



## William Thomas Thornton Sr.

April 21, 1935 - January 1, 2021

North Augusta, SC—Graveside Services for Mr. William Thomas Thornton, Sr., 85, who entered into rest January 1, 2021 will be conducted Tuesday morning at 11 o'clock in Pineview Memorial Gardens. Rev. Richard Smith, Dr. Harold Herd and Rev. Roy Kiser officiating. The service will be streamed live on the Posey Funeral Directors Facebook Page.

Mr. Thornton was born in Michigan, grew up in Toledo, OH, was a former resident of Oak Ridge, Tennessee, and then finally made North Augusta his home for the past 42 years. He earned his bachelor's degree from Wheaton College and master's from Vanderbilt University. Mr. Thornton worked as a health physicist for the United States Department of Energy, first in Oak Ridge, TN and later at the Savannah River Site. He was a talented pianist who shared his gift with others as a church musician. Over the years he played at Central Baptist Church in Oak Ridge, First Baptist Church of North Augusta, Big Stevens Creek and Immanuel Baptist. Not only did he share this gift with the church, he taught his family how to play too. He served as a deacon at First Baptist Church of North Augusta and taught the Faithful Sunday School Class there. The time and energy spent preparing for teaching the Word of God is evidenced by a drawerful of notes found in his desk at home. Mr. Thornton was an active volunteer with Gideons International and the Augusta Rescue Mission, and he served consistently in the local prison ministering to the inmates for over a decade. While he enjoyed playing golf

and tracking his favorite sports team, the Atlanta Braves, Mr. Thornton's greatest love was his family. He was a loving husband, father and grandfather who was a faithful prayer warrior, encourager and teacher. He and his wife Nancy knew that the time invested in family was invaluable and they created traditions to foster relationships with their children and grandchildren. The first way they did this was by hosting Sunday lunches at their home each week after church. In addition to this, they made sure 1 week every summer was set aside to be together. This yearly gathering grew into a reunion called "Partywave," where the family retreated to Hilton Head Island for fun, rest and fellowship. The rest of the year, when he was not serving the church or in the various ministries mentioned above, he made time to support those he loved. Bill travelled near and far to support his grandchildren in whatever life event he could: from concerts, to sports games, to graduations and weddings.

Survivors include his wife of 60 years, Nancy Lawson Thornton; two sons, Tom (Caryn) Thornton, Carol Stream, IL and Tim (Jane) Thornton, North Augusta, SC; a daughter, Traci (Kyle) Smith, North Augusta, SC; 11 grandchildren, Megan (Aaron) Lynch, Katie Thornton, Kelly Thornton, Curtis Thornton, Nathan (Kimberly) Thornton, Kip Thornton, Abby Thornton, Taylor (Luke) Francis, Logan Smith, Luke Smith and Jack Smith.

Pallbearers will be Curtis Thornton, Nathan Thornton, Kip Thornton, Luke Smith, Jack Smith and Luke Francis.

The family will receive friends Monday afternoon from 4 until 6, under the oak tree at Posey Funeral Directors. Masks are required and social distancing will be practiced.

Memorials may be made to Gideons International at [www.gideons.org](http://www.gideons.org)

Posey Funeral Directors of North Augusta is in charge of arrangements

(803.278.1181). Visit the registry at [www.POSEYCARES.com](http://www.POSEYCARES.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Pineview Memorial Gardens

450 West Five Notch Road  
North Augusta, SC 29841

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**JAN 4.** 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Under the Oak Tree at Posey's  
1307 Georgia Ave  
North Augusta, SC 29841

## Graveside

**JAN 5.** 11:00 AM (ET)

Pineview Memorial Gardens  
450 West Five Notch Road  
North Augusta, SC 29841

# Tribute Wall



“ Posey Funeral Directors created a Webcast in memory of William Thomas Thornton Sr.



---

**Posey Funeral Directors** - January 06, 2021 at 04:21 PM



“ Posey Funeral Directors created a Tribute Video in memory of William Thomas Thornton Sr.



---

**Posey Funeral Directors** - January 03, 2021 at 06:16 PM

SB

*Thoughts and prayers to the family. We so enjoyed listening to Bill play the piano every Sunday for so long at BSCBC. He was a very wise, kind and gentle man. He will truly be missed.  
Jamie and Sue Beasley*

---

**Susan Beasley** - January 04, 2021 at 05:20 PM

RL

*These are great pics of Bill & family! thanks so much for sharing!*

---

**Russ Larkin** - January 04, 2021 at 06:38 PM

RL

*Brother Bill is a class act! In the 10 years I've known him, he always did his best to glorify the Lord! In his deeds, in his service to the Gideons, to inmates and to rescue mission residents. He had a heart of gold and truly wanted the best for everyone, the best being Jesus! And Miss Nancy was always bringing the sweets and treats to the rescue mission ministering right alongside Bill. He was a wonderful bible study leader and had thoughtful insight in the Word. He was skilled at inspiring inmates to look to the Lord no matter the circumstances.... I believe heaven was an easy transition for Bill as he was always living just as the Lord said "Seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness". You will be dearly missed Brother Bill! Until we meet again!*

**Russ Larkin** - January 04, 2021 at 06:49 PM



“ *William Thomas Thornton Sr.*

October 06, 2023 at 06:29 AM



“ *William Thomas Thornton Sr.*

September 24, 2022 at 12:12 PM

BI

“ *BETH INGLE sent a virtual gift in memory of William Thomas Thornton Sr.*



**BETH INGLE** - January 05, 2021 at 10:12 PM

“ Dear Thornton Family,

*I was soooooo not expecting the phone call I got from my sister, BECKY, on New Years Day. She told me that Tim had contacted her in regards to your fabulous dad, and his passing into Heaven, early that morning. Literally, my heart sank....Broken to pieces for each of you, and in another thought, grateful your did not have to die a lengthy process. BECKY and I continued our conversation, and we even discussed how similar our daddy and your dad went quickly from this earth into their new locations. Our dad has been gone 9 years, and just watching the live stream this morning of the wonderful service given for your dad, and listening to Tim's opening remarks, I kept telling myself, "I'm so sorry they're having to face this." I don't know if you could feel the love being sent from Oak Ridge, Tennessee., but rest assured, it was plentiful. We never got over missing you guys!, riding around in your old station wagon, with your mom driving, as we tossed multiple rolls of toilet paper all over Oak Ridge during those days! My goodness, what memories, deep deep memories, that we wouldn't trade for anything in this world! I'm not so sure your dad approved of all the mess we got in, but, Nancy Thornton sure did!!! What a life of fabulous friendships that have lasted a lifetime!! Thank you Lord!!*

*We never realized back then that when your dad and our mom would play their duets on Sunday mornings, at Central Baptist Church of Oak Ridge, that some of us would also be church musicians one day!! BECKY had the honor of taking your dads spot once you guys moved away, and let me assure you, she has made Bill Thornton proud all these years of continuing to bring Jesus Christ to CBC through music! We've been through a lot of sweet sweet friends passing away over the years, but, I can honestly say the loss of your dad has hit us in a different way, just as special as our other friends who have passed, but there was a strong connection because of your dad and our mom filling our lives each week with the organ and the piano!! I'm so thankful we got to be a part of that! To God be the Glory!!*

*Our mom is now in assisted living here in Oak Ridge, for over a year now, and she continues to go downhill day after day. We have chosen not to tell our mom about your dads passing ONLY BECAUSE she truly wouldn't comprehend BECKY or myself trying to tell her. Instead, she will only have happy memories of the Thornton Family, and the music that would "literally bring the house down" on Sundays!! That would make them both happy!!*

*Tim, you hit a home run this morning speaking about your dad. I'm so proud of you for standing there, in front of your broken mom and Tommy and Traci, and spouses and children, so emotional at times I didn't think you could possibly finish the sentence, much less hit a home run!! Good job my brother!! Your daddy would be soooooo pleased with the words of his son, Tim Thornton!*

*We love you all very very much❤️! Let there never be any doubt! The impact you guys had on CBCOR, and our city of Oak Ridge, will live on for years to come!!*

*Hugs to all, and many thoughts and prayers are with each of you🙏*

*Until the next time, love from Tennessee!  
BETH INGLE*

---

**BETH INGLE** - January 05, 2021 at 10:02 PM

LL

“*Joe and I enjoyed getting to know Bill—and hear him play the piano—at Gideon banquets through the years; we'll miss him! 'Sending love and prayers to all his family. Laura Lusk*

---

**Laura D. Lusk** - January 05, 2021 at 12:43 PM

NS

“ We are saddened to hear of Bill’s passing. We always enjoyed hearing Bill play the piano. It was such a blessing to have been acquainted with Bill and Nancy!  
Prayers and love to the Thornton family!

---

**Nancy Smith** - January 05, 2021 at 11:16 AM

JB

“ Jack and I have your family in our prayers. We are so sorry for your loss. We enjoyed Connection Group so much when Bill led!!

---

**Jack and Mary Bradford** - January 04, 2021 at 04:01 PM

LM

“ My sympathy to the Thornton family. Bill was one of the first people I met when I went to Central Baptist Church in 1958 - wow! he could play that piano so beautifully. Nancy grew up here. I treasure your friendship over the years as I watched the family (Tom, Tim and Traci) grow up. The last time I saw him (when Tim brought Bill and Nancy to Oak Ridge) he was expressing gratitude to God for his family and good life. A talented Christian man of integrity - he will be missed. God be with you. My love to you all. -Lois McNealy

---

**Lois McNealy** - January 04, 2021 at 01:42 PM

DB

My prayers and sympathy go out to the Thornton family. Mr. Thornton was such a Christian inspiration to many men like myself. Whenever I saw him he always had a smile on his face and a positive word to share. The true character of a man is the legacy he leaves and the people he has touched. Mr Thornton truly lived out God’s great commission of making disciples. Mr Thornton will not be forgotten. His legacy will continue in his family and those he has influenced like me. He will be missed but not forgotten. We love the Thornton family and will prayerfully remember you during this time of lost. - Donny and Kim Barfield.

---

**Donny Barfield** - January 05, 2021 at 04:42 AM

PF

“ *An amazingly talented man who will be missed by many.*

Patricia Fitchpatrick - January 04, 2021 at 11:56 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of William Thomas Thornton Sr..*



January 04, 2021 at 09:50 AM



“ *87 files added to the album Life Tributes*



Posey Funeral Directors - January 03, 2021 at 06:00 PM

KB

“ *Bill was an extraordinarily kind and gentle man. He was so generous with his time and talent. We enjoyed every minute of listening to him as he played at Big Stevens Creek. He certainly is hearing, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.” Please know Big Stevens Creek church family is praying for all of you!*  
*Charles and Kerry Blackston*

Kerry Blackston - January 03, 2021 at 02:10 PM

NM

“ *BILL WAS ONE OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING CHRISTIAN MEN I HAVE EVER KNOWN. I LOVED TO HEAR HIM SHARE AND TEACH AND PLAY THE PIANO. HE EXEMPLIFIED JESUS IN HIS LIFE. LORD COMFORT NANCY AND FAMILY IN THE DAYS AND MONTHS AHEAD. LOVE TO YOU ALL, NEWTON MANLY*

NEWTON MANLY - January 03, 2021 at 08:21 AM

CB

“ *A wonderful Godly man of faith whom I had the pleasure of being a prayer partner with for a time and fellow deacon. It was my blessing and joy to have known Bill and I will miss him. Our loss is heavens gain.*

Craig Bannecke - January 02, 2021 at 08:36 PM

EE

“ *Bill was such a nice guy. Years I was in Gideon's and acquainted with him from SRS . I didn't realize he played piano until I joined FBCNA and he was excellent. I am so sorry for the loss and I know he will be missed. Prayers for peace , God's comfort and strength during your grieving.*

Erma Ellis - January 02, 2021 at 07:44 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of William Thomas Thornton Sr..*



January 02, 2021 at 02:19 PM

PM

“ Our sympathy to the family; there must be rejoicing in heaven for the many souls Bill has led to Christ. We've lost a friend.  
*Phil & Barbara McBeath*

phillip McBeath - January 02, 2021 at 12:35 PM

BT

“ I am so saddened to learn about the passing of Bill. He will certainly be missed at First Baptist Church of North Augusta, SC. I have a very fond memory of this guy performing an informal church service at one of the Mayan Ruins in Guatemala.....

Brian Thompson - January 02, 2021 at 12:12 PM

KS

“ Our deepest Christian sympathies to The Thornton Family. So sorry for your loss; may God's peace comfort each of you during this difficult time. The Sapp Family - Ralph, Kristin & Hunter



Kristin E Sapp - January 02, 2021 at 10:27 AM

RW

“ May God bless this family in this time of sorrow.

Robert and Mary Whatley - January 02, 2021 at 07:01 AM