

Rev. Jesse Jackson Dead at 84: Inside the Faith, Fight and Final Years of a Civil Rights Icon

On Feb. 17, 2026, Rev. Jesse Louis Jackson Sr.—a Baptist minister, civil rights icon and founder of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition—passed away at the age of 84. His family announced that he died peacefully, surrounded by loved ones. He died after a fight with Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP).

In a statement, his family shared:

Our father was a servant leader – not only to our family, but to the oppressed, the voiceless, and the overlooked around the shared him with the world, and in return, the world became part of our extended family. His unwavering belief in justice, equality, and love uplifted millions, and we ask you to honor his memory by continuing the fight for the values he lived by.

His Rainbow PUSH Coalition further shared of his passing on social media:

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Civil Rights leader and founder of the Rainbow PUSH Coalition, the Honorable Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr....

A Ministry about Justice and Compassion

Born on Oct. 8, 1941, in Greenville, South Carolina, Jackson's early experiences with segregation and injustice ignited his passion for equality. He pursued theological studies at the Chicago Theological Seminary and was ordained as a Baptist

minister in 1968. His ministry extended beyond the church walls, reaching into the streets where he championed the rights of the marginalized.



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Health Challenges and Perseverance

In 2017, Jackson publicly announced his diagnosis with Parkinson's disease. Later, he was diagnosed with progressive supranuclear palsy (PSP), a rare brain disorder affecting movement and balance. Despite these health challenges, he remained active in public life, advocating for civil rights and participating in protests, including those related to the Black Lives Matter movement. He also continued to speak out on issues such as healthcare disparities and international diplomacy.

In Nov. 2025, Jackson was hospitalized for observation due to his condition. Amidst media speculation, his family clarified that reports of his imminent death were inaccurate, emphasizing that while his condition was serious, he was receiving appropriate care.

Prepared by Charisma Media Staff.