

Word of God Megachurch Pastor Dies Suddenly

Word of God Church Founder Bishop Frank Summerfield died July 2, the church announced this week. Summerfield was 67, and no cause of death has been reported.

“We are grieving the loss of a great leader and a father to many. At this time we ask that you keep the Summerfield family and the Word of God Fellowship Church family in your thoughts and prayers,” according to the church’s Facebook page.

“He was a devoted husband, father, bishop, friend, mentor and a great community leader,” the church website reads.

Summerfield pastored Word of God Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, for 22 years. The church has multiple ministries, including a TV outreach, prison ministry, a daycare center and school.

According to his church biography:

Dr. Summerfield graduated from Weequahic High in Newark, New Jersey, and played on a team that won two city, county and state championships, and was ranked No. 1 in the nation. Dr. Summerfield has a B.A. in Health & Physical Education from Kansas Wesleyan University Salina, Kansas, a M.A. in Health Education from Montclair State University, and a Doctorate of Divinity Degree from Saint Thomas Christian College of Jacksonville, Florida. Dr. Summerfield finished his undergraduate degree in 3 ½ years, which was a semester early, while at Kansas Wesleyan University.

He was captain of the basketball team, on two (KCAC) Kansas Collegiate Athletic Conference Championship teams, and was ranked 12th in (NAIA) National Association Intercollegiate Athletics District 10 in field goal percentage.

The Summerfield's have been married since 1976. Their four children, Music Minister Frank Jr., Executive Coordinator Mitchell, Human Resource/Personnel Director Valisha and Joshua are actively involved and supportive of the ministry.

Dr. Summerfield travels extensively, ministering to the needs of the body of Christ. He is currently seen nationally and internationally on The Word Network as well as a host of local and regional network channels. Dr. Summerfield was an administrator for the City of Raleigh Parks and Recreation for 14 years with his highest position being superintendent of Recreation, supervising managers and supervisors.

Dr. Summerfield taught at Campbell University in 1973 as an assistant health professor. He also was head tennis coach and assistant basketball coach in charge of recruiting. Dr. Summerfield taught at Shaw University from 1988 to 1991 in the Department of Health, Recreation and Physical Therapy.

The news of his death shocked and saddened many.

"Pray for the healing of the love ones of Bishop Frank Summerfield. I am grateful to had the chance to set in his present to received the word of God several times. Dr. Summerfield was a great blessing to my ministry," One person posted to Facebook.

Another wrote: "My condolences to Lady Jonelle and family; as well as the Word of God family. Bishop Summerfield was so instrumental to my walk with Christ. He was a true living vessel of God that impacted many. My prayers are with you. May God strengthen you and give you continued peace."

Summerfield is survived by his wife of 40 years, co-pastor Lady JoeNell Summerfield, and four children. The children are Frank IV, Mitchell (Shantel), Joshua and Valisha (Travis) Fowles.

The church will hold multiple final services this weekend, including a wake and a homegoing service. {eo}