

A portrait of an elderly Black man with a full white beard and hair, smiling warmly. He is wearing a blue collared shirt, a grey sweater, and a brown leather jacket. The background is a soft-focus outdoor scene with trees and foliage in warm, golden light.

Robert James Smith

"Bob"

January 1, 1940 — January 1, 2025

Funeral

2026-04-09

First Baptist Church, 123 E Lee St,
Chicago Il

Obituary

Robert James Smith, affectionately known to all as "Bob," lived a life defined by wisdom, humor, and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. Born on January 1, 1940, in Chicago, IL, Bob was the cherished son of the late John and Mary Smith. From an early age, he possessed a natural gift for storytelling that would eventually shape his brilliant career and touch the lives of thousands of students and readers.

Bob's professional legacy is one of immense intellectual contribution and dedication. As a celebrated professor at MidState University for 32 years, he inspired generations with his insightful lectures and sharp wit. A prolific writer, he authored over 124 books and articles, achieving the distinction of a New York Times Bestselling Author in 2012. His shelves were lined with prestigious accolades, including the Professor of the Year award in 1988, the Author Award in 1990, the Writer's Guild Award in 2002, and the Authorian Literary Award in 2020. Despite his academic stature, Bob was best known for his amazing storytelling and a sense of humor that could light up any room.

Obituary (Cont.)

At the heart of Bob's life was his 50-year marriage to his beloved wife, Sara. Together, they explored the world, seeking out new adventures and creating a home filled with laughter and books. He was a devoted father to Mike, Jimmy, and Tina, and a constant source of support to his siblings, Marvin, Doll, James Smith, and Linda Brown, as well as his step-brother, Jody Mays. Bob found his greatest joy in his later years as a grandfather, where he spent his days reading to and spoiling Emma, Noah, Olivia, Terrence, and Torrin.

Bob's legacy is not just in the volumes he published, but in the love he shared and the laughter he inspired. His life was a masterpiece of joy, education, and family devotion. He leaves behind a world made brighter by his presence and a family forever enriched by his incredible stories and warm spirit.

Order of Service

Processional: The Family

Opening Prayer: Clergy

Scripture Reading: Family Member

Musical Selection: The Choir

Reading of the Obituary: Close Friend

Eulogy: Minister

Benediction: Clergy

Recessional: The Family

Poems & Tributes

*In suburban Chicago, his story took flight,
The youngest of John and Mary's delight.
A gifted young soul, doted on from the start,
With a brilliance of mind and a kindness of heart.*

*At MidState he taught for three decades and more,
With a hundred-plus books and awards by the score.
From Professor of the Year to the bestseller's fame,
The literary world will long honor his name.*

*With a wit sharp as flint and a laugh like a song,
He carried a room and his audience along.
An amazing storyteller, funny and wise,
With a twinkle of humor deep in his eyes.*

Poems & Tributes (Cont.)

*He loved new adventures and travels afar,
With his wife as his compass and family his star.
Though the final chapter for Bob has been penned,
His legacy blossoms in the hearts he would mend.*

Cherished Memories



Cherished Memories



Pallbearers

Family & Friends

Acknowledgments

The family wishes to express their deep appreciation and sincere thanks for all the acts of kindness and expressions of sympathy shown during their time of bereavement. Your prayers, visits, calls, and other gestures of love have been a source of great comfort.

The Repast will be held at:

Church



VIRTUAL
OBITS