



## Michael Ray

April 5, 2025

Michael Robert Ray, age 59 of Hartsville passed away unexpectedly Saturday April 5, 2025. He was a great man and was dearly loved by all who were graced with his presence. He was born on December 9, 1965, in Herkimer, NY. He was the son of the late William M. "Bill" Ray and Doris (Wengert) Ray. He was a Certified Legal Assistant, and a Pastor. He served Bethel UMC and Sandy Grove UMC of the Hartsville District of the United Methodist Church. His final contribution being instrumental in planting Sandy Grove Community Church. Michael served Sandy Grove Community Church with passion and vigor until his passing. He was an avid car enthusiast and loved sharing his love of cars with others. With all of this being said, though Michael may no longer walk beside us, his love, laughter, and legacy will forever live on in the hearts of those who knew and cherished him.

A celebration of his life will be held, Monday, April 14, 2025 at 2:00pm, at The Grand Old Post Office officiated by Rev. Taylor .F Coates his sister in Christ.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

APR **14**. 2:00 PM (Est)

The Grand Old Post Office  
201 Pearl St  
Darlington, SC 29532  
(843) 944-0157

# Tribute Wall

TR

“ *I always considered you a friend and I appreciate you taking the time to help and offer assistance. We met in a different era, and I am so happy you found peace and a fulfilling life. Rest well my friend*

Tom Robertson - June 17, 2025 at 03:48 PM

JT

“ *Thank you for being so kind to Rudy and me . We will miss you so much but know you are in a better place .*



Jayne Tyner - April 30, 2025 at 08:27 PM

BD

“ *Buck & Deb lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



Buck & Deb - April 12, 2025 at 06:14 PM

SG

“ *Suzanne Gordon lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



Suzanne Gordon - April 11, 2025 at 03:24 PM

PH

“ *Pansy Howell lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



Pansy Howell - April 10, 2025 at 04:07 PM

BR

“ *Becky And Tony Rummage lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



Becky and Tony Rummage - April 10, 2025 at 03:12 PM

JH

“ *I will never forget You!! We spent the whole day together until God called You Home! Rest Easy My Friend Your Work Here Is Done!!!Love You Bumaclat!!*❤️❤️❤️❤️

Janet Hancock - April 09, 2025 at 06:02 PM

GH

“ *Ginger Hess lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



Ginger Hess - April 09, 2025 at 05:57 PM

SC

“ Sherry Cross lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray



Sherry Cross - April 09, 2025 at 01:25 PM

LI

“ Lisa lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray



Lisa - April 09, 2025 at 11:48 AM

MN

“ Mike And Brenda Northcutt lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray



Mike and Brenda Northcutt - April 08, 2025 at 11:21 PM

DG

“ Deborah Gandy lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray



Deborah Gandy - April 08, 2025 at 09:44 PM

DT

“ *Debbie Talbert lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



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**Debbie Talbert** - April 08, 2025 at 07:43 PM

JS

“ *My prayers and thoughts are with the Ray family and friends. May God comfort you in your sorrow and may you find joy in the wonderful memories you shared.*

*Jackie James Slayton*

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**Jackie James Slayton** - April 08, 2025 at 05:06 PM

LS

“ *Mike was a friend to all and he never thought twice about trying to help you ,, he will be missed by many ,, he loved passing out the little Jesus figures*

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**Linda Stevens** - April 08, 2025 at 03:12 PM

WM

“ *So sorry to hear about Mike. I always enjoyed waiting on him at the bank. He was so kind and funny.*



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**Wanda Moore** - April 08, 2025 at 02:52 PM

LG

“ I am so heartbroken that I am just finding out about his passing. He was always so nice and helpful when I had any questions. Wow I am at a loss for words. You will be missed.

Lavonda Green - April 08, 2025 at 02:47 PM

JS

“ I never once called him or text him in need, and him not be there. He lifted me up as well as my son in our hard times. He took time with my son one on one and always pushed him to be everything he can be. I will miss the check ins and i will miss you, Mike! I will miss your kindness, positivity, and always keeping it real with me. I will miss how no matter how much you had going on; you would always remember us. I will miss hearing the motivational words ... I am glad that our paths crossed, and a friendship was born, even if it wasn't under the best of circumstances. RIP my friend.

Jessica Simmons - April 08, 2025 at 02:18 PM

MC

“ Mike was such a blessing to many people.  
Rest in peace my friend.



Mae Helen Burch {Tax Collector} - April 08, 2025 at 12:46 PM

ZG

“ I’m still in a state of shock over his passing. He touched the lives of many including myself. When my grandpa Scott (his brother) passed away and my world was shattered from it, Mike stepped in and did his very best to fill his shoes and I knew he was always one of my biggest supporters. The days and memories we shared together will never be forgotten. I love you so much big guy! I wish you were still here. ❤️



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**Zoe Gage** - April 08, 2025 at 12:36 PM

JB

“ Jeannie Brown lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray



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**Jeannie Brown** - April 08, 2025 at 11:26 AM

CR

“ Rip Mike it still doesn't seem real, still in stock... you were a friend before you took my wreck case. I'm going to miss arguing with you on a weekly basis lol. I never forget when my mom was in the hospital, I had a bad break down and took it out on you , you said Crystal I was your friend before this case and I'm not going to let this get in the way of a friendship. You said I know you are upset "I'm praying for you and your mom if you need anything at all I'm here " then you asked me did you need to come to the hospital with me even if it was just for a hug ,that's just who you were always there for everyone . Thank you for all you done and for being so good to my Austin also. Rest easy my friend (Austin the elf and Mike the Santa )



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**Crystal** - April 08, 2025 at 10:09 AM

RS

“ I loved following Mike on FB because he always had something on his FB page that made me laugh - he was such a joy to be around - he will truly be missed and I am blessed to have known him and to have had him as a friend



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**Rae Sessoms** - April 08, 2025 at 01:47 AM

BW

“ *Bess Watkins lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



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**Bess Watkins** - April 07, 2025 at 09:44 PM

SC

“ *Rest Easy my friend*



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**Sharon and David Catoe** - April 07, 2025 at 09:21 PM

“ I feel led to write this. It’s my hope most of you will understand the intent of it. Closure. Mike Ray and I joined the same church in 2017, in my case, and I assume his, to start out fresh on our paths to redemption in Him. I most definitely wasn’t the most grounded person in those days, but I was trying to be. The last time I saw Mike was in January of this year at Solicitor Burch’s investiture in Chesterfield. As a newly ordained pastor, fresh out of seminary, I’d been asked by the solicitor to offer the benediction at one of the most important days of his life. Mike was there, along with 200 plus others. Afterwards, Mike came up to me, and looked me square in the eye. Believe me, he could have gone anywhere else, talked to more important people, but he came to me, rather rapidly, I noticed, and said with firm conviction that he was extremely proud of me. Not another word. He would not let go of my hand that he’d extended for a handshake, for over 45 seconds. He said nothing else, smiled, and walked off to the reception, which I skipped. (I wanted to get home to my wife). From 2017 - 2019, I wrongly looked at Mike as a competitor in our church, and that messed me up, and most definitely messed up any chance for a good relationship and friendship with him, work with the then church pastor, and with most of that congregation, and most importantly, with God. The latter relationship, the one with God, has sense been corrected. I regret my actions that led me to be seen as an unworthy friend candidate to Mike, or to anyone else, in that time frame. I got big headed and felt entitled then. My failed friendship with him was definitely a marvelous teacher. The failure taught me more than most seminary classes did. It taught me HOW NOT TO BEHAVE in a church setting. Church life isn’t a competition. It’s my deepest regret to date that I never accepted a friendship Mike freely gave anyone, and at one time, wanted to give me. Any time I saw him after 2019, we both moved to other church pursuits by then, he always spoke, well up until the Burch event, which was usually at the post office. I am glad he was loved by so many, and I’m glad I had that moment with him in January because of Solicitor Burch. I don’t always get things right, definitely not back then, and I’m so sorry for my role in the dysfunction that kept me from being a friend to a man that helped so

*many. Does any of this make sense? I sure hope it does, and I hope all who read this and feel the love it's intended to convey. I'm glad Mike was loved, and I'm glad we had the moment in January he alone made happen. He was always teaching. May he rest in peace, and may you all reading this, find peace in his death, and find love in my words here. But for the grace of God go I.*

Rev. Andy Williams - April 07, 2025 at 09:15 PM

LL

“ *Such a kind and sweet man  
You will be missed by all  
That were fortunate enough to have known you*



Lawrence & Cindy Lowe - April 07, 2025 at 08:29 PM

ND

“ *Nikki M. Daniels lit a candle in memory of  
Michael Ray*



Nikki M. Daniels - April 07, 2025 at 08:16 PM

MR

“ *Sending my condolences to the family. May  
God give you peace and comfort today and  
the days ahead.*



Marcia Rhyne - April 07, 2025 at 07:42 PM

DT

“ *Dave Thompson lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



**Dave Thompson** - April 07, 2025 at 06:59 PM

JW

“ *Mike was such a blessing in my life I am heartbroken and sad he made such a difference in this world rest in peace my friend*

**Jamie Wheless** - April 07, 2025 at 06:56 PM

JW

“ *Jamie Wheless lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



**Jamie Wheless** - April 07, 2025 at 06:52 PM

KL

“ *Mike will truly be missed in Hartsville. Praying for comfort in the days ahead.*

**Kathy Lawhon** - April 07, 2025 at 06:49 PM

TK

“ *Heartbroken about Mike's passing! He was such a kind caring man, always willing to help, always a smile and always loving Jesus! He will me missed by so many people. RIP and fly high Mike, until we meet again! Terry O*

**Terry C King** - April 07, 2025 at 05:07 PM

PF

“ You are going to be missed by so many. Our family thought of you as family. And I was so blessed you were kb's God Father. You and your memories will forever live on within us. Prayers for family and friends. Fly High and R.I.P. our friend.



Patricia Byrd and Family. - April 07, 2025 at 12:48 PM

EM

“ Elayne Mahn lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray



Elayne Mahn - April 07, 2025 at 12:30 PM



“ Annette Moore lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray



Annette Moore - April 07, 2025 at 10:48 AM

PW

“ Sending lots of love and comfort to all who were blessed to know Mike. Such a caring, thoughtful young man who was always so willing to help whenever you needed him. His loss will be felt by all!

Phyllis and Len Watson - April 07, 2025 at 10:37 AM

DF

“ Our deepest sympathy and heartfelt prayers for all family and friends during this difficult time.

*Dottie and Robert*



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**Dottie and Robert Fowler** - April 07, 2025 at 09:47 AM

RM

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



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**Robert C Mcwatty** - April 07, 2025 at 09:40 AM

RM

*Mike"s last Earthly ride.*

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**Robert C Mcwatty** - April 07, 2025 at 09:41 AM

DS

“ So very sorry, prayers for all that knew and loved Mike.



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**Danny and Phoebe Stokes** - April 07, 2025 at 07:52 AM

RE

“ Mike’s gracious spirit and jovial “bigger than life” personality was only exceeded by his love for Jesus Christ. He was a true disciple—redeemed by God’s Love, and transformed into a beautiful soul who made an impact on the world. He will be dearly missed, and his witness of Christ-like love in action will forever be an example for all of us. “Uncle Mike” will be missed deeply in our family. He has now won the race...  
Larry and Rev. Fran Elrod

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**Rev. Fran Elrod** - April 07, 2025 at 07:31 AM

SH

“ Such a shock to hear of Mike’s sudden death. He went doing just what he loved and won the race for sure. Mike shared so much goodness in his short time in Hartsville and certainly will be missed.

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**Sarah and Bob Haarlow** - April 07, 2025 at 06:43 AM

MC

“ My goodness. This is unbelievable! This man was such an inspiration and a wonderful person to everyone that met him. Our hearts are broken 🙏😞  
RIP our friend  
Maxie and Gail Cantley

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**Maxie and Gail Cantley** - April 06, 2025 at 11:09 PM

KA

“ Say hi to your mom!! Oh wait.....Nevermind!

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**kayleigh** - April 06, 2025 at 10:06 PM

DO

*I want to know what this means!*

Doria - April 11, 2025 at 12:51 PM

DM

“ *This was shocking news! Mike was an amazing man, and friend!! His positive words and true caring he showed all will be greatly missed. But he is headed to the best place...his race is done. Rest in peace Mike.*

Dana & Tony Moore - April 06, 2025 at 08:36 PM

DB

“ *Danielle Braswell lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



Danielle Braswell - April 06, 2025 at 08:25 PM

KS

“ *A wonderful friend to everyone! We will miss you dearly! 💔*



Kirk & Donna Spires - April 06, 2025 at 08:11 PM

BM

“ *We will miss our wonderful friend. He has been a blessing to Hartsville, his many friends, and the Methodist Church.*

Bob and Becky McWatty - April 06, 2025 at 08:10 PM

JK

“ So very sorry to hear this sad news. Mike had the perfect last name as he truly was a ray of sunshine to everyone he met. He will be sorely missed.



JoFrieda Kelley - April 06, 2025 at 08:02 PM

FL

“ So sorry to hear. Such a great friend. Always willing to help anyone.

Fran Bailey Langley - April 06, 2025 at 07:59 PM

CG

“ Curt And Cindy Griggs lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray



Curt and Cindy Griggs - April 06, 2025 at 07:32 PM

KS

“ This was a heartbreaking thing to hear about. Mike was a great person and every time you saw him he was always smiling and would always have a kind word to say. Mr Mike will be missed by everyone and especially those that was fortunate enough to know him. My prayers goes out to his family . RIP my friend.

Ken Sumner - April 06, 2025 at 07:31 PM

AK

“ *Ann King lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



Ann King - April 06, 2025 at 07:02 PM

CT

“ *Always enjoyed talking with Mike about his latest fast car or riding laps at Darlington in that wild Camaro! He was a true witness for redemption and his faith. A funny and truly kind man. Always greeted me with that big smile. RIP my friend. You will be missed.*

Curtis A. Tyner - April 06, 2025 at 06:52 PM

VB

“ *Violet Bragdon lit a candle in memory of Michael Ray*



Violet Bragdon - April 06, 2025 at 06:46 PM

GK

“ *Such a wonderful man and loved by many!!! So many people's lives you touched including mine💖RIP my dear friend 💖*



Gail kimbrell - April 06, 2025 at 06:44 PM

VS

“ Rest in peace dear friend. You will truly be missed. 🙏



Vicky and Joel Segars - April 06, 2025 at 06:34 PM

CN

Prayers for his family!- Mike was a special kind person!- thanks for all he did for ny family and so many others!❤️🙏🙏

carl NEWSOME - April 06, 2025 at 08:12 PM

SS

“ You will be missed my friend.



Stephanie Smith - April 06, 2025 at 06:10 PM

GO

“ Prayers for his family as well as his Church Family



Grady L O'Neal - April 06, 2025 at 04:39 PM

EA

“ Had fun talking with you and doing laps for charity at Darlington. I'm going to miss talking about racing and just catching up with each other. Until we see each other again. Rest easy Mike



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**Ethan Anderson** - April 06, 2025 at 04:34 PM