

Eric's Life Sketch

Throughout his life, Eric was active in and deeply dedicated to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He loved God and Jesus Christ devoutly and believed fully in the essential teachings of the Church. As a young man, he served a full-time mission in Tacoma, Washington. He took seriously every calling and served with all his energy and heart.

Eric met, fell in love with, and married Gina Harkness. He immensely admired her intelligence, sense of humor, commitment to her family, and work ethic. He would often remark, "I fished my wish." They were sealed for time and all eternity in the Salt Lake Temple on October 23, 2003. Eric and Gina have five children together. Eric's family was the best and most important thing that ever happened to him.

Being a father was Eric's proudest and most cherished role. He relished bonding with Gabriella over their mutual love of literature and lit up when she walked into a room. He rejoiced in seeing Emmitt develop his sense of humor and was filled with peace as Emmitt's testimony grew on his mission. Eric adored having twins (and being a twin) and shared a love of basketball, attention to detail, and organization with both Chloe and Charlotte. He loved to laugh with Chloe and be audience to her impromptu skits and jokes. He was amazed at Charlotte's keen eye for opportunities to serve. No matter his medical condition, Eric prioritized attending Tennyson's soccer games to cheer him on. Tennyson became Eric's right-hand man, and the two were often found working together in the garage or yard or garden.

Eric worked as an attorney "at law" in Salt Lake City for two years before transitioning to pursue his true passion. For 25 years, he worked as an editor for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, first in the Curriculum Department and then in the Church History Department. The crowning jewel of his career was his work on the Joseph Smith Papers Project, which beautifully blended his love for language and history. As the project's editorial manager and later a general editor, he played a key role in publishing the definitive, 27-volume scholarly edition of Joseph Smith's writings and teachings. He gained great satisfaction from both the work he did and the friendships he made throughout his career, and his colleagues loved him for his kindness, wit, and good judgment.

From a young age, Eric was a kind and attentive listener, a curious observer of people and the world, an elite writer, a master gardener, and a true lover of history and nonfiction. He made an effort to not only get to know the people around him but to intimately understand them. He also thoroughly enjoyed watching nearly any sport and loved discussing games and statistics with his family and friends.

Eric's strength, love, loyalty, intellect, humor, kindness, service, and devotion will be forever missed by all who knew him."

Celebrating The Life of



ROBERT ERIC SMITH

1971 ~ 2026

In Loving Memory
ERIC SMITH



BORN
May 11, 1971
Newport News, Virginia

DIED
July 22, 2026
Draper, Utah

SON OF
Robert Frank Smith and Kathleeen Knell

HUSBAND OF
Gina Harkness

Celebration of Life

Saturday, August 1, 2026 ~ 11:00 A.M.
Draper Utah Meadows Stake Center
575 East 13800 South
Draper, Utah

Pallbearers

Emmitt Smith
Scott Smith
Aaron Smith
Rance Summers

Tennyson Smith
Jared Smith
Richard Harkness
Chris Stowell

Services

Elder Ronald A. Rasband, Presiding
(Member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles)

Bishop Adam Ostheid, Conducting

Family Prayer Richard Harkness

Chorister Stacie Berardi

Organist Karen Rozsa

Opening Hymn #27

"Praise to the Man"

Invocation Peter Donaldson

Life Sketch Gabriella, Emmitt, Chloe, Charlotte,
and Tennyson Smith

Musical Number Sarah Smith (flute)
and Kimberly Child (piano)

"I Need Thee Every Hour"

Speaker Scott Smith

Musical Number Richard Harkness

"Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling"

Speaker Nathan Waite

Musical Number Stacie Berardi

"Oh How Lovely Was the Morning"

Speaker Bishop Adam Ostheid

Closing Remarks Elder Ronald A. Rasband

Closing Hymn #100

"Nearer, My God, to Thee"

Benediction Nathaniel Paynter

Interment

Larkin Sunset Gardens
1950 East Dimple Dell Road
Sandy, Utah

Dedication of the Grave Aaron Smith

We, as a Smith family, echo John Taylor's sentiments at Hyrum Smith's death, "He was a great and good man, and [our souls are] cemented to his. If ever there was an exemplary, honest, and virtuous man, an embodiment of all that is noble in the human form, [Eric Smith] was its representative."

My heart mourns for those who have been taken from us, but not without hope, for I shall see them again and be with them.

—Joseph Smith to Emma Smith, 20–25 January 1840

The expectation of seeing my friends in the morning of the resurrection cheers my soul and makes me bear up against the evils of life. It is like [they're] taking a long journey, and on their return, we meet them with increased joy.

—Joseph Smith, Discourse, 16 April 1843, as reported by Willard Richards
The time will soon arrive when the trumpet shall sound. When we depart, we shall hail our mothers, fathers, friends, and all whom we love, who have fallen asleep in Jesus. ... It will be an eternity of felicity.

—Joseph Smith, Discourse, 7 April 1844, as reported in *Times and Seasons*

I know in whom I trust; I stand upon the rock; the floods cannot, no, they shall not, overthrow me.

—Joseph Smith, letter to William Smith, 18 December 1835

My son, peace be unto thy soul; thine adversity and thine afflictions shall be but a small moment; and then, if thou endure it well, God shall exalt thee on high.

—D&C 121:7-8



Please scan the QR code to view Eric's obituary and program online.

