
RODNEY ALAN GILES

Rodney Alan Giles, 63, of Overland Park, KS, died peacefully on December 4, 2010, after enduring an extended illness and dialysis for six years. Rodney was born on October 30, 1947, in Kansas City, MO. He graduated from Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, KS, in 1965, where he participated in music and drama, playing Henry Higgins in the school production of "My Fair Lady." After earning his Bachelor of Music in organ performance as a student of Bethel Knoche at the Conservatory of Music, University of Missouri, Kansas City, he went on to receive his Master of Arts in organ performance from [Ohio State University](#) in Columbus as a student of Gordon Wilson. From 1973 to 1989, Rodney was Minister of Music and Organist at First Baptist Church of Kansas City. He was College Organist and Adjunct Instructor at Park College (now University) in Parkville, MO, and University Organist and organ instructor at Ottawa University, Ottawa, KS. Rodney was a staff organist at the RLDS (now Community of Christ) Auditorium, Independence, MO in 1967 and again from 1973 until 1985. A member of the Greater Kansas City Chapter of the American Guild of Organists since 1962, he was Dean in 1978-79. For five summers in the 1980s, Rodney was on staff at the American Institute of Musical Studies, Graz, Austria, which prepared American singers and instrumentalists for careers in European opera. Rodney moved to New York City in 1989 where he was Organist/Director of Music at Hansen Place Central United Methodist Church in Brooklyn, and later Director of Music at West Park Presbyterian Church in Manhattan. From 1996 to 2000 he was the presiding pastor, holding the office of elder, in New York's Manhattan congregation of the Community of Christ. He kept a home in Cherry Grove, NY, where he played for summer church services and acted in plays, including his 2007 solo show, "Brokeback Mountain and Me." From 2001 he spent winters in FL, where he served as minister of music for First Congregational Church of Fort Lauderdale. In 2008 he moved to Aurora, CO; and to Overland Park in 2009. Everywhere Rodney lived, he made dear friends. He enjoyed traveling, sailing, going to movies, and collecting classic television comedies. Rodney is preceded in death by his father, Jed K. Giles, Sr. He is survived by his mother, Gloria "Raw" Giles, sister Deborah Rushfelt (the Honorable Gerald Rushfelt), brother Jed Giles, Jr., sister Shannon Giles (Lee Estingoy), nieces Elizabeth Page (Zaki Hafid) and Melissa Giles, and nephews Spencer Giles and Daniel Estingoy. He also leaves behind his beloved dog, Stoney. A memorial service will be held at the Mission Road Congregation of the Community of Christ, 79th & Mission Road, Prairie Village, on Saturday, December 11, at 11 a.m. The family will greet visitors there from 9:30 a.m. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions to Wayside Waifs (www.waysidewaifs.org) or to The Rodney Giles Endowment Fund at the American Guild of Organists, Greater Kansas City Chapter (www.kcago.com).

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