

Radio Host Jim Leek goes home to Glory after Florida incident

Local Christian Radio personality James Fabian "Jim" Leek passed away unexpectedly January 29 whilst on vacation in the Florida Keys. He was 58.

Jim Leek was a familiar presence on the Greater Toronto Radio dial for more than two decades. It was reported that he had been scuba diving with a qualified instructor in Key Largo, and after he returned to the boat he became unresponsive. After receiving CPR on the boat and then taken to a hospital, he was pronounced dead.

Jim Leek began his career in Christian Radio in 1994 as the afternoon host of "Celebrate with Jim Leek" on CJMR 1320. CJMR had recently started airing Christian programming during daytime, and Celebrate anchored the programming with an afternoon drivetime show featuring Christian music and interviews.

In 2001, CJMR's owners launched JOY1250, a 24-hour Christian Radio venture, and Jim went on to host the morning program "The Breakfast Show", while also serving as the station's Music Director.

He also emceed many local Gospel concerts and church events. After his speaking duties, he would often spend time with fans at the JOY1250 booth.

After receiving Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour at Toronto's Queensway Cathedral, Jim served in many local churches and ministries. He served as a youth pastor, and also worked with the Christian Broadcasting Associates and on the steering committee of the Toronto March for Jesus.

Jim was a Christian performing artist with diverse musical tastes and a particular affection for the Jazz genre. He was a tireless supporter of Christian music and its musicians, serving for a number of years on the governing board of the Canadian Gospel Music Association Canada and also its successor, GMA Canada.

At a February 21st memorial organized by close friends, many of those whose lives he touched gathered to celebrate his life and his contribution to Southern Ontario's Christian community.

The Christian Herald's Founder and Publisher Fazal Karim, Jr. told the crowd how he and Jim had built up an enduring friendship after launching their Christian media careers in 1994. Karim shared anecdotes about their times in ministry, including a story about how Jim had taken on the task of securing a temporary radio frequency for the Toronto March for Jesus in the late 90s, and ended up deejaying the massive Downtown Toronto worship event

was a patient and gracious listener, compassionate with his words, and a person with keen spiritual insight and wisdom.

Jim loved football (which he played in his younger days) and was a fan of very spicy food. He disliked the cold winters, often telling his radio listeners of his interest in starting a support group for those with similar feelings about the cold winter months. He posted daily inspirational



Jim Leek (1956-2015)

quotes and Bible passages for his listeners. He also had a terrific sense of humour and enjoyed using puns and jokes on his show, each of which was as likely to make his listeners groan as much as laugh.

Jim's last post on Facebook seems prescient: "*Eating breakfast at McDonald's with jazz playing in the background. I must be close to heaven*", he wrote on January 22.

Griffith saw this stage being set for Jim's promotion to Glory. "Jim loved the entire experience, said he felt such peace under the water; the colours, the marine life, the quietness, the sense of God's presence. Jim had said the experience was what he imagined Heaven was like. Basking in the warm Florida sun, far from the cold Toronto winter, being able to scuba dive again and relive the experience and peace he had enjoyed so much. And then to emerge from the water...and to seamlessly transition into paradise, into the very presence of Jesus himself. I don't think he could have asked for a more perfect homecoming."

Born in 1956 in Lachine, Quebec, Jim was preceded in death by his parents Gilbert Watson Leek and Theresa Cecelia Leek, and brother Robert. He is survived by his sister Corinne, his sister-in-law Fulvia and his nephew David.

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how he and Jim had built up an enduring friendship after launching their Christian media careers in 1994. Karim shared anecdotes about their times in ministry, including a story about how Jim had taken on the task of securing a temporary radio frequency for the Toronto March for Jesus in the late 90s, and ended up deejaying the massive Downtown Toronto worship event from the very top of the CN Tower.

Longtime friend Darren Griffith spoke of Jim's contribution to the formative years of his Christian life, and testified that Jim

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For most of his radio career, Jim ended each show with a quoting the words of St. Augustine of Hippo. In his soothing baritone voice, he would gently remind listeners that "Jesus Christ is not valued at all, unless He is valued above all."

Point well taken, and also well lived.

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