



# Delmo Reed Payne

JAN 8, 2026



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## **Delmo Reed Payne**

JAN 8, 2026

**D**elmo Reed Payne - husband, father, grandfather, educator, entrepreneur, coach, cattleman, rancher, pilot, teacher, mentor, staunch businessman, and world-class encourager - went home to be with his Lord and Savior on January 8, 2026. He's Survived by Wilmuth Creekmore Payne, the love of his life for over sixty years; his beloved daughters, Emma Kate Mikels and Molly Ainsworth, whose husbands, Brad Mikels and Brad Ainsworth, were like sons to Delmo; and six grandchildren who delighted his heart at every turn.

Born on August 8, 1944, Delmo was the son of Neva Mae Christian and Mack Reed (Bunt) Payne. A native of Tupelo and a proud graduate of Mississippi State University, Delmo offered the world his unique brand of servant leadership, unfiltered truth, and loving guidance for 81 full and fruitful years. He understood the value of timely affirmation and the power of personnel transformation, so he constantly pointed out the gifts he saw in other people and encouraged them to make the most of every opportunity. His leadership was relational, practical, and paternal. It was easy to fix your eyes on Delmo's example because his eyes were always fixed on Jesus. He sincerely loved others, and his compassionate, shepherding influence changed people for the better.

Delmos's life left an indelible imprint on the residents of Hamilton and Nettleton, countless students, athletes, and colleagues, the manufactured housing industry, the Santa Gertrudis cattle family, and most of all, the Creekmore and Payne families. He was a member of the Alabama Manufactured Housing Association Hall of fame, the Mississippi Manufactured Housing Association Hall of Fame, and the Santa Gertrude's Breeders Hall of Fame - but Delmo prioritized the truth of Matthew 16:26: it's no good for a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul. So, while Delmo sowed into many fields over the course of his life - and while the harvest from all of that sowing was abundant - his most treasured field was made up of the



family members the Lord entrusted to him. He tended that field with everything he had, and the character, compassion, and consistency, that's so evident in this grandchildren - Reed, Garrett, Caroline, Warren, Will, and Stewart - is a reflection of who Delmo was and what he poured into the generations behind him. His life was a testament to his faith and commitment to Christ. He wholly embodied the fruits of the spirit in Galatians 5.

One of Delmo's friends remembers that "Delmo Payne was always one of the largest guys in the barn, and he had the heart to match. He was soft spoken, but you always listened to what he said. He cared deeply for others and was always intentional to check in...one of the most generous people you'd ever meet." Truly everything about Delmo felt larger than life: his stature, his presence, his humility, his hugs, his courage, and his deep affection for people. If you ever made him laugh, you haven't forgotten it. That booming, infectious chuckle - complete with a smile that seemed to stretch for miles - had the power to transform the worst day. He was an ever-present and intentional listener who offered guidance to so many over the years, providing wisdom and truth. His word was his bond, and he was never inclined to break it. Character and integrity mattered deeply to him; he was a man who practiced what he preached.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Mack Reed Payne and Neva Mae Christian Payne, and his sister-in-law Elizabeth Rains and Dr. Manrin Rains.

He is survived by his wife, Wilmuth of 60 years, by his children Emma Kate Mikels (Brad) of Tupelo, Molly Ainsworth (Brad) of Birmingham; by his grandchildren Reed Mikels (Lucy), Caroline Mikels, Garrett Mikels, Warren Ainsworth, Will Ainsworth, and Stewart Ainsworth; his brother-in-laws Dr. Sam Creekmore (Barbara) and John Creekmore (Sheila); nephews Sam Creekmore (Warner), Ben Creekmore (Penny), Matthew Creekmore (Leigh Ann), Mark Creekmore (Lilly); nieces Melanie Creekmore (Andy) and a host of great nieces and nephews.

A memorial service honoring Delmo's remarkable life will be held Tuesday, January 13, 2026 at First Baptist Church in Hamilton, Alabama. Visitation will be from 11am-1 pm with the service immediately following. Private burial will be at Auburn Cemetery in Tupelo. Pallbearers are Brad Ainsworth, Warren Ainsworth, Will




Ainsworth , Brad Mikels, Garrett Mikels, and Reed Mikels. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the National Junior Santa Gertrudis Association (checks payable to NJSGA and mailed to SGBI, PO Boxd 1257, Kingville, TX 78364, <https://santagertrudis.com>, an organization that Delmo loved- and where he heavily invested his time for so many years.


There's a passage in the Old Testament that offers a sweet perspective in the midst of loss. In Genesis 26, Issac visits a valley where his father, Abraham, dug wells many years before. Isaac reopens those wells , and there's water in there. It's the provision of a father In the life of the next generation, and it's a reminder that, In so many ways , Delmo Payne was a well digger. Not in the literal sense. But in his personal life, his family life, and his spiritual life, Delmo dug deep. And even though his appointed time on earth has come to a close he has left a well that continues to overflow with Living Water. Delmo's family and friends will get to sit by that well and draw from it for the rest of their lives. The Lord will use it to comfort and sustain them. What an extraordinary gift of grace.

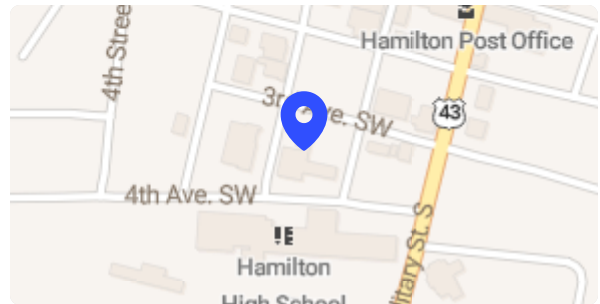


## Visitation


 **Tuesday**, January 13, 2026

 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM CT


 **First Baptist Church**  
430 1st St SW, Hamilton, AL 35570, Hamilton AL 35570

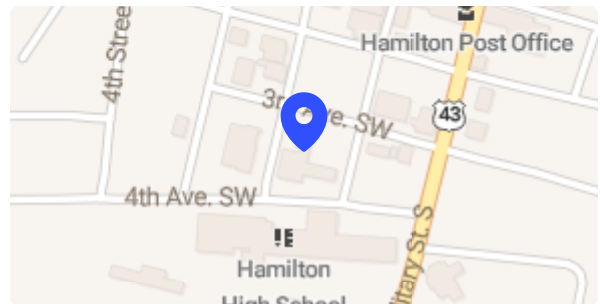


## Service

 **Tuesday**, January 13, 2026

 1:00 PM CT

 **First Baptist Church**  
430 1st St SW, Hamilton, AL 35570, Hamilton AL 35570





## Tribute Wall

**Delmo Reed Payne**



**Woody Magers** posted:

I enjoyed working with Delmo when we were at Nettleton High School Woody and Judy Magers

January 12 at 12:13 PM



**David Jessup And Jessup Housing** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Delmo.



January 12 at 12:04 PM



**David Jessup And Jessup Housing** sent a Strength & Solace Spray to the Payne family.



January 12 at 12:04 PM



# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Delmo by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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