



Attorney James E. Ferguson II

October 10, 1942 - July 21, 2025

James E. Ferguson was invited to practice with Julius Chambers in 1967 after he graduated from Columbia Law School. He began practicing with Chambers and Adam Stein with whom he shared a desk in the small unheated library of Chamber's first office. A year later, they formed the law firm Chambers Stein Ferguson & Lanning. The firm was the first integrated law firm in the State of North Carolina and was among the first integrated firms throughout the Southeast. The firm established itself as a leader in the area of civil rights, employment, voting, education, criminal, personal injury and medical malpractice. Ferguson became the titular leader of the firm after Chambers left the firm to become Director Counsel for the NAACP-Legal Defense and Education Fund in 1984.

Ferguson's interest in civil rights work had its beginning in Asheville, North Carolina where he was born and raised by his parents, James E. Ferguson, Sr. and Nina Ferguson. The youngest of seven children, Ferguson began his lifelong passion of advocacy for others while in high school where he and other young African Americans joined forces to demand equal rights and equality in Asheville's public schools and public accommodations. He carried that fiery advocacy with him as he worked all over the State of North Carolina on behalf of accused persons, injured and discriminated victims. He is known for a number of cases including the Wilmington Ten and Darryl Hunt to name a few. From the 1980's he was the go-to lawyer for police misconduct and excessive force cases. His exemplary work on medical negligence and other

personal injury cases led him to be invited to join The Inner Circle, a group of highly accomplished lawyers limited to only two persons from each state. In addition to his work representing clients, Ferguson served the legal profession tirelessly as a member of various committees of the North Carolina State Bar, North Carolina Advocates for Justice, North Carolina Association of Black Lawyers, NAACP-LDF Cooperating Attorney, National Institute for Trial Advocacy, ACLU, Black Lawyers Association of South Africa, and the Innocence Commission. He was an early advocate of the decriminalization of marijuana and crack/cocaine with an emphasis on treatment for addiction rather than jail time. His study and travels across the country and globe helped shape a broad view of the world and reinforced his belief that one should keep an open mind and act based on facts and what is fair and just to the individual and to society. Along the way, he grew to understand and embrace the African term ubuntu which translates to “I cannot be the best that I can be until you are the best that you can be.”

Fergie is survived by his brother, William Ferguson, three children, James E. “Jay” Ferguson, III, Taj Ferguson and Kali Ferguson; four grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

The Ferguson Chambers & Sumter family is honored and privileged to have had the opportunity to work with Fergie for over 57 years. He served as a lawyer here longer than anyone else. His guidance and support over the years has helped shape the professional lives and careers of scores of support staff, young law clerks, associates and partners. For that we are most thankful. Most of all, we are grateful for his kindness, generosity and compassion. He will be missed.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

AUG 7. 12:00 PM (ET)

The Park Church
6029 Beatties Ford Rd
Charlotte, NC 28216-2205
(704) 392-1681

Tribute Wall

AT

“ I remember Mr Ferguson being a very wise man and as a young girl and neighbor would take the time to listen to his words. He had a distinctive voice, and tone that made you pay attention. I babysat his children and never knew he was such an iconic man of greatness until I matured and went to college. We hosted Mr. Ferguson for dinner a couple of times at my home near Cambridge, Massachusetts when he would come to teach at Harvard. He would ask thoughtful questions about my life and my job never speaking of his extensive milestones or accomplishments. He was a humble servant for those who needed a voice and the world is so much better for his being in it. His legacy is vast and in his obituary enlightened me to even more of his accomplishments. My sincere sympathy to Jay, Taj and Kali as you gently let your father go. He will be with you forever .

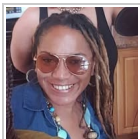
Amelia Turner - August 07, 2025 at 03:45 PM

MM

“ On behalf of The Late Rev. Phillip & Dora Mixon We convey heartfelt prayers and condolences to Emeritus Attorney James E. Ferguson, II family during your bereavement.



Miss Roslyn Mixon - August 07, 2025 at 02:58 PM



“ Sincere condolences to the family. Yolanda Tucker-Hunter and family pray for strength.



Yolanda Tucker-Hunter - August 07, 2025 at 01:50 PM

DT

“ *Attorney Ferguson was a gifted person and an attorney committed to excellence while showing humility and gratitude. Thanks for his courage, wisdom, and kindness.*
Dr. Herman Thomas

Dr. Herman Thomas - August 07, 2025 at 12:08 PM

BG

“ *To the Family you have my deepish sympathyies and condolences . I was a pleasure to know him and an honor to have him as a friend. I know that at his time you are experiencing sorry however there should be comfort in that you experienced the best. His legacy will live forever. May he rest in peace . _Bobby Gibbs*



Bobby Gibbs - August 07, 2025 at 10:49 AM

DC

“ *Dr Michael Crawley lit a candle in memory of James Ferguson*



Dr Michael Crawley - August 07, 2025 at 09:34 AM

BG

“ I wish to extent my deepish sympathies and condolences to the family . My friendship with the Ferguson's family dates back to his roots in Asheville NC where our families were friends. It was at North Carolina Central at Durham that even one with limited sight could see the leadership and greatness that he processed. The powerful bird, the eagle that represented that spirit and power of the college becasue it was no ordinary barn yard bird was also in Ferguson. I know that you as a Family are experiencing sorry however you should have some comfort that you were blessed with the experince of the best. He will be missed and may he rest in peace. _ Bobby Gibbs



Bobby Gibbs - August 07, 2025 at 09:15 AM

TA

“ Thank you for being not only an inspiration and mentor, but a friend to so many of us who needed it.

The Lily and Rose Tribute Spray is from all of us in The John S. Leary Bar Association of Black Attorneys. Thank you for all that you've done for us.

The John S. Leary Bar Association - August 05, 2025 at 12:29 PM



“ Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Attorney James E. Ferguson II.



August 05, 2025 at 11:45 AM

AL

“ I went back to Charlotte to visit after working for Chambers, Ferguson in the early 80s as a law student.

When I visited Fergie, he said, “Thank you for remembering us”.

Here he was, a great man and a famous lawyer saying that to an unknown new lawyer.

That’s the kind of man he was – so kind and humble.

That was probably over 40 years ago, but I have never forgotten.

He was truly one of the greats. He changed my life forever.

My deepest condolences to family and all who loved him.

Arlene Lieberman



Arlene L Lieberman - August 03, 2025 at 10:34 PM

AF

Deepest condolences to the Ferguson family. Thank you for sharing Fergie with all of us for so long. His legacy will live on and the memories will always be cherished. With Love and Gratitude ❤️
Annetta Foard

Annetta Foard - August 07, 2025 at 07:48 AM

WR

“ Walter & Joe Alice Ruff lit a candle in memory of James Ferguson



Walter & Joe Alice Ruff - August 03, 2025 at 04:21 PM

DN

“ *Attorney Ferguson was a Man among Men. Truly a blessing to so many. So thankful for all the lives he touched - especially for the Wilmington Ten. Will continue to pray for his loving family.* 💔



Danyce Dicks, Wilmington NC - August 03, 2025 at 06:55 AM

DB

“ *God is still in control*



Darrell Barber - August 02, 2025 at 09:20 PM

DW

“ *David W. purchased the Sentiments of Serenity S pray for the family of Attorney James E. Ferguson II.*



David W. - July 31, 2025 at 10:39 AM

AV

“ *Andre D. Vann sent a virtual gift in memory of James Ferguson*



Andre D. Vann - July 30, 2025 at 03:25 PM

PP

“ *Phyllis T Price lit a candle in memory of James Ferguson*



Phyllis T Price - July 30, 2025 at 07:19 AM

AI

“ *Anita B Ingram lit a candle in memory of James Ferguson*



Anita B Ingram - July 28, 2025 at 08:08 PM

HJ

“ *A husband, a father, a leader, a servant, a mentor, a man who possessed the passion, intellect and commitment to justice that could win over the hearts and minds of so many that opposed true equitable opportunities for, so often, those most in need... Fergie was all these things and more. Attorney James E. Ferguson II, your impact in this world was both meaningful and vast. Your legacy is one to be studied and your works sought to be emulated. Thank you for all you did for so many, for so long.*

Harold Cogdell

Harold Cogdell Jr - July 28, 2025 at 10:26 AM

RE

“ *My heartfelt condolences to the family. I am a friend, and will miss seeing attorney Ferguson, we always showed up at the grocery store the same day. Rev. Sarah Ellis*

Rev. Sarah M. Ellis - July 27, 2025 at 07:58 PM

TF

“ *The Chambers Family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Attorney James E. Ferguson II.*



The Chambers Family - July 27, 2025 at 11:22 AM

RP

“ *One of the kindest men I have ever known. You will surely be missed. May you forever Rest in Paradise.*



Rosie M. Porter-Irby - July 27, 2025 at 11:02 AM

JJ

“ *Fergie was one of a kind. Our prayers and love goes out to the Ferguson family.*



James and Jessie Jordan - July 27, 2025 at 09:03 AM

AD

“ My condolences for your loss. May God comfort you in this season. Rest well Sir! 🙏
🙏



Antoinette Dixon - July 26, 2025 at 10:55 AM

ED

“ Condolences to the family of this great man. I will forever appreciate his saying to me "Those who know you know the truth." May his soul now rest in eternal peace.

Evelyn Dove - July 26, 2025 at 05:37 AM

JM

“ Honoring a great man who fought for others .He is now resting in Heavenly Peace. Thank God for life he lived. Praying 🙏 for the family.



Julia Young Mccollie - July 24, 2025 at 08:00 PM

KM

He left so many wonderful memories. A Great n powerful attorney that fought for the rights of others. Gone but never forgotten. A life well lived.

K Ferguson Mccarter - July 29, 2025 at 05:57 PM

MJ

I remember asking you to show that NCCU sprit during a Sign of The Time At Friendship, you held those hands in shape of Eagle wings. You have blessed a lot of people in your time here on earth, now take you rest. Prayers to the Family.
Deacon Merl Jones

Merl Jones - August 07, 2025 at 11:02 AM

BJ

“ *Mr Ferguson was a good friend a great attorney You rest in peace you will be greatly missed your loss is a shock to many*

Berwyn Johnson - July 24, 2025 at 05:05 PM

DB

“ *Doris Bowe lit a candle in memory of James Ferguson*



Doris Bowe - July 24, 2025 at 02:23 PM

BE

“ *Brenda Edwards sent a virtual gift in memory of James Ferguson*



Brenda Edwards - July 24, 2025 at 08:46 AM

JD

“ *Judy Dewberry lit a candle in memory of James Ferguson*



Judy Dewberry - July 24, 2025 at 08:06 AM

HJ

“ *One of God's great creation, may he rest in peace.*



Herbert Spicer, Jr. - July 23, 2025 at 08:54 PM

SC

“ *Mr. Ferguson fought the good fight for many years. May he now rest in peace. His memory will always remain.*
Steve Cherry

Steve Cherry - July 23, 2025 at 01:29 PM

BC

“ *Betty Collins lit a candle in memory of James Ferguson*



Betty Collins - July 23, 2025 at 11:51 AM

HH

“ Jim was a great lawyer and a great man. He has made a lasting legacy and his efforts to make the lives of all person's count is immeasurable. I especially appreciate the time he took to talk to my youngest son, Matt Van Hoy, about Brown V. Board and about how lawyers, including his firm, helped all of realize the promise of that decision. Jim enriched us all. Hank Van Hoy

Hank Van Hoy - July 22, 2025 at 05:11 PM

LF

“ Condolences to the family and friends of Mr James Ferguson



Lawrence T Belton sr and family - July 22, 2025 at 11:26 AM

CG

“ My thoughts and prayers are with Mr. Ferguson's family and friends during this difficult time.



C. L. Givens - July 22, 2025 at 07:53 AM

CW

“ Cynthia Williams lit a candle in memory of James Ferguson



Cynthia Williams - July 22, 2025 at 07:05 AM

CW

“ *Mr Ferguson, was a man above men. He was great at every thing, he did. He is already missed.*

Cynthia Williams - July 22, 2025 at 07:04 AM

MB

“ *One of my mentors and great friends! I'm so sorry for your loss! May God take care of you during this most difficult time. I will keep all of you in prayer 🙏*

Mark Bibbs - July 21, 2025 at 10:41 PM

KS

“ *The love I have for this guy...job wel done...your barbershop man Karl sims for years ❤️ god makes no mistakes*

Karl sims - July 21, 2025 at 05:27 PM

AG

“ *He was the best Black lawyer and best to lead his ppl*

Alberta Williams Goodson - July 21, 2025 at 05:03 PM

IP

*Going to miss him. He was like a dad to me. He always made sure I was taking care of at the Excelsior
Love you . The Queen of the Excelsior. Mrs Iris Pompey*

Iris Pompey - July 22, 2025 at 06:29 PM

TM

I'm blessed to have known you and all that you stood for in the Community and the City of Charlotte.

Thelma R Mungo - July 25, 2025 at 08:48 PM



I really miss my friend and mentor

T Michael Todd - January 31 at 10:13 PM