



Published on NCSE (<https://ncse.com>)

[Home](#) > D. James Kennedy dies

SHARE TWEET EMAIL [PRINT](#) [1]

[NCSE Staff](#) [2]

09.05.2007

[D. James Kennedy dies](#) [3]

D. James Kennedy, the megachurch pastor and religious broadcaster, died on September 5, 2007, at the age of 76 in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, according to the *Washington Post's* [obituary](#) [4] (September 5, 2007). Born in 1930 in Augusta, Georgia, and reared mainly in Chicago, he was managing a dancing school in Tampa when he experienced a religious conversion, leading him to earn a divinity degree from Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. (He later also earned a master's degree in theology from the Chicago Graduate School of Theology and a Ph.D. from New York University, with a 1979 dissertation on the history of Evangelism Explosion, a program which he himself developed for training laypeople to spread the gospel.) In 1959, Kennedy returned to Florida, where he founded Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church, now housed in a 2500-seat edifice in Fort Lauderdale. He expanded his efforts to the airwaves with the founding of Coral Ridge Ministries in 1974; it is presently claimed to reach three million people across the United States. He also was responsible for Knox Theological Seminary (founded in 1989), the Center for Reclaiming America for Christ (founded in 1996 and disbanded in 2007), which aimed to recruit conservative Christians for grassroots activism, and the D. James Kennedy Center for Christian Statesmanship (founded in 1995), which engages in outreach to public servants in Washington DC.

A dedicated young-earth creationist, Kennedy often preached against evolution; in his *Anti-Evolution: A Reader's Guide to Writings Before and After Darwin*, Tom McIver describes a 1986 pamphlet based on one of his sermons as "delivered with great confidence and authority, yet ... filled with highly misleading distortions and outright falsehoods." Between 2004 and 2007, the Creation Studies Institute (founded in 1988 by Tom DeRosa) was part of Coral Ridge Ministries. Kennedy also supported the young-earth creationist movement at large, delivering the keynote address at the 1986 International Creationist Conference and serving as the honorary chairman of Answers in Genesis's Creation Museum. Yet he was open to promoting "intelligent design" creationism as well, featuring Phillip Johnson, Michael Behe, and

William Dembski on his radio broadcasts, and selling a variety of "intelligent design" material through Coral Ridge Ministries. Kennedy's diatribes commonly emphasized the evil supposedly due to the evolutionary sciences, culminating in the 2006 polemic "Darwin's Deadly Legacy," a broadcast featuring "14 scholars, scientists, and authors who outline the grim consequences of Darwin's theory of evolution and show how his theory fueled Hitler's ovens." The show was [denounced](#) [5] as "outrageous and shoddy" by the Anti-Defamation League, and Francis Collins, who was unwittingly interviewed for it, described it as "utterly misguided and inflammatory."

[Anti-Evolution](#) [6]

[2007](#) [7]

[National](#) [8]

[+ read](#) [3]

Source URL: <https://ncse.com/news/2007/09/d-james-kennedy-dies-001310#comment-0>

Links

[1] <https://ncse.com/printpdf/13185>

[2] <https://ncse.com/users/ncse-staff>

[3] <https://ncse.com/news/2007/09/d-james-kennedy-dies-001310>

[4] <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/05/AR2007090502441.html>

[5] http://www.adl.org/PresRele/HolNa_52/4877_52.htm

[6] <https://ncse.com/news/anti-evolution>

[7] <https://ncse.com/news/2007>

[8] <https://ncse.com/news/national>