



Denny Roy Burris

July 21, 1946 - January 12, 2026

UPDATE- Service rescheduled due to weather. See service information below.

It is with deep love and grateful hearts that we announce the passing of Denny Roy Burris, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, firefighter, chaplain, pastor, and faithful servant of God. While we grieve his absence, we rejoice knowing Denny has gone home to be with his Savior—whole, restored, and at peace.

Denny was born on July 21, 1946, in Dallas, Texas, to Homer Burris and Louise Massie and received his eternal reward on January 12, 2026. Throughout his life, he was known for his courage, compassion, steady presence, and deep commitment to serving others.

Denny met the love of his life, Nancy Sandling, in middle school. They dated all through school graduating together from Lancaster High School in 1964. They were married on March 5, 1965, and shared 60 years of marriage, building a life rooted in faith, laughter, and steadfast devotion.

He began his career serving the city of Dallas as a firefighter in 1968, answering the call when others ran from danger. He understood the risks, long hours, and weight of the badge, yet served with pride and humility. That same

heart of service led him into ministry. He earned his Bachelor of Arts from Dallas Baptist University in 1976. While earning his Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Denny worked for the Lancaster Fire Department from 1979 to 1981 where his loyal brothers there often covered for him while he went to class. While at Lancaster FD and going to seminary, Denny began his role as a volunteer chaplain for Dallas.

In 1982, Denny was appointed Chaplain of the Dallas Fire Department, becoming a steady presence in moments of fear, loss, and uncertainty. He was instrumental in the creation of the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) program, helping establish care systems that continue to support firefighters today. He also served as Chaplain for the Texas State Association of Firefighters for 20 years.

After retiring from the Dallas Fire Department, Denny pastored Grace Community Church in Mabank, Texas, for 10 years, continuing his calling as a shepherd of hearts. His compassion extended beyond the fire service and church through years of involvement with Denton State School, organizing joyful outings for residents, and through his dedicated support of the Muscular Dystrophy Association, particularly the MDA–Dallas Firefighter Program.

Denny's life of service was recognized with numerous honors, including the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Friends of the Dallas Fire Department and an award from the Muscular Dystrophy Association for his advocacy and support. Though appreciated, recognition was never his goal—people were.

To those who knew him professionally, Denny Burris was a trusted voice and quiet source of comfort. To his family—especially his grandchildren—he was simply Pappy, a man who modeled service without seeking recognition, leadership through kindness, and faith lived out daily. His legacy lives on not only in the departments and churches he served, but in the lives he touched

and the values he passed down.

Denny was preceded in death by his parents, Homer Burris and Louise Massie; his brother, Bruce Burris; his father-in-law, Jack Sandling; his mother-in-law, Dera Sandling; his stepmother, Novilene Burris; and his nephew, Derek Lee.

Denny is survived by his beloved wife of 60 years, Nancy Burris; his children, Kirk Burris and his wife Tammi, Kristi Courtney and her husband Tim, and Keith Burris and his wife Mariann. He was a proud grandfather to Mindy Hensley and her husband Jody, Aaron Gray and his wife Jennifer, Seth Burris, and Ellie Burris; and a joyful great-grandfather to Haylee Stephens, Austin Hensley, Jayden Gray, and Jacey Gray. He is also survived by his sister, Carole Russell; his sister-in-law, Lisa Lee, and her husband Jerry; his nephews Jimmy, Ronnie, and Terry Russell; his niece, Gina Maier; his stepsisters, Kitty McCommas and Connie Couch; his cousins, Boyd Burris, Bobby Burris, Bill Burris, Marilyn Terry, Marsha Brown, Jackie Thigpen, Cathy Martin, and Judy Knight; plus many grand and great-grand nieces and nephews, extended family members, and friends.

Denny's life was a testament to faith, service, and love—and he will always be remembered not just for what he did, but for who he was.

On behalf of the family, a heartfelt thank you is given to the staff and all of Denny's caregivers at Arabella Memory Care in Red Oak as well as the loving care received from Trinity Hospice CNA, Mae and RN LaSondra. We are forever grateful.

A visitation will be held from 5:00pm to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, January 30, 2026
at

First Baptist Church of Lancaster.

A celebration Denny's life will be at 11:00am on Saturday, January 31, 2026 also at First Baptist Lancaster. DFD Honors will be rendered immediately following the service at Edgewood Cemetery in Lancaster.

In lieu of flowers, the family request memorials be made in Denny's name to the American Heart Association or the American Cancer Society.

For those who may not be able to attend the service, the live stream link is below:

<https://galliganmedia.com/funerals/remembering-denny-burris/>

Cemetery Details

Edgewood Cemetery

695 Nokomis Road
Lancaster, TX

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 30. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church
305 E. Third
Lancaster, TX 75146

Celebration of Life

JAN 31. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church
305 E. Third
Lancaster, TX 75146

Tribute Wall



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Denny Roy Burris.*



February 06 at 05:29 PM



“ *Kenneth and Joyce Knotts planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Denny Roy Burris.*

Kenneth and Joyce Knotts - February 06 at 05:29 PM



“ *I was so sorry to hear about Denny Roy, my classmate (LHS '64), my teammate, and best of all, my friend. My sincere condolences to dear Nancy and their wonderful family. I have never read a more amazing life's story of service and dedication than for Denny Roy. I can still remember the times we shared in high school, times for the most part of laughter and fun. In retrospect, I am not surprised by the wonderful life's path that Denny and Nancy followed. I feel privileged to have called him friend. May God's Blessing be on you all as I am sure it is on Denny's spirit. With love, Larry Schenk.*

Larry Schenk - February 01 at 06:18 PM

WM

“ Denny meant so much to our family. He helped my mother and the rest of our family cope with the loss of my father, Ed Metters. During that time, Denny made sure none of us kids would ever forget the love and support the Dallas Fire Department has for one another.

He continued to support my mother when she needed it most and went on to marry both Jodi and me. Denny was always there for the most important moments of our lives, cheering us on every step of the way. The ringing of the bell for the fallen firefighters kept us connected to the fire department and reminded us of the deep bond shared among its members.

I want to sincerely thank Denny and Nancy for all of their love and support throughout the years. Denny, you will be missed by many but never forgotten.

We love you.
— The Metters Family

Wendi Metters - January 31 at 02:06 PM

SA

“ Scott A. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Denny Roy Burris.

Scott A. - January 30 at 07:46 PM

AF

“ Angel, Victor and family purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Denny Roy Burris.



Angel, Victor and family - January 30 at 12:34 PM

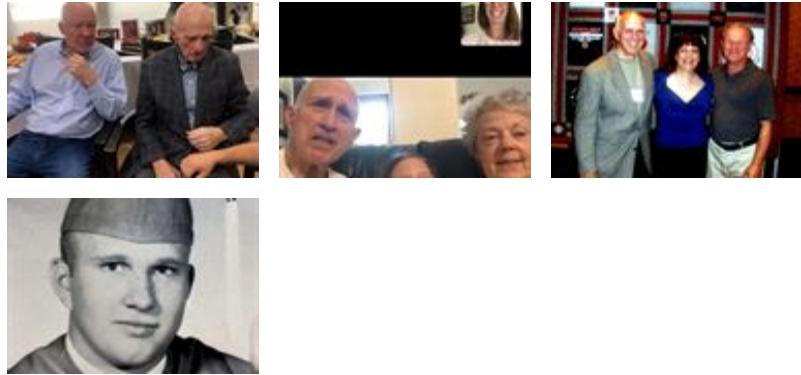


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Angel, Victor and family - January 30 at 12:34 PM



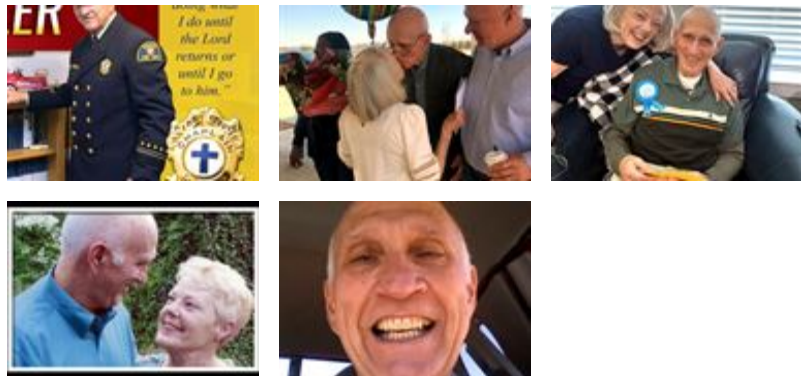
“ 4 files added to the album Life Tributes



Byrum Funeral Home - January 29 at 03:42 PM



“ 377 files added to the album Life Tributes



Byrum Funeral Home - January 29 at 12:24 PM

EC

“ Ed, Kitty, Carrie, Todd and Carina purchased the *Beautiful in Blue* for the family of Denny Roy Burris.



Ed, Kitty, Carrie, Todd and Carina - January 21 at 04:46 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket* was purchased for the family of Denny Roy Burris.



January 21 at 12:28 PM

JO

“ Jean and Joel Oxford planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Denny Roy Burris.

Jean and Joel Oxford - January 21 at 12:28 PM

TF

“ The Colaluca Family purchased the *Full Of Love Bouquet* for the family of Denny Roy Burris.



The Colaluca Family - January 19 at 11:13 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Denny Roy Burris.*



January 19 at 09:50 AM



“ *Peggy S. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Denny Roy Burris.*

Peggy S. - January 19 at 09:50 AM



“ *Will never forget Denny's sparkling eyes and beautiful smile. Always so welcoming with his laughing voice. Cheryl Dougherty (Diane Cheshier-Cash)*

Cheryl Diane Cheshier-Cash - January 18 at 09:51 PM



“ *The Bodle's purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Denny Roy Burris.*



The Bodle's - January 18 at 03:43 PM

KS

“ *Karen Philbrick Sanford*



Karen Philbrick Sanford - January 17 at 11:49 AM



“ *We are so very sorry to hear of Denny Roy's passing. His smile was like a shining star that lit up every room he entered. May your wonderful memories of him bring you comfort and joy. John and Monica May*



Monica May - January 16 at 11:32 PM

EP

“ *Evelyn P. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Denny Roy Burris.*

Evelyn P. - January 16 at 05:18 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Denny Roy Burris.*



January 16 at 02:15 PM

AD

“ *Denny was a very special Decon and friend. He will be missed.* ”



Annette Durand - January 16 at 10:30 AM



“ *Denny was truly a remarkable man. It was an honor and a privilege to be one of the ones to help care for him during his time at Arabella. My deepest condolences and prayers go out to Nancy and the entire family.* ”



Crystan Mendoza - January 16 at 07:29 AM

EH

“ *Elaine P. Harris lit a candle in memory of Denny Burris* ”



Elaine P. Harris - January 16 at 06:42 AM

LP

“ *Denny was the best and held a special place in my family's heart. He touched so many people in such a positive way. My love & sympathy to Nancy & the family.* ”

ILynda Penny - January 15 at 06:21 PM

KR

The first time I met Denny I fell in love with him. He was one of the kindest people I ever met. He always shared a hug and a smile with me. I am so blessed to be able to call Denny a friend.

Kim Roppolo - January 16 at 10:23 AM

JP

“ *Denny was always there when our family lost a loved one. His compassion was heartfelt, and his words of comfort were meaningful. We will miss him.*

Jon Philbrick - January 15 at 05:00 PM

SE

“ *Selinda lit a candle in memory of Denny Burris*



Selinda - January 15 at 04:29 PM

MB

“ *Mike and Molly Ballance purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Denny Roy Burris.*



Mike and Molly Ballance - January 15 at 04:04 PM

MB

“ *Mike and Molly Ballance planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Denny Roy Burris.*

Mike and Molly Ballance - January 15 at 04:04 PM

WT

“ Denny was so faithful to Nancy and our family. He kept us on our toes never knowing what bit of humorous tidbit he would share. Denny became the family mentor and spiritual leader. What a great guy!

Wanda Tuley - January 15 at 03:51 PM

JE

“ Judy Mahone Edwards lit a candle in memory of Denny Burris



Judy Mahone Edwards - January 15 at 01:46 PM

AW

“ Denny was a wonderful friend. Our Dads were Dallas Police Officers together. Like his Daddy Homer Denny was always cutting up and friendly to everyone they met. I don't know any one who asked for help that Denny didn't step up. He was only person our girls wanted to marry them. Retiring never slowed his service to Dallas Fire Department down. May Denny rest in peace.

Alyne Munster Watson - January 15 at 01:46 PM

CB

“ Denny's impact on my life has been profound, and I'm grateful for the kindness he showed my family. He spoke at the funerals of my dad, Johnny Bowman, the former fire chief of Desoto, and my grandfather Walton Bowman, with whom he worked at the fire rescue in Dallas.

Candy Bowman - January 15 at 11:35 AM

SF

Denny....what can I say that hasn't been said. Special man of God. Friend to all. Known most of my life. Married my son. You will be so missed. Love & peace to Nancy and family.❤️

Sue Fabrizzio - January 15 at 08:08 PM

EP

Denny was a kind, gentle man and a blessing to all who encountered him.

Evelyn Parker - January 16 at 05:24 PM

HN

Denny meant a lot to me and my family, and I will miss him so much. Prayers for sweet Nancy and his family.

Holly Hitt Niner - January 21 at 03:34 PM