



Dr. John Thomas Lucas Sr.

September 22, 1945 - January 2, 2026

Dr. John Thomas Lucas, Sr. passed away after a protracted illness January 2, 2026 in his own home in Travelers Rest, SC.

Born September 22nd, 1945 in Lexington, South Carolina, to Lucille Priester Lucas and Murdock Franklin Lucas, John graduated from Brookland-Cayce High School in 1963, then from the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry, in 1967. After graduating, he taught science at Fulmer Jr. Highschool before deciding to pursue a professional career as a physician. He studied neurosurgery at the Medical University of the South Carolina, and graduated in 1974. His internship was in surgery at the University of South Carolina Teaching Hospital from 1974-1975. His residencies included a residency in neurosurgery at The University of South Carolina (1975-1976); at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Mercy Hospital in Baltimore, where he was chief resident, neurosurgery division (1976-1980); and also as Senior Resident in Neurosurgery at the University of Western Ontario Hospital, London, in Ontario Canada (1979). He had additional Neurosurgery training at New York University in 1977. In 1980 he joined the medical staff of the Louisiana State University Medical Center Department of Surgery, where he was also a full time assistant professor in Shreveport, Louisiana.

In 1983 he moved his family to Greenville, SC, where he practiced

Neurosurgery in the Greenville Hospital System, St. Francis Hospital, and joined the practice of Neurosurgical Associates, which later became the Southeastern Neurosurgical and Spine Institute. He practiced medicine full time until his heart condition forced him to retire to his home in Beaufort, SC in 2002.

Other professional recognitions, associations, and distinctions include the Lange Medical Publications Award for outstanding achievement as a medical student, membership in Alpha Omega Alpha, the Honor Medical Society, membership in the University of Maryland Surgical Society, certification by the Louisiana State Board of Medical Examiners, recognition as a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, membership in the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, membership in the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, board certification by the American Board of Neurosurgical Surgery, a diplomate at the National Board of Medical Examiners of the United States of America, a certificate for Meritorious Service from MAP International - Health for the World's Poor, a place on the Wall of Tolerance from the National Campaign for Tolerance, and license to practice medicine in South Carolina from the State Board of Medical Examiners.

In 1972, John married Carolyn Faith Carlisle, and they would enjoy 53 years of marriage together through all of the hardships, challenges, joys, and successes that a loving marriage brings. They had many adventures sailing, camping, and conducting medical missions trips. They had two boys together, John Thomas Lucas Jr., and Charles Murdock Lucas, who they both loved deeply. Charles remembers many tender moments, adventures in camping, hiking, travel, and long deep conversations in the evenings with his father. John and Carolyn would move to Travelers Rest in 2006, where he would live the rest of his life.

John had many passions, including Metal Machinework, Woodwork, Classic Cars, Farming, Model Ship Building, Hiking, Camping, Running, Sailing,

Celestial Navigation, Traveling, and Teaching. He also had many intellectual interests outside of medicine, including physics, philosophy, and history.

John was Christian who believed in grace and love, and a student of Christian Existentialism. Over the years, John and his family were members at several churches in the Greenville area, including Edwards Road Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Greenville, and the Triune Mercy Center. John had an active role in many new churches, including helping to build the new building of the Community Mission Church led by Furman Gatewood Sr. in 1995.

John's most fulfilling passion was his medical missions work. He made many medical missions trips to Brazil, Zambia, Haiti, and Thailand with groups from Taylors First Baptist Church, Edwards Road Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Greenville, First Baptist Church of Lawrenceburg, KY, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and the South Carolina Baptists Partnership. In these countries he saw a deep need for medical care, and often the most basic medical supplies and medicines, like gloves, bandages, and penicillin, were lacking. In the USA, surgical gloves are used once and discarded, at that time in Zambia, they were kept, sterilized, and re-used until they fell apart. In addition to performing free medical services at his own cost, he organized shipments of medical supply donations from the USA for these trips. His wife, Carolyn, as well as both of his boys, John Jr. and Charles, would accompany him on some of these trips. In 1992, he helped a young girl from Brazil come to the USA where she would get life changing special surgery and medical treatment for her polio. She stayed with John and his family during her recovery, becoming part of the family. Over the years, the clinics he set up would treat hundreds and hundreds of patients who otherwise wouldn't have received care. He would frequently volunteer time with the Greenville Free Medical Clinic as well. He received the Lloyd Auten World Service Award from American Leprosy Missions in 1996, in recognition of his medical missions

work in Brazil. For years, he kept a quote on the wall of his office that said "If you want to preach only to our souls, go to the place of the dead. That is the only place that the body and soul are separate. Here on earth, to reach my soul, you cannot neglect my body." - Pastor Samuel Yameogo, Federation of Evangelical Churches, Burkina Faso.

John was preceded in death by his mother, Lucille Priester Lucas and father, Murdock Franklin Lucas, and his brother, Robert L. Lucas.

Surviving him are his wife, Carolyn C. Lucas; his oldest son Dr. John T. Lucas Jr. and his wife, Kristen Osborne Lucas, and their two girls, Emmeline Faith Lucas, and Stella Pauline Lucas; his youngest son Charles Murdock Lucas and his wife Dina Maria Perez, and their daughter, Nikkia Brooke Perez Lucas; his niece Lynnette Lucas Crolley and her husband Doug Crolley; as well as other nieces and nephews, Anna M. Lucas, Robert D. Lucas, Lori Lucas, and Debbie Lucas.

A visitation will be held at the Howze Mortuary, 6714 State Park Rd., Travelers Rest, SC on Monday January 12 from 9:30 - 10:15 am with a funeral service at following at 10:30 am. John will be buried next to his parents at Elmwood Cemetery, Columbia, SC. A private family burial is planned.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you please consider a memorial contribution, made in John's name, to the work helping the homeless and building community at the Triune Mercy Center at 222 Rutherford St. Greenville, SC 29609.

Cemetery Details

Elmwood Cemetery

501 Elmwood Avenue
Columbia, SC 29201

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 12. 9:30 AM - 10:15 AM (ET)

The Howze Mortuary Chapel
6714 State Park Rd.
Travelers Rest
Travelers Rest, SC 29690
thehowzemortuary@yahoo.com

Funeral Service

JAN 12. 10:30 AM (ET)

The Howze Mortuary, Inc.
6714 State Park Road
P.O. Box 369
Travelers Rest, SC 29690
(864) 834-8051
thehowzemortuary@yahoo.com
<https://www.thehowzemortuary.com/>

Tribute Wall

SR

“ *Deepest sympathies to Carolyn, John and Charles on the passing of your beloved husband and father. Gods peace be with you in this time of grief.*



Sheryl J Remick - February 07 at 12:47 PM

MM

“ *I am deeply saddened to read of Dr. Lucas' passing. Wishing comfort, peace, and only the best memories from wonderful times together for the whole family.*

Melissa Frazier Miller - January 11 at 08:47 PM

DP

“ *My sincerest sympathies to the Lucas family in the loss of my son-in-law's father. To give of one's own time and resources for the medical treatment of the underprivileged is a great achievement. I had the privilege of exchanging emails with John about our granddaughter, his ancestors and family. Though he seemed to be a man of few words, I could tell he was proud of all these. Rest in peace John Thomas Lucas, Sr. You will be missed by all. --Danny Perez.*

Dan Perez - January 09 at 06:08 PM

PJ

“ I will never forget working with John at Prisma Hospital, but also the medical mission trips we embarked on. Hard work, but such great times and I was blessed to be a part of such a special experience. He was a complex man with a huge heart and love for those less fortunate. I will truly miss him and send my love to Carolyn, Charles and the family. Phyllis Davis Jennings

Phyllis D. Jennings - January 09 at 02:11 PM