



## Dr. Ronald Leon Prior

March 9, 1945 - April 30, 2024

Ronald Leon Prior, son of Gordon and Mary Elenor (Stretch) Prior, was born March 9, 1945 in McCook, NE. He grew up and attended grade school and high school in the small, rural Nebraska farming community of Wauneta. Ron was born with an insatiable curiosity and a passion for unraveling the mysteries of the human body with help from his maker. Even above his thirst for knowledge, from early in his life all the way to the end, the most important thing to him was not his work but his love for his maker and the church.

He met the first love of his life (Ann Hoff) when they were in second grade. Ron attended the University of Nebraska. After graduating from college, Ron and Ann married in Wauneta on June 11, 1967. Shortly thereafter, they moved to Ithaca, NY where Ron completed his Ph.D in Nutritional Sciences from Cornell University. While living in Ithaca, their son Mark was born. Shortly after that, they moved to Hastings, NE in 1973.

From 1973 to 1987, Ron worked for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) doing research in a myriad of areas. During this time, Ron also started and ran several successful businesses including a real estate business in and around Hastings, NE. In 1987, the family moved to the Boston, MA area. During this time, Ron worked for the USDA associated with Tufts University. In 2000, Ron and Ann had an opportunity with his work to move to Arkansas which allowed them to be close to their son, Mark, and his

growing family. Ron and Ann made annual trips for 20 years to Bar Harbor, ME for conferences on his research.

Ron, known professionally as Dr. Prior, embarked on a journey of scientific exploration that would redefine our understanding of diet, antioxidants, and disease prevention. Throughout his career, Ron held prominent positions at renowned research institutions, where he spearheaded groundbreaking studies on the role of antioxidants in human health. His pioneering work shed light on the profound impact of dietary choices on disease prevention, longevity, and overall well-being. His findings were published in leading scientific journals, earning him widespread recognition and acclaim within the scientific community. Ron was deeply committed to mentorship and education, inspiring the next generation of scientists to push the boundaries of knowledge and innovation. He served as a mentor to countless aspiring researchers, imparting invaluable wisdom and guidance to help them navigate the complexities of scientific inquiry.

Throughout Ron's life, he served the church wherever they lived. He served in multiple congregations as a Bible teacher, a deacon, and an elder. His quiet humble servant attitude showed both in his professional field and his everyday living.

After 51 years of marriage, Ann passed in 2018. Within the next few years, Ron found a new love, Danna Williams. They married on May 23, 2023.

Family survivors include wife Danna Prior; son Mark (Diana) Prior; stepson Daniel (Lauren) Williams; brother Kent (Marsha) Prior, sister Marla Corman, brother Kevin (Jan) Prior, brother Gaylin (Lisa) Prior; grandchildren Mallory, Addyson, and Tucker Prior; and numerous nieces, nephews, and step-grandchildren.

Ronald Prior will be deeply missed by his family, friends, colleagues, and the countless individuals whose lives he touched with his kindness, wisdom, and boundless generosity. May his memory be a blessing, and may his legacy continue to inspire us all to reach for the stars and make a difference in the world.

Ron was a man of education, a man of science, but ultimately he was a man of God.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributing to the Urgent Needs Ministry at Cabot Church of Christ at P.O. Box 97, Cabot, AR 72023. This ministry helps members of the church with a variety of urgent needs related to their current situations (e.g., hospital stays, medical bills, or any other major one time expenses). This was often an area where Ronald contributed regularly when and wherever he saw a need.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAY 6. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (cst)

Powell Funeral Home & Cremation Services (Searcy)  
2602 W. Beebe-Capps Expy  
Searcy, AR 72143  
(501) 268-7220  
searcy@powellfuneralhome.net  
<https://www.powellfuneralhome.net/>

## Funeral Service

MAY 7. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (cst)

Cabot Church of Christ  
500 N. Second Street  
Cabot, AR 72023

## Entombment

MAY 7. 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM (cst)

White County Memorial Gardens  
Eastline Road and Park Avenue  
Searcy, AR 72143

# Tribute Wall

AH

“ I was a colleague of Ron's for several decades and worked with him on the health benefits of blueberries. We were both part of the Bar Harbor Wild Blueberry Summit group and had many very memorable times together! He was a man of sterling character and scientific genius who made monumental contributions to the science of blueberries and their antioxidant effects. He will be missed by all of us blueberry scientists and will be remembered as an icon in his field. Here is a picture of Ron in the wild blueberry fields in Maine, with his wife, and with our group when we visited Martha Stewart's home in Bass Harbor. A life well-lived! Rest easy Ron! XOXO



Amy Howell - June 29, 2024 at 09:25 AM

LL

“ Luke and Linnie planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Dr. Ronald Leon Prior.

Luke and Linnie - May 05, 2024 at 04:16 PM

LL

“ Luke and Linnie purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Dr. Ronald Leon Prior.



Luke and Linnie - May 05, 2024 at 04:16 PM

RJ

“ *Richard and JoAnne purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Dr. Ronald Leon Prior.*



---

**Richard and JoAnne** - May 01, 2024 at 08:17 PM