

IN LOVING MEMORY

## *Dr. Charles Joseph Ash*

### **BORN**

*July 27, 1930  
Denver, Colorado*

### **PASSED AWAY**

*August 24, 2020  
Springfield, Missouri*

### **MEMORIAL MASS**

*11:00 am Friday  
September 18, 2020  
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton  
Catholic Church*

### **OFFICIATING**

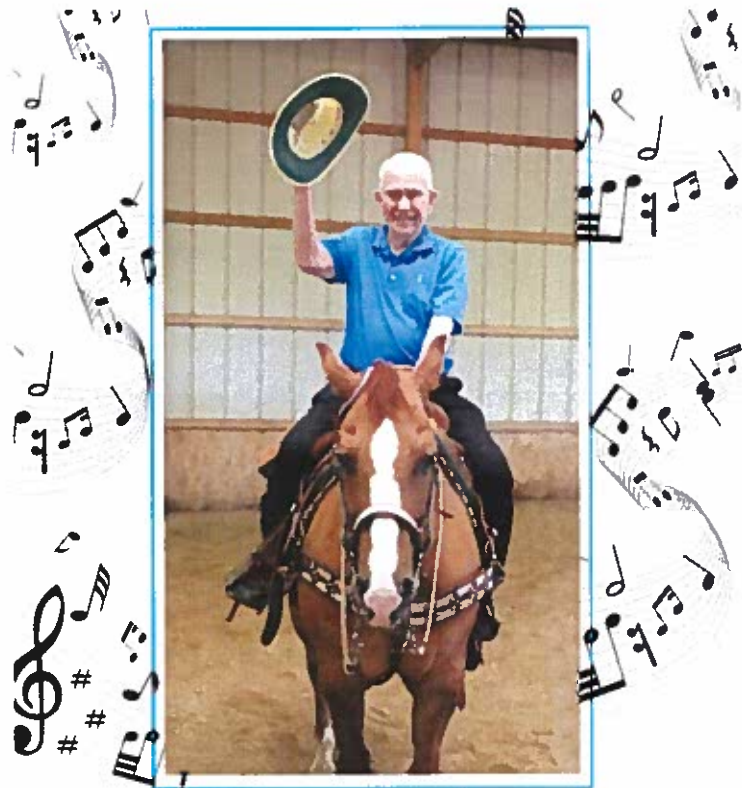
*Father Mike McDevitt*

### **MUSICIANS**

*Andrew Curtis  
Hayden Vaughn*

### **FINAL RESTING PLACE**

*Calvary Cemetery  
St. Louis, Missouri*



## *Dr. Charles Joseph Ash*

*July 27, 1930 - August 24, 2020*

Charles 'Doc Charlie' Joseph Ash died at Mercy Medical Center in Springfield, Missouri, August 24 after a long battle with congestive heart failure. He was 90 years old. Orthopedic surgeon, pianist, medical researcher, disability rights advocate, golfer, infinite flirt—he lived his life robustly and with verve.

He is survived by his three children Carol Ash Widder, Michael Joseph Ash and Cynthia Joan Ash, as well as his brother Kenneth Ash, two sisters Lucy Klee and Eileen McAlister, three grandchildren Kathryn "Katy" Henriksen (nee Widder), Heidi Widder and Diana Ash, as well as three great-grandchildren. Preceding him in death are Patricia Ann Corcoran Ash, his first wife and mother to his three children, his second wife Maxine Andrews Ash, his final soulmate Clara Hubbard, his brother Larry Ash, an infant sister StellaMary Ash, and his parents.

From a lifetime of playing piano—until a year ago he spent Monday nights with dear friends in band practice—whether in the Dixie Docs, his big band Caduceus or a little George Gershwin, Scott Joplin or a jazz standard on the piano in the living room to entertain the family, music was always a key passion.

Born in Denver on July 27, 1930, he graduated from St. Mary's High School in Colorado Springs in 1948 and enrolled in Regis College, where he was debate team captain and graduated in three years, going on to medical school at St. Louis University. In June 1955, he married Patricia Ann Corcoran and they moved to Boston, Massachusetts, where he completed his surgical internship and had his first daughter in 1956. They returned to St. Louis where he started his three year residency in orthopedics.

In 1960 they settled in Springfield where he started his surgical practice at Smith Glynn Calloway. He remained in private practice as an orthopedic surgeon from 1960 to 2018.

A lifelong dedication for disability rights began when his daughter Cynthia was born with Cerebral Palsy. He advocated to make public schools accessible to those with disabilities and helped form the Springfield Cerebral Palsy Center, where his daughter attended. He also opened the first public school scoliosis clinic in Springfield.

As a medical researcher he served as president of Greene County Medical Association and published research on heat stroke in Oxford Academic and other medical journals. In his time as an adjunct professor at Missouri State University he proved that use of thermography as a medical measurement of pain was invalid and a monetary waste. His ethics were golden and he truly lived the Hippocratic Oath to "do no harm." He helped pass state laws requiring physicians to take their fair share of Medicaid patients, never collected on a delinquent bill, would not charge for office visits after surgeries and—until he was forbidden to do so—often bartered, most notably for a baby pig that he brought home for a pet.

Doc Charlie loved golfing, table tennis, fishing, water skiing, scuba diving, dog training, magic tricks, and was a Lifetime Bridge Master. He cherished coaxing his granddaughter into singing along to his piano accompaniments, winning medals for his prized Boxers, solving a Rubix Cube and telling dirty jokes. His boisterous and uncompromising love of friends, family and life will be sorely missed.