

**G**ary W. Kemper aka Brother Shankara, peacefully left behind all his worldly limitations on Friday, March 22, 2024 at 1:56 pm Eastern time, surrounded by family and friends chanting and singing him on his way.

Gary was born in Fresno, California on May 19, 1942 to Clifton W. Kemper and Lora Kemper (née Moore), the eldest of five children, Janice, Richard, Evan, Lisa and himself. Being an “Army brat,” he lived in many places across the United States, as well as in France and Germany. His family settled in Riverside, CA in the 1950s. Gary married Marjorie Anderson in Seal Beach, California on January 12, 1963 and had a son, Benjamin, on October 1, 1964.

### **Gary becomes Shankara...**

In early 1973, Gary’s brother Evan recommended that he meet Swami Prabhavananda at the Vedanta Society of Southern California in Hollywood. The resulting meeting would change the course of Gary’s (and his son Benjamin’s) life. Gary was initiated by Swami Swahananda and was given the name Shankara. Over the years, he would assist Swahanandaji with many projects, including the formation of many satellite centers. He served on the Society’s Board for over 25 years.

### **...and finally, Brother Shankara**

Soon after Marjorie passed away on November 12, 2009, Shankara discerned a new calling. He received Brahmacharya vows from Swami Swahananda and, at his request, traveled to Tucker, Georgia to take up the position of Resident Minister of the Vedanta Center of Atlanta in August of 2010. Now Brother Shankara, he led the Center for 14 years. Working with the devotees there, Brother Shankara grew the congregation, rebuilt the Monastery to better accommodate visiting Swamis and Pravajikas, and held the Center together with Zoom talks and classes during the Covid pandemic. He also held classes in Athens, Georgia, and was actively involved in interfaith work in Atlanta, providing talks at Universities and hosting students at the Center.

Despite his health challenges, Brother Shankara gave Sunday talks and led three classes a week on Zoom up until just three weeks prior to his passing. Though we are grateful that he will now be with Thakur and Ma, his teaching, his love, and his generosity of spirit will be missed by friends and devotees in California, Georgia and around the world.



## **In Memoriam**

**Brother Shankara/Gary Kemper**

**Sunday, May 5, 2024, 3 p.m.**

**The Vedanta Society of Southern California**

