



Pastor Virgil Rasmussen

May 11, 1926 - December 22, 2017

Pastor Virgil I. Rasmussen, 91 of Cloquet passed away on Friday, December 22, 2017 in Community Memorial Hospital after suffering a stroke earlier that day. He was born May 11, 1926 in Marshall County, Minnesota to George and Olga Rasmussen.

He grew up on the family farm and attended school in Strandquist, MN. Virgil served his country on Guam in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during World War II. He graduated from North Central University in Minneapolis in 1949 and began his career in ministry that same year. He married Ruth Olson on May 30, 1949 in Duluth. Virgil pastored several congregations in northern Minnesota prior to serving at the Cloquet Gospel Tabernacle (now Journey Christian Church) for 24 years before retiring in 1988. Following retirement, Virgil served as an interim pastor at several churches in the Midwest. Virgil and Ruth were full partners and served side by side throughout his career.

Pastor Rasmussen was a master conversationalist who cared passionately about his faith, ministry, all people, our planet, his family, having fun and laughing, building, gardening, and so much more. At 91 and a half years of age, he was still curious, learning and evolving. He leaves behind a legacy of integrity, sincere humility, selfless compassion, ingenuity and tireless hard work. He and Ruth prayed together daily for each family member by name, as well as for countless friends around the world.

Virgil was preceded in death by his brother, Glenn; granddaughter, Esther Hope Rasmussen; sons-in-law, Robert Hilton and Kirby Smith.

He is survived and will be sadly missed by his wife of 68 years, Ruth; his six children, LeAnn (Paul) Nelson of Rochester, NY, Arlen Rasmussen of Cloquet, Linda Smith of Seattle, WA, Nathan (Karen) Rasmussen of Kigoma, Tanzania, East Africa, Lynette (Alan) Rasmussen Sclater of Seattle, WA, and Steven (Janice) Rasmussen of St. Paul; sisters, LouAnn Grandstrand of Cloquet, Carol (Don) Gossenberger of Mission Viejo, Calif.; brothers, Vern (Sharon) of Frazee, Minn. and Allen (Gail) of International Falls; 15 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Visitation: 5 to 7 p.m. Tuesday, January 2, 2018 in Journey Christian Church, 1400 Washington Ave., Cloquet. Visitation will continue from 10 until the 11:00 a.m. funeral service on Wednesday, January 3rd also in the church. In lieu of flowers, Pastor Rasmussen requested that memorials be directed to JOURNEY CHRISTIAN CHURCH for its missions program. Arrangements entrusted to Atkins Northland Funeral Home, Cloquet. To sign the guest book and offer an online tribute, see www.atkinsnorthlandfuneralhome.com

Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Obituary Wall



Atkins-Northland Funeral Home and Cremation Service - April 03, 2018 at 11:26 AM



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February 07, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ ODE TO MY DEAR DAD (1/3/17)

My dad has entered the pearly gates
An event that seems rather surreal
His life was one so very well lived
I think he got a pretty good deal

He'd tell you that God has been so good
And blessed him and his beyond measure
His faith, his family and his dear friends
Were the source of his greatest pleasure

Dad was born and raised Minnesotan
Somewhere very near "Lake Wobegon"
Where they wear their long johns until June
And where he grew up with his friend, Tom

Dad was an usher at Tom's wedding
Where he took a shine to lovely Ruth
Who was the Maid of Honor that day
He discovered she was from Duluth

The rest is history, as they say
One thing quickly led to another
They married in 1949
And Ruth soon became a new mother

Before they had determined the cause
There were six little mouths to be fed

The young mom and dad worked such long hours
Every night they collapsed right into bed

Ruth was a secondary teacher
Schooling home economics and math
Virgil was a very young preacher
Which became his lifelong career path

Those six children born to mom and dad
Have now multiplied to 31
Not quite like the seed of Abraham
But I'm sure they are nowhere near done

Dad had preacher friends with funny names
Like Hauge, Jauhiainen and Drake
They would drink coffee and share stories
And indulge in Ruth's cookies and cake

My dad devoted his entire life
In service to God and to others
Nothing excited him any more
Than new Christian "sisters and brothers";

Joy unspeakable and full of glory
And the half has never yet been told;
He quoted that hymn to sum up his life
And now he is walking streets of gold

His contagious smile, his laugh, his humor
With a zest for life beyond compare
Dad loved us all, and we loved him back
Our family patriarch extraordinaire

There's a gaping hole in all of our hearts
Left behind by this "giant" of a man
Yet I hear dad whispering even now
Not to worry, it is all in God's plan

I can only imagine the joy
To finally meet his Savior face to face
And to hear those words, "Well done, my son
You've been faithful and finished the race";

Thank you for showing us all, dear Dad
How to live with purpose every day
Sharing God's love, one small kindness at a time
With all those we meet along the way

As you sit and learn at Jesus' feet

Your wish granted like never before
Please know we will take good care of mom
‘Til she meets you again at heaven’s door

Yours was an amazing life, dear dad
I couldn’t love you more than I do
I am so very proud to be your daughter
I can’t wait for your hugs in heaven too ❤️

Lynette (Red)

January 16, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Ruth and family,
I am just seeing this, and I am so sorry for your loss. Heaven certainly is still rejoicing at Virgil's Home coming I am sure.. I am also sure there is an empty spot in your heart with his leaving here. For that I pray the Lord bring you comfort and the oil of joy to ease your ache.
My favorite memories of you and Virgil are one from family camp! I was a mom with three young boys and a husband that wasn't following the Lord at the time. As we all sat in chapel the speaker led us to pray and you and Virgil were sitting close to me and as I poured my heart to the Lord you came and prayed with me. That truly was a breakthrough moment for me. You not even knowing who I was reaching up to heaven to pull God's glory into my situation made all the difference in my life! My husband did come to know the Lord and he is also now at home in heaven. Thank you for your hearts that loved the Lord.
Then the last time Virgil preached at West Side Church where I served as a member and volunteer for years, He spoke about The Church and how God had created it! I still carry those notes in my bible today! And as I come across those that don't believe the church is valid or that it wasn't ordained by God I often repeat those words and biblical reference over and over again. I am So grateful for the knowledge and love God put in Virgil's heart to share it with so many. His legacy is carried not only by your family but through many many who had the privilege to hear God speak through him.
You will be in my prayers daily!
God Bless you and keep you Ruth.
Much love and appreciation,
Jenny Sathre

January 06, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ The Rasmussens were a huge impact on my spiritual growth, especially during my teen years. I thank God that He placed them in my life at that critical time. Their dedicated service, compassion and heart to build the Kingdom without denominational walls will bear fruit into eternity.

Lynette Scherber
Missionary to South Africa
Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge

January 03, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ You were truly an inspiration! You weren't afraid to get in the thick of things! You opened your home to Thelma Foss & myself when we came to Duluth for a church conference. You will be truly missed!

January 03, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ When Linda and I were beginning our ministry here in Chetek, Virgil and Ruth were such a great encouragement to the both of us. I'll never forget that after a month in Chetek I received a call from Virgil who when I picked up the phone said, "I'm Virgil Rasmussen. Welcome to Minnesota!" (for those who don't know, Chetek is definitely in Wisconsin). But he invited me to attend a cluster meeting that was soon to be held in St. Cloud. He asked how things were going and he genuinely wanted to know how I was doing. Over the next few years he made a point of asking me the same every time our paths crossed. He called last summer sometime but I was out. I called him back later and he was unavailable. I wished I would have tried harder. I love and honor his memory. May God bless and keep him!

January 02, 2018 at 12:00 AM



“ When you were in the presence of Pastor Rasmussen, you just knew he was the real deal Christian. Always quiet and humble in demeanor, he had a real heart of a servant. If not for the time spent with him and Ruth, I never would have grasped the concept of "saved by grace". My life and that of my family were so blessed by the time we spent with him both as friends and as part of his congregation. I can't think of anyone, aside from my father, that had such a meaningful and long lasting impact on my life as Pastor. My heart goes out to Ruth and the rest of the family in these dark hours but, I have faith that they have an abundance of happy memories to see them through.

December 31, 2017 at 12:00 AM



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Candle of Memories - December 31, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ To the Rasmussen family, we know how much Virgil meant to all of you. He was a good man and loved the Lord dearly. Our thoughts and prayers are with you as you go through this difficult time. May the Lord comfort you and pour his love down upon you. May he fill your minds with fond memories and wipe away your grief. Blessings,
Jim and Renee Larson

December 31, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Honoring Pastor Rasmussen for his joyful energy, humble heart and missionary vision... now carried on generationally in family both physical and spiritual. May the LORD give us an overflow of the presence of Jesus in his life until he comes again!

Soft Glow - December 28, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ I just want to share with the family what a true treasure they had in Virgil. The last number of years, he became my friend. We would talk over the phone now and then, had lunch in Hibbing a few times, and I stopped at their apartment in Cloquet once. His simple wisdom, and practical approach to the ministry were remarkable. Even though his ministry to the Cloquet area, and the FCA could not begin to be measured, I am most spoken to by his family, their love for God, and the calling they have to missions. Even though Virgil was highly successful, he was so humble, so caring, and so gracious. I know that Heaven is greatly enriched, but we have seen the passing of a mighty saint of God. He will be greatly missed.
May God bless his family, and the church
Pastor Rod Tuomi
Hibbing Christian Assembly

December 27, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ So sorry Ruth and Family. We will be praying for an abundant peace for you! It meant so much for us Foss kids to have Virgil do Mom and Dad's funeral services. He was a wonderful human being, and will be missed by thousands! They are celebrating together now in Glory! Praise God for that!
Gary and Melanie Foss

December 27, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Gary and Carol Hall....missionary pastors in Nagoya Japan. We met Pastor Rasmussen at a meeting in Chicago many years ago on our return from 7 years in Liberia. A very humble man and we were struck by his easy going mannerisms....we felt he cared about people...Truly a shepherds heart. May the Lord bless and comfort you who are left behind...but guess what....he is in a great place now and enjoying the presence of the Lord...and better yet we will all be together in HIS and our home before long. Love and strength and patience to each of you. Rest in His peace...it is so strong and everlasting.

December 27, 2017 at 12:00 AM



“ Dear Ruth & Family,

Our sympathy and prayers be with you all. As we think about all the pastors we've had, you and Virgil had the most energy, compassion, and love for all people. You both were treasures to all who met you. We can't begin to imagine all the people who came to know Jesus because of the compassionate way you both ministered to people. We still tell people that it was you two who brought us together 23 years ago, assuring Jenny's parents that Ely had this wonderful church and she would be just fine spending a month there. You had no idea Dave was single and home for the summer, but God did! We thank God for your ministry and for being the best role models in how we should minister to and love people just like Jesus did.

Love, Jenny & Dave Janssen & children (Bethany & Nathaniel)

December 24, 2017 at 12:00 AM