



Pastor Merlin Kenneth Norris

June 15, 1935 - May 29, 2020

Pastor Merlin K. Norris, age 84 of Lake Mills, died on Friday, May 29, 2020 at MercyOne North Iowa in Mason City.

A private family service will be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Scarville, Iowa with Pastor Randy Baldwin, Pastor Joel Guttormson, and Pastor Melinda McCluskey officiating. Burial will take place in the North Prairie Lutheran Cemetery, rural Leland, Iowa.

The service will be streamed live on the Mittelstadt Funeral Home Facebook page beginning at 10:30 AM on Tuesday, June 2, 2020.

<https://bizwizmarketing.com/funeral-service-for-merlin-kenneth-norris/>

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorials be directed to the Good Samaritan Fund at Salem Lutheran Church, 401 S. Lake St., Lake Mills, IA 50450, or to the North Prairie Cemetery Fund c/o Roger Solomonson, 44432 Hwy 69, Leland, IA 50453.

Merlin Kenneth Norris was born near Graettinger, Iowa on June 15, 1935, to Martin and Edna (Bisgaard) Norris. He was baptized into the Christian faith on August 25, 1935 at Lost Island Lutheran Church, Graettinger, Iowa. He was confirmed on June 5, 1949 at the same church.

Merlin received his elementary education at a rural school in Lost Island township and in Graettinger Consolidated school, graduating from Graettinger High School in 1954. He then went on to receive his bachelor's degree from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, in 1958. Merlin received his theological degree from Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, in 1962.

On August 12, 1956, Merlin was united in marriage to Marietta Zitterich, his high school sweetheart. Their marriage was blessed with three children, Barbara Renee, Rodney Ivan, and William (Bill) Fredrich.

Merlin was ordained into the Christian ministry at Lost Island Lutheran Church on June 17, 1962. "Pastor Norris" embraced his Christian calling serving the Iowa parishes of St. Donatus (St. John's, St. Donatus, and St. Paul, Lamotte) 1962-1966; Scarville Lutheran Parish (Immanuel, Scarville and North Prairie, rural Scarville) 1966-1976; Fjeldberg Lutheran, Huxley, from 1976-1989 and Good Hope Lutheran, Titonka, from 1989 - 2000. His ministry expanded to the entire community in which Merlin and Marietta lived. He thoroughly enjoyed visiting with whomever he came in contact with. Merlin retired from active ministry in 2000 and he and Marietta moved to Lake Mills, Iowa. He then served for many years as interim and visiting pastor for many area churches.

Merlin was known for his beautiful, well-manicured flower beds. He was proud that many of the

perennials had a personal history to them. It gave him pleasure to share his flowers, whether it be the blooms or cuttings of the plant. In the winter, the downstairs became Merlin's flower room(s) where he could take cuttings from the annual flowers of the past summer to start for the next summer's flower beds. Another hobby would be the Scandinavian bell pulls Merlin would stitch. Marietta's job was then to meticulously hand sew the background and the bell pulls on to finish the project.

Family and relationships were of utmost importance to Merlin. First, and foremost, was his rock and supporter, Marietta. Family reunions, birthdays, and holidays were always special and meant to be celebrated! Merlin cherished and maintained life-long friendships with numerous people. His kind, caring, accepting personality endeared him to many.

Merlin is survived by his wife of 64 years, Marietta of Lake Mills; his three children, Barb (Brian) Abele of Leland; Rod (Shellene) Norris of Lake Mills and Bill (Sheila) Norris of Huxley; his six grandchildren, Allison (Bob) Greenfield of Lake Mills; Sarah (Nick) Kuennen of Pella; Anthony (Devan Register) Norris of Lakewood, Colorado; Ashlyn (Jerry) Morse of Storm Lake; Joshua Norris of Des Moines and Jessica Norris of Huxley; and six great-grandchildren, Kenlie and Gage Greenfield; Brynn, Carew and Elle Kuennen and Everleigh Norris. He is also survived by a sister-in-law, Jan (Bob) Meyer; special nieces and nephews: Karyn (Troy) Leininger; Kim (Jay) Venzon; Kyle (Amee) Norris; and Kirt (Mandy) Norris. He is also survived by Marietta's sister, Jeralda Arcularius and her brother, Eldon Zitterich as well as Marietta's nieces and nephews.

Merlin was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Keith (1984) along with Marietta's siblings; Merle and Lois Zitterich, Justin and Hazel Zitterich and Lois Zitterich.

Glory Be To God!

Cemetery



**NORTH PRAIRIE
LUTHERAN CEMETERY**

170th Avenue, Leland,
IA 50453

Events



FUNERAL SERVICE

10:30 AM

Immanuel Lutheran Church 105 East 3rd Street, Scarville, IA 50473 The service for Pastor Norris is PRIVATE/immediate family ONLY due to ongoing COVID-19 limitations. It will be streamed live on the Mittelstadt Funeral Home Facebook page beginning at 10:30 AM on Tuesday, June 2. The website for livestream: <https://bizwizmarketing.com/funeral-service-for-merlin-kenneth-norris/> copy and paste into your browser. Or go to the Tribute Wall above and follow the direct link

Tribute Wall

K

Ken & Bridget Kuennen & family

So sorry for your loss ! You are all in our thoughts & prayers ! 🙏

S

Sonia Solomonson

I am so sad to hear about Pastor Norris' death. He was a caring and loving pastor to our whole family, and in the last years became a good friend to my siblings and me. He and Marietta lovingly kept tabs on my brother, Owen, as he slipped into dementia a couple years ago. In fact, Pastor Norris is the one who notified my sister and me about what was happening since we live elsewhere. Pastor Norris had some of our beloved mother's bulbs and plants from her garden, and we always knew they received tender, loving care at his hands. We have wonderful memories and are grateful for his life. May Marietta and all the family feel wrapped in God's loving arms as they grieve his death and celebrate his life. Sonia Solomonson

R

Roger and Mary Ellen Twedt

We have many happy memories of the Norris Family in Huxley! It doesn't seem possible that it has been nearly 45 years ago since you arrived here! We were all young then! Our sincere sympathies in your loss. He was a wonderful pastor. One of ur favorite! God bless you all, MaryEllen and Roger

S

Schott Funeral Homes



"Schott Funeral Homes posted a video"

 [Watch now](#)

N

Nels & Rowena Nord

We were deeply saddened when we heard about Pastor Norris. He was just a wonderful pastor and a great friend, so easy to talk to and just a wonderful, special man. We thought so highly of him. We are thinking about all of you and send you our deepest sympathy and our prayers. Love, Nels & Rowena Nord and Family

D**Derek Nord**

Pastor Norris confirmed me as well as married me and my wife. He had an amazing impact on me and my life. He will truly be missed. Derek Nord

C**Celeste Allen**

Pastor Norris was a great guy had a way of making everyone feel special

L**Laurie and Jerry Harms**

Pastor became a dear friend while serving at Good Hope here in Titonka and will always remember and hold dear our garden chats and visits! We have several perennials in our garden from plant exchanges with Merlin. Our sympathies to Marietta and all the family!

C**Connie Chose Doscher**

So sorry to hear of Pastor Norris's passing. He was a great man and teacher. He made confirmation classes fun and informative. He was one of my favorites. Connie Chose Doscher

**Julie Rice**

Our deepest condolences to your family, Marietta, Barb, Rod & Bill (HUGS) My heart is aching but also praising. Being one of Pastor Norris' confirmed children of God, who was blessed to share many wonderful memories & joyful visits with him! With a confident heart I know He is in Heaven & resting in the room the Lord has prepared for him after blessing so many of us here in earth! He got me through many tough years & I will be forever GRATEFUL he was one of the adults in my life that I felt truly cared for me, which helped make me who I am ! He was a good man through & through! Well done Gods servant...it is now time to rest! Until we meet again May his memories be blessed & may you feel the arms of the Lord wrapped around you as you mourn

L**Lorraine Hoffman**

Dear Norris Family, We are deeply saddened by the passing of your dear husband, father and grandfather. His ministry at Fjeldberg Lutheran Church set the foundation of faith for our young family in the 80's and we are forever indebted for his presence in our lives. His sincerity, kindness and deep conviction to faith brought the immense joy of God's awesome abundance to living reality in all the hearts and souls he touched. Our lights shine brighter because of him and we give thanks. We send caring thoughts and prayers for comfort and peace. Lorraine and Peter Hoffman and family

G

Gail Hamilton

I think my heart is broken. I will never forget this man who was there for me so many times while serving Good Hope. His support and help continued after his retirement to Lake Mills during a time of upheaval at our church while I served as church council president. You were so blessed to have him as father, grandfather, great grandfather. There are no words to convey what he meant to us, to me as an individual and a friend and to our church as a whole.

D

Diane Sletten

That's a hard one there are so many, but the one I can think of right off the top of my head is our Luther League retreat to the boundary waters that was the first time I had ever been on a. Vacation and I'm glad I got to go with him and the rest of the group.



Laurel Yost

To all of Pastor Norris family & friends, I am truly saddened to learn of his passing. My prayers will include you, as you grieve. I grieve with you. He was one of the nicest persons I have ever known. Definitely a favorite!! I loved running into him. He always greeted me with a big smile, and often a hug. I really liked him, and considered him a good friend. He will be missed a lot by many. God bless.
