



Rev. Otto Schmitt

November 6, 1924 - July 17, 2020

The Graveside Service for Otto can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/user113354829/review/440130335/b675ac3bc4>

Rev. Otto Walter Schmitt, 95, of West Fargo, North Dakota, died peacefully on Friday, July 17, and is now at home with his Heavenly Father.

Born to Jacob and Albina (Bertsch) Schmitt on a farm southeast of Regent, North Dakota, on November 6, 1924, Otto attended elementary school in the rural school in Chilton Township. He completed high school in Mott, North Dakota. He graduated from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, in 1948 and married LaVerne A. Bolme on August 28, 1949. After graduating from Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, in 1952, he was ordained into the ministry. He served parishes in Richardton, Gackle (where he preached in German at the Neudorf Lutheran Church), Max, and Cando, North Dakota; rural Northwood (Silver Lake) in Iowa, and Walcott (Richland), Colfax, and Fargo, North Dakota. In June of 2017 he celebrated the 65th anniversary of his ordination, for which he chose this scripture from Romans 8:38-39:

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Otto's calling to the ministry came at a young age when he could be found preaching to the sheep in the pasture on the family farm. His desire to share the Gospel never waned, and he was often heard in his room and the common areas of Sheyenne Crossings doing just that – long past the time when he was able to see the words in his well-loved, well-read, and well-worn Bible. He was a man of many talents and hobbies – singing, building in his woodshop, gardening with LaVerne – even helping with her jigsaw puzzles. They were truly partners in life until his mission to care for her ended last year. Love for his family came second only to his love for God.

Otto is survived by eight children: Terri (Roger) Olson, Timothy (Sherry) Schmitt, Thomas (Linda) Schmitt, Rebecca (Kevin) Leidal, Miriam (Scott) Hildre, Heidi (Jeffrey) Vansteenburgh, Sonja (Kent) Casperson, and Margaret (Jon) Young; 24 grandchildren and many great-grandchildren. He is also survived by one sister, Ida Schmitt. He was preceded in death by his parents, Jacob and Albina, wife, LaVerne, infant brother Henry, infant sister Eva, sisters, Pauline Alma (Henry) Erlenbusch, Clara (Adam) Oberlander, Martha (Arthur) Frisvold, Esther Schmitt, Emma (Clarence) Kamka, Lydia Schmitt, and brother, Emanuel (Leona) Schmitt.

Now you who have believed enter that rest, just as God has said.

A private family service will be held On Monday, July 20, at Richland Lutheran Church Cemetery.

Cemetery

Richland Lutheran Church

6143 172nd Ave. SE

Walcott, ND, 58077

Comments



“ A webcast video has been added.



Hanson-Runsvold Funeral Home - July 20, 2020 at 05:38 PM



“ I am Pastor Wilbur Fisher and I met Pastor Otto in 1964 In the Devel's Lake Conference. I rejoice that Otto is with his Lord, but I grieve for LaVern and family. He was a great friend and pastor. I enjoyed his fellowship.

Rev Wil Fisher - July 31, 2020 at 03:08 PM



“ Thank you for sharing.

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:14 AM



“ My deepest sympathy to the Schmidt family. I loved his preaching at Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Fargo. He was so reverend and old gospel. His deep booming voice always got the message heard and imbedded. I truly missed him when he stopped doing church services. He was our visitation Pastor and tracked me down at my Mom's house to check on me when going through cancer surgeries and chemo in 2005. I was so happy to see him! He touched so many lives and hearts. We were all blessed to have known Pastor Otto!

Marlene Mix - July 25, 2020 at 06:29 PM



“ What a lovely tribute! Thank you.

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:15 AM



“ One of my favorite people. He confirmed me and used to stop by for coffee when he would go from the church to the parsonage. Sure missed them when they moved. Have too many memories of him and the family to mention. Rip and God bless.

sharon songstad shaw - July 24, 2020 at 03:59 PM



“ How sweet! We appreciate your kind words!

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:17 AM



“ He was so wonderful to my parents during times with bad health. He spiritually supported them always. He came to their home and his words of hope and faith were always welcome. Thank God for Pastor Schmitt.

Diane Lane Monk - July 21, 2020 at 04:48 PM



“ Thank you for sharing.

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:18 AM



“ I do not remember Pastor Schmitt but he was very important in my life. I may be one of the first if not the first baby he baptized. I was born just before Christmas in 1951. At the time St. John Lutheran Church in Richardton was between pastors. Pastor Schmitt, still a seminarian, tended to the the congregation during the Christmas holiday. I have heard the story how Pastor Schmitt walked across the snowbanks down to the farm on New Years Day, 1952 to baptize me before going back to seminary. I thank God for men of God who have faithfully spoken the word of God.

Cindy Alpert - July 21, 2020 at 10:16 AM



“ My sincere sympathy to all the Schmitt family! He was a great pastor, who confirmed me in 1964. He even stopped to compose us on 'question' night, before our families. A few of us got the giggles, and he stopped the proceedings and allowed us to compose ourselves, with a smile on his face. He made a very good impact on my faith life. RIP Pastor.

Dianne (Hogenson) Hyndman - July 21, 2020 at 04:19 PM



“ Otto was a lifelong (almost) pastoral colleague and close friend of mine—and so my heart is hurting right now. Junice and I had many, many fun and heart-warming times with Otto and Laverne—occasions when two neighboring pastors & wives had opportunities to lighten hearts and get away from the often solemn world of pastoral ministry. Yes, I loved Otto's friendship—but I can only rejoice for him now in the assurance that this good and faithful servant of the Gospel is now using his wonderful baritone voice singing in the choir of the Church Triumphant!! RIP, Otto!! See you soon!!

Al and Junice Sandness.

Al Sandness - July 22, 2020 at 11:52 PM



“ Cindy Alpert, your message made me smile. Dad never was afraid of a little snow. In fact, he would take us shopping after he drove bus on snow days.

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:23 AM



“ Dianne Hyndman,
Thanks for sharing your confirmation memory of Dad. Thank goodness for his patience with all kids. He always accepted kids and understood their need to giggle. He often said kids need to kick up their heels once in awhile.

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:30 AM



“ Pastor Al and Junice,
You two meant so much to Dad and Mom, Thank you for your kind words.

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:34 AM



“ 1 file added to the album Slideshow



Luke Leidal - July 20, 2020 at 01:04 PM



“ What a beautiful tribute to Pastor Schmitt! The pictures and memories of his life were so rewarding to see! The horses, the places he lived, I would have had so much more to visit with him on, had I known. Pastor Schmitt and his family first came into my family's life in Colfax, ND. I drove school bus for Colfax and Abercrombie and would stop at the Schmitt home for one of the girls. He was our Pastor. He did a wonderful job the day that we said our goodbyes to our son, Donovan. He and Pastor McCracken made that day memorable in blessings to our family. Pastor Schmitt continued to visit us long after Donovan's passing, offering us strength and deliverance from our pain. Later in years when the Schmitt's moved to Fargo, they purchased a home at the end of my parents block where I had grown up. Watching them walk the neighborhood and garden and care for the old Freeman House was rewarding to see. They held a special place in my heart! Pastor Schmitt and his wife LaVerne were ok and still actively participating in community and that brought me comfort. They were forever guidance and knowledge of the Lord and this was very appealing to a young mother that had just lost her 11 year old son to cancer. And now I know, I can actually see them, Otto and LaVerne walking those golden paths, encouraging all those that enter through those pearly gates into a life forever after in HIS Kingdom! To walk with them, with HIS guidance will for sure bring you home to walk this path and pass by this Heavenly God blessed partnership of Otto&LaVerne...Forever and in Eternity...RIP Pastor, your legend lives on as you leave this world to once again join up with LaVerne and to walk together again, only now, on HIS golden paths, in HIS neighborhood and kingdom!
Hallelujah!

With love and condolences to the family...

Rebecca Anderson,

Brighton, Colorado

Rebecca Anderson - July 21, 2020 at 02:06 PM



“ What a lovely tribute, Rebecca Anderson! It means a lot to us to read this! Losing a young child is difficult, to say the least. I am so glad Dad was able to be there for your difficult journey.

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:40 AM



“ After our motorcycle accident in 1992, he came to our house and applied his carpentry skills. He built a railing for us to use to get into our garage. We still use it today. I will miss visiting with him around the holidays at Scott and Miriam’s house.

Allen Beaton - July 20, 2020 at 12:10 PM



“ Of course he did! My dad could build anything!

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:41 AM



“ Rev. Schmitt invited me to share the ministry of the New Life Center at Walcott Lutheran Church many years ago. He had a deep concern for homeless people, for both their physical and spiritual needs. We shared a mutual liking for Gackle, ND in that he had previously ministered there and I had a hunting shack in town. We knew some of the same folks and had a good time reminiscing. He came to the New Life Center when in town, bringing quilts the ladies of the church had made for our shelter. He also personally supported the mission financially and the church supported as well. His interest in serving others and his love for the Lord were most evident. God bless your memory Otto, I look forward to seeing you again one day.
Dan L. Danielson

Dan Danielson - July 20, 2020 at 11:13 AM



“ Thank you for sharing.

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:43 AM



“ To all of my special Schmitt family. Uncle Otto got his wish, he needed to be with Aunt LaVerne, his parents, his siblings including my Grandpa Schmitt and of course, Jesus! Since Aunt LaVerne died, Uncle Otto missed her too much. But now, they are together and still married forever and ever and ever! Amen.

I will do a video of myself taking for memory of Uncle Otto.

But I can message too.

Back in September 2014, Me and my mom Lynnette (Schmitt) Terjesen took one of our cousin on the Jenner side to Fargo for her to fly back to Nebraska and the reason why I came with mom is because I had an appointment with an orthopedic but was not until before evening so Uncle Otto and Aunt LaVerne met us at Best Western Doublewood Inn (now Ramada) Fargo and they took me and my mom to Quaker Steak (the only time me and mom had been there because they closed few years ago). I felt sooo thankful that Otto and LaVerne took us to Quaker Steak and Lube. They had bunch of NASCAR stuff/decorations. They also took me, my mom, Travis and others to Fryn' Pan, Deaners Diner, and a restaurant at Holiday Inn when we come to Fargo area.

Someday, the coronavirus will get better.

When that gets better, maybe we can do something for the Schmitt Family as long as Aunt Ida is still around.

God bless you all especially the family of ours.

Justin Allan Terjesen of Kulm, North Dakota.



Justin Terjesen - July 19, 2020 at 06:25 PM



“ Thanks, Justin! Your Uncle Otto always loved your visits!

Heidi Vansteenburgh - August 09, 2020 at 11:45 AM