



David Smith

April 28, 1939 - October 5, 2024

David H. Smith died in his sleep on Saturday October 5th 2024, he was 85.

The son of Herbert and Celeste (Rocke) Smith, David was born in Evanston, Illinois on April 28, 1939, and was educated in public schools in Evanston. His childhood in Evanston instilled in him a lifelong enthusiasm for the Chicago Cubs. His list of notable achievements began early, as he attained the rank of Eagle Scout as a boy.

He graduated from Carleton College in 1960. On June 3, 1961 in Northfield MN, David married Marie-Louise Arnaud, whom he had met at Carleton. After receiving his BA from Carleton, he earned a Bachelor of Divinity degree from Yale Divinity School in 1964 and then a PhD from Princeton University.

After graduation from Princeton he took a position at Indiana University in 1967, where he helped to launch the Religious Studies department. He was a key player in establishing the department's undergraduate major, master's degree, and doctoral program. He chaired the department of Religious Studies from 1976 to 1984, and was a popular and award-winning teacher, twice being awarded teaching prizes.

Much of David's intellectual work was in the area of religion and bioethics. He received a fellowship at the Kennedy Institute of Bioethics at Georgetown

University, and spent a sabbatical year in England, where he was a volunteer in a hospice, an experience that complemented his work to help found Hospice of Bloomington. He continued to build institutions and develop initiatives at Indiana University and in 1983, he became director of the Poynter Center for the Study of Ethics and American Institutions. As director of the Poynter Center, he oversaw projects concerning the teaching of ethics, care for the dying, genetic testing, research ethics, the moral responsibilities of trustees, and the relationship of religion and ethics. Throughout all this institution-building and achievement at Indiana University, he earned a reputation for being the “Dick Clark” of the Religious Studies department – that is, someone who seemed to be “forever young” and vibrant.

In 2003 David retired from Indiana University, and began a remarkable new chapter of his career. He served as the Frederick Distinguished Visiting Professor at DePauw University, where he helped start the Janet Prindle Institute of Ethics. David served as a visiting professor of bioethics in the Institution for Social and Policy Studies at Yale for the 2003-4 academic year and then served as Director of the Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics at Yale.

Among his other career achievements, he directed the National Endowment for the Humanities seminars for college faculty members for two summers and one academic year, and conducted professional development training conferences for the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps. A fellow of the Hastings Center, he was a consultant on the teaching of ethics and values in higher education and chaired the executive committee of the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics for ten years. He served on the Board of the Indiana Governor’s Council for People with Disabilities. David’s publications include *Health and Medicine in the Anglican Tradition* (1986), *Entrusted: The Moral Responsibilities of Trustees* (1995), and an impressive number of articles and co-authored works.

David was an active member of the community at Trinity Episcopal Church in Bloomington beginning shortly after his arrival to Bloomington. He served in numerous lay leadership roles including the Vestry and Christian Education. He assisted with fund raising for several building expansions. He was an active participant in almost every service he attended. Many of his close friends hail from this loving community. He enjoyed a good potluck supper and a pastry from Crumble at the Men's Group breakfast. From 2000 to 2003 he chaired a Task Force on Ethics and the New Genetics created by the church's Executive Council and he was active with the Episcopal Scholar's Guild.

David was a loving and supportive husband, and was an enthusiastic helper for Marie-Louise's recorder students' recitals and receptions, and events during the summer Recorder Academy. He also worked closely with Marie-Louise on bringing the International Dance for Parkinson's to Bloomington and proudly served on its Board until his death. David was a warm, loving, and encouraging father and grandfather. He was a boundless fountain of support and encouragement for his children (Alexandra, Zachary, and Jacob) and his grandchildren (Jonah, Henry, Catherine, Benjamin and Grace). He was always the loudest supporter at any game or performance of his grandchildren ("hot whoop!")

David Smith lived life to the fullest, and was always a beacon of hope, wisdom, generosity, optimism, vitality and encouragement to those around him. His unflagging sense of hope and optimism is clearly seen in his eternal faith in the Chicago Cubs. He loved deeply and was much loved. His life is worthy of celebration, and he had a profound influence on his family as well as on his intellectual field and his religious community.

The family wants to thank David's loving caregivers from WellCare (Koshie, Becky, Priscilla, Proxie, Tonia, Larry and Michael) and Jim with IU Health Hospice. A special thank you to Vera, Joyce and Mary Ellen for their love and support.

A memorial service will be held in January 2025 at Trinity Episcopal Church in Bloomington. In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to Trinity Episcopal Church Second Century Fund, Dance for Parkinson's of Bloomington, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, or the Marie-Louise A. Smith Recorder Pedagogy and Performance Fund. To make a contribution to the Recorder Pedagogy and Performance Fund please make a check out to the Indiana University Foundation, include the account number 0370014829 on the memo line, and send the check by mail to:

Indiana University Foundation
PO Boxc 6460
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Allen Funeral Home and Crematory, 4155 S. Old State Road 37, have been entrusted with arrangements. Online condolences, photos and memories may be shared with family and friends at www.allencares.com

Tribute Wall



“ David was a key figure in my life at Indiana University, even before I came here to teach. We got acquainted at the Society of Christian Ethics. I did my graduate work in religious ethics, but at the time I was working for a newspaper in Kentucky. David invited me to join a group of professional ethicists and religious personnel for periodic seminars on topics in religious ethics. He later asked me to put a similar group together to explore issues in journalism ethics. This resulted in my getting to know a few other faculty members, including Jon Dilts. Jon alerted me to an opening at the School of Journalism, primarily for teaching journalism ethics. When I came to IU, David was a great supporter, getting me involved at the Poynter Center, including me in academic groups that expanded my work outside the School of Journalism. I had a wonderful 25-year career teaching at IU. But it would not have as rich or diverse without the contributions David made to my intellectual life. As a colleague and a friend, he was one of the best academic mentors I ever had.

David Boeyink - January 20, 2025 at 10:45 AM

DC

“ I joined the IU School of Law faculty in 1983, about the same time that David Smith began his 20-year tenure as director of IU’s Poynter Center for the Study of Ethics and American Institutions. Under his leadership, the Poynter Center thrived as a vibrant hub of interdisciplinary research, teaching, and conversations about ethics, morality, and religion. At David’s invitation, I was an active participant in various programs and activities. I loved the Poynter Center. It became my second academic home, and David became a much-valued colleague and friend. David was an outstanding scholar, but he especially loved teaching, and he valued intellectual discussions for their own sake. David was a wonderful academic and a delightful human being. I am grateful that my life intersected with his, making mine much richer as a result.

Daniel Conkle - January 15, 2025 at 04:08 PM

AM

“ Dear Alexandra, Zachary, Jacob, and IU Department of Religious Studies colleagues: David was an inspiring teacher; a creative, supportive, and collegial colleague and mentor; and a precise bioethical thinker and scholar. He was also an exquisite human being. He graced colleagues and students with his listening ear, his compassion, his gentleness, and his delight in the flourishing of others. I was privileged to be his junior colleague. My sympathy to his family and wide circle of friends.

Ann Mongoven - December 06, 2024 at 11:32 PM

AM

“ Alexandra, Zachary, Jacob: your parents were among the first people I met on coming to Bloomington and over the years we stayed in touch, How glad I am that in recent years we met regularly at Dance for Parkinson's. Your father's good sense of humor and encouraging words gave much joy and encouragement to the group as he did throughout his life to any group. I send you my love and condolences at this time. Antonia Matthew

Antonia Matthew - October 21, 2024 at 10:21 AM