



Walter Johnson

September 30, 1933 - December 15, 2009

The Rev. WALTER FRANCIS JOHNSON passed away Tuesday, December 15, in Bloomington, Indiana. He was 76 years old. Born in Akron, Ohio to the late E. Russell and Cornelia Johnson, Rev. Johnson graduated from Akron South High School in January of 1951. A few days later he began classes at Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio, graduating with a B.A. in 1954. He went on to Hamma Divinity School (now Hamma School of Theology) at Wittenberg, graduating in 1957 with a Master of Divinity degree. He later earned a Master's Degree in Education from Ohio University and a Graduate Certificate in Counseling from the University of Illinois. Rev. Johnson served many communities as pastor. His first call was as Assistant Pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Canton, Ohio, where he served from 1957 to 1960. He went on to serve Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Tyler, Texas (1960-1963); First English Lutheran Church, Cleveland, Ohio (1963 to 1966); Christ Church and Lutheran Campus Ministry, Athens, Ohio (1966-1972); the Lutheran Campus Center (later St. Andrew's Church), Champaign, Illinois (1972-1984); and St. Thomas Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Indiana (1984-1995). Following an early retirement for health reasons in 1995, he worked part-time as a Mission Director in Indiana and Kentucky for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He retired again in 1998. In 2005, Rev. Johnson was given the honorary title of "Pastor Emeritus" at St. Thomas Church in Bloomington. He was an active supporter of many social and environmental causes, and a champion for the civil rights of marginalized populations. An

unusually talented wordsmith, he chose to use his writing talents to glorify God and preach His word. He self-published two collections of his sermons, "Ambo Oddities" and "At the Edge of Christmas: Meditations on Christmas Eve." Rev. Johnson was the recipient of the first annual Distinguished Service Award given by the National Lutheran Church Campus Ministry, which included a grant for a study sabbatical in Italy, Switzerland, and England. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 48 years, Nona Herrick Johnson, who passed away unexpectedly in 2008, and by his brother, Bill, and sister, Carol. Rev. Johnson is survived by daughters Letitia K. Johnson of Ste. Genevieve, Missouri; Larissa C. Johnson and her partner Eric Sparks of Bloomfield; and the granddaughter he loved so much, Addison Rayne Sparks, also of Bloomfield. A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, December 19, 2009, at St. Thomas Lutheran Church in Bloomington. Presiding at the service will be the Rev. Dr. Lyle M. McKee, assisted by the Rev. Richard Zawistoski. A memorial fund for an as-yet undetermined purpose has been established at St. Thomas Lutheran Church, 3800 E. Third Street, Bloomington IN 47401. Allen Funeral Home is handling arrangements. Online condolences may be sent to the family at www.allenfuneralhome.org.

Tribute Wall

CA

“ I just found out that Walt passed away and I'd like to extend my deepest sympathy to his family. Walt has been one of my genealogy buddies for many years. Along with his wisdom, he shared info. with me about my family. His grandmother, Carrie LAKIN-RICKETTS was raised by my gg-grandmother, Mary (Mame)PINNIX-LAKIN of Circleville O., who married his gg-grandfather, Francis Asbury LAKIN. I'm happy for Walt that he has been reunited with God and his wonderful Nona, and that his gentle, loving nature will live on through his children & grandchildren.

God Bless

cathyh361@yahoo.com

Cathy Haddox - March 22, 2013 at 08:20 AM

MA

“ Pastor Johnson was a wonderful counselor and friend to me. He helped me in so many ways, and I remember my trip to his home in Bloomington IN. He and Noma were so sweet to invite me to visit them. I think of him often and wondered how he was doing, but would get busy and never got the chance to correspond with me again. I will greatly miss him. My prayers are with you the family, as I am sure you will truly miss him.

Mary Blue - March 22, 2013 at 08:20 AM

SH

“ Walt was such a dear, kind, soul. Every email he wrote to me always contained his very clear, wonderful voice. He truly did have a marvelous command of our language, but even more so, the large capacity to welcome all in his heart and language. I enjoyed the opportunity to get to know him at St. Thomas. We will miss him so much, as well as Nona.

Shari Rogge-Fidler - March 22, 2013 at 08:20 AM