



Service of Remembrance and Commendation
for
Rev. Donald Ray Just

November 23, 1939 – April 27, 2020



Bethany Lutheran Church
Ephraim, Wisconsin
Aug. 30, 2021
10:00 AM EDT

Well done, good and faithful servant.
Matthew 25:23

Order of Service

Gathering & Greeting

Baptismal Promise

Prayer

Let us pray together...

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you this day our beloved, Don. We thank you for giving him to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up in the victory of our risen Lord, Jesus Christ, so that we may live in confidence and hope until, by your call, we are gathered to our heavenly home in the company of all who have gone before. Amen.

Reflections by Friends and Family

Hymn #685 **Take My Life That I May Be**

Scripture Readings Phillipians 2:1-11
John 12:23-26

Sermon Pastor John Rollefson

Hymn #659 **Will You Let Me Be Your Servant**

The Apostles' Creed

Prayers of Intercession (God of mercy...**hear our prayer.**)

Commendation

Closing Hymn **Beautiful Savior** Arr. By F. Melius Christiansen
(Performed by the choirs of Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota)

Benediction and Words of Sending

Please process to the churchyard for greetings and to receive a token of remembrance of Don.
Private committal at Bethany Lutheran cemetery will follow the church service.

Serving today:

Pastor: Rev. John Rollefson

Organist: Lori Free

Readers:

Ron Moen Friend, Concordia College '61 classmate

Carl Evenson Friend, former ELCA colleague

Marilyn Smith Friend, former ELCA colleague

Bill Smith Friend

Special assistant: Elsie Evenson

"The connections we make in the course of a life---maybe that's what heaven is." Rev. Fred ("Mr.") Rogers

"What is our death but a night's sleep? For as through sleep all weariness and faintness pass away and cease, and the powers of the spirit come back again, so that in the morning we arise fresh and strong and joyous; so at the Last Day we shall rise again as if we had only slept a night, and shall be fresh and strong." Martin Luther (1483-1546)

"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." Mother Teresa.

IN MEMORIUM

Donald Ray Just, 80, of Avery County, North Carolina, passed away April 27, 2020 at his winter residence in Boone, NC from complications of atypical Parkinson's disease. An ordained Lutheran minister for over 50 years, Rev. Just used his many gifts to educate, counsel, console, and shepherd students, seminarians, soldiers and congregations in several states in the USA and abroad.

Don was born November 23, 1939 in rural McIntosh County, North Dakota, the first-born of Julius and Helen (Dockter) Just, both of German-Russian heritage. His childhood was greatly influenced by the values of his hard-working farm family and neighbors in Berlin, ND. Growing up, church, school, sports, and FFA provided formative experiences and opportunities to develop leadership skills. Don came to believe deeply in taking advantage of opportunities for personal development and spiritual servanthood.

Don graduated from high school in LaMoure, ND in 1957. He then attended Concordia Junior College, St. Paul, Minnesota, graduating after two years with an Associate of Arts degree. He continued his studies at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota, graduating in 1961 with a BA degree with majors in Philosophy and History-Political Science. Don went on to earn advanced degrees in theology, guidance, and education at Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois (M.Div. 1965), NC State (M.Ed. 1972), and the School of Theology and Graduate Center at Claremont, California (PhD, 1981).

After ordination at his home church, Trinity of LaMoure, in September, 1965, Don was installed as pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church and Peace Lutheran Church in Victoria and Sydney, British Columbia, where he served for two years.

Rev. Just was commissioned as Captain in the US Army Chaplaincy in June, 1967 and served for five years, including one year of combat in Vietnam. While there, he served with two distinguished and decorated battalions in the Tet Counter Offensive operations and was awarded Bronze Stars for service and valor and the Purple Heart. From 1969-1972 he was assigned to Fort Bragg, NC as Brigade Chaplain with the 82nd Airborne Division.

After separating from the Army, Don became Dean of Student Affairs and assistant professor of psychology at Concordia College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin while simultaneously completing his doctoral work. He then served as interim pastor at three congregations in Wisconsin while anticipating a return to a college setting. He received a call to be campus chaplain at Lenoir Rhyne College in Hickory, NC in 1982 and served there for eleven years, followed by congregational ministry and seminary teaching in Texas, serving as deployed staff of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and ultimately a return to Lenoir Rhyne as adjunct faculty with a part-time interim pastorate at St. Mark's, Lenoir/Blowing Rock, NC. Don also participated in Bethany Lutheran Church's summer ministry in Ephraim, Wisconsin for forty years.

Don felt honored and privileged to be a Lutheran pastor. He loved God and had a strong personal faith. He had an adventurous spirit, loved to travel, and had a pilot license for many years. He enjoyed working with his hands, building retaining walls at his beloved home, Pastorage, in the Blue Ridge mountains of North Carolina, and woodworking/carving. Many friends, family members, students, and congregations were the recipients of wooden Advent wreaths and other functional and decorative objects he created. A devoted listener to classical music and avid reader, Don particularly enjoyed discussing literature, religion, philosophy, politics or the topic of the day.

Rev. Don Just is survived by his wife, Laura Mueller Just, brothers Myron (Ellen) Just and Walt (Patricia) Just, sisters Marcella (Robert) Ludwig and Carol Just, Aunt Laverna Dockter (Clifton) Kaseman, and many beloved nieces, nephews, and cousins. Over the years Don nurtured and treasured many special "almost family" relationships. He adored and was especially proud of being "Bampa" to Emily, Bryan, and Samuel Sandifer.