



NORTH
AMERICAN
BAPTIST
CONFERENCE

SERVANT LINK

Connecting Retired Christian Workers & Friends of the NAB Conference

This World Is Not My Home

BY RON STOLLER

When we travel north and south on Interstate 5 between Oregon and California, we try to stop for lunch at a great Christian restaurant called Heaven on Earth. If you have a sweet tooth, like I do, the sweet rolls, donuts, and cakes are out of this world! Of course, the meals must be made by angels, as they are heavenly! This meal helps keep us going for our twelve-hour journey. What helps keep us going on our spiritual journey are the opportunities to be open books to others we interact with daily, showing our love for God and our compassion for others. We hold on deeply to God's promises as we walk where God leads us and at the same time wait for the day we can enter into his heavenly home, worship at his feet, and walk on those streets of gold. In this edition of *Servant Link*, we again read of many of our NAB family who have been called home to end their earthly journey and meet their Savior, family, and friends. What a reward they must be getting seeing those who they may have led to the Lord while on their earthly journey. We mourn with the families at their loss and yet rejoice with the families at their "graduation" to their eternal home to be with Jesus.

Many of our NAB family members are in God's waiting room. New in this edition of *Servant Link*, you can see the partial list of over twenty-five of our senior seniors who are over 90 but are still being used by God daily. Milton Zeeb has told me many times when I have called him in Arizona that he and his wife Alice are in "God's waiting room." Until God calls us home, we are to be used as open books reflecting Christ to those around us. In 2 Corinthians 3:3, it says we "are a letter written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God" (NIRV). In the old hymn we sing, "This world is not my home, I'm just a-passing through. My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue." Our treasures are in Heaven, and we are just passing through this broken world. Our legal citizenship is on Earth, but our citizenship is in heaven, as we read in Philippians 3:20–21: "But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body." Reflect on his love, patience, joy, and message to those around you in God's waiting room, and wait for him to call!



SENIORS OVER 90

Art Brust in Elk Grove, California, will be 93 on December 8, 2022, and his wife, **Sena**, is 90.

Ben Engbrecht, retired Sioux Falls Seminary Advancement VP, is 91.

Peter and Doris Fehr both turned 90 in January 2022 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Fred Folkerts in Chicago, Illinois, is 91.

Nancy Grover in Portland, Oregon, is 90.

Milton Hildebrandt in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is 94.

Richard Houts, a professor emeritus at Sioux Falls Seminary, is 92.

Gordon Huisinga in Minneapolis, Minnesota, will be 94 on July 16, and his wife, **Betty**, is 92.

Reinhold Kersten is in Florida.

Harold Lang in Minneapolis, Minnesota, turns 90 on August 21.

Dr. Donald N. Miller in Hillsboro, Oregon, turns 90 on July 21.

Florence Miller in Benton Harbor, Michigan, is 97 (flojmillier@gmail.com).

Willis Potratz in Bismarck, North Dakota, will be 99 on November 18 (701-989-7378).

Bruce Rich in Hillsboro, Oregon, is 91.

Gladys Richter in Portland, Oregon, turned 90 in November.

Ken Schmuland in Post Falls, Idaho, is 91 (208-777-3039).

Trudy Schatz in Edmonton, Alberta, turned 94 on February 16.

Paul Siewert in Minneapolis, Minnesota, will be 92 on March 25, 2022.

Bernice Strohschein in Tacoma, Washington, will be 94 on July 19, and her husband, **Allan**, will be 94 on September 21.

Bruno Voss in Edmonton, Alberta, turned 96 on March 10.

Alice Zeeb in Tucson, Arizona, is 90.

Who did we miss?



HOME TO GLORY

Evelyn Lang Itterman, 92, passed away in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, on August 27, 2021. She was born in Emery, South Dakota, to Theo and Martha Lang. She married Bert Itterman in Sioux Falls in 1954. They ministered in a number of churches in the upper Midwest. Bert, her son Bruce, and her brother Raymond preceded her to heaven. A service was held at Trinity Baptist in Sioux Falls on August 29.

Dr. John Foerster, 85, passed away on August 30, 2021, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, after a long battle with cancer and dementia. He was a renowned hematology/oncology physician who served as professor and head of the department of Medicine at St. Boniface Hospital and the University of Manitoba. It was his commitment to his faith as expressed through active participation at McDermot Avenue Baptist Church and the NAB, including Sioux Falls Seminary, that allowed him to broaden his influence beyond medicine. His memoir, *No Abiding Dwelling Place*, is available from his wife, Elfriede, who can be reached at wekuenstler@mymts.net. His celebration of life was on Sept. 11 at McDermot Baptist.

Joy Reed, 76, went to be with the Lord on August 30, 2021, in Madison, South Dakota. She was born in Gatesville, Texas, on November 25, 1944, and married Roger Reed on July 1, 1967. Roger taught at North Dakota State University. They raised two daughters, Shonda, of Sioux Falls, and Shan, who is an NAB missionary in Japan.

Faith Evangeline Page, 74, entered the presence of her Lord and Savior on September 5, 2021. She is lovingly remembered by Syd, her husband of fifty-three years; her two children; her three siblings; her four grandchildren; and her nieces and nephews. A

celebration of life was held in Edmonton, Alberta, on September 10. The service was streamed and can be viewed at faithpage.ca. Contact Syd at Taylor Seminary in Edmonton.

Leora Mae “Lee” Herrmann (nee Potratz), 64, was hit and killed by a car on her morning walk with her husband in Bismarck, North Dakota, on September 18, 2021. From the street of Bismarck, she walked directly onto the streets of heaven and into the arms of her heavenly Father. Lee was born in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to Rev. Willis and Ruth Potratz. She is survived by her husband of forty-three years, Tim; two sons, TJ (Dani) and David (Sophia); and father, Willis. Her mother, Ruth Potratz, and her sister, Eloise Potratz, preceded her in death.

David Thomas Dettmer Priestley, 85, entered his heavenly rest on October 7, 2021. He was born in Lisburn, Northern Ireland. David will be missed by his wife, Janet; his daughter, Sondra; his sons, Roger (Marcie) and Rob (Laurie); his grandchildren, Annalea, Aidan, and Allysa; his brother-in-law, Bill Newman; many relatives; and many students, staff, and NAB connections. From 1982 to 2001, he worked as a professor of Historical Theology at North American Baptist Divinity School (Taylor Seminary). David spent innumerable hours researching and writing about the history of Baptists, particularly Baptists in Canada. His memorial service was at Zion Baptist Church in Edmonton, Alberta, on November 9.

Linda Kinnier (nee Schilke), 66, passed away on October 15, 2021, in Portland, Oregon, after eight years of valiantly battling cancer. She was the youngest of four children born to Richard and Kathryn Schilke. She will be buried alongside her parents in South Dakota in the future. She is

survived by her husband, Jim; two daughters and their husbands; and two grandsons. Jim has moved to Spokane, Washington. A memorial was held at Bethany Baptist Church in Portland on November 20.

Myrl Thiesies, 90, passed into God's presence on October 18, 2021, at the Dallas Retirement Village in Dallas, Oregon. He attended Biola University in California and then went to North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Myrl entered the ministry with Virginia after their marriage on August 10, 1956. He whole-heartedly and humbly pastored congregations in Paul, Idaho; Spokane, Odessa, and Renton, Washington; and McClusky and Rosenfeld, North Dakota; in addition to various interim positions. His celebration of life was on October 23 at Salt Creek Baptist Church in Dallas. You can reach Virginia at mvthiesies@gmail.com or 509-768-4951.

Marian Saline "Sally" Prast (nee Batzer), 92, entered into the presence of her Lord on October 31, 2021. She married Laurence Raymond Prast on July 2, 1949, and moved to Sioux Falls, South Dakota, for Laurence to attend the North American Baptist Seminary. They interned at NAB churches on the Canadian plains and in provinces. Sally and Larry moved to Arizona after he became paralyzed in June 1992. He passed away in 2006. She loved people, ministry, and her Lord and Savior.

Hildegard Lore Merke (nee Roller), 88, entered the loving arms of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on November 4, 2021, in Edmonton, Alberta. She was born in Gross Hanswalde, East Prussia. She was preceded in death by her husband, Ehrenfried; daughter, Trudy; and brother, Dieter. The Merkes served churches in Alberta, Toronto, and Chicago and touched many lives. She is survived by her children, Edgar (Wilhelmina), George (Johanna), Rose, and Gary (Tania); her sisters, Else, Renate and Hanni; her brother, Werner; six grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren. Hildegard

had a great love of Christ and lived the Gospel through kindness, the sacrificial love of others, hospitality, and a sacred devotion to prayer for others. A celebration of life was held at Zion Baptist Church in Edmonton.

Myrna Joyce Goodman, 83, went to be with her Savior and Lord Jesus Christ on November 30, 2021. She lived a full life serving others as a registered nurse and midwife. She worked in Kentucky and Texas and as an NAB missionary in Cameroon beginning in 1988. Her memorial service was held on December 16 at Vista Grande Baptist Church in Colorado Springs, Colorado. There will be a graveside service in Millersburg, Iowa, in the spring.

Anthony R. Bradseth, 53, of Dolgeville, New York, and formerly of Bemidji, Minnesota, passed away peacefully on December 1, 2021, at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany, New York. He studied at North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls. He pastored in many places, including Cleveland, Ohio; Jamestown, North Dakota; Dell Rapids, Stickney, and Belle Fourche, South Dakota; and Parkersburg, Iowa. He pastored six churches in New York. His celebration of life was held on December 7, 2021, at St. Johnsville United Methodist Church in Johnsville, New York.

Joanne Heckman Kiemele, 82, went to glory on January 5, 2022. She graduated from Bethel College in St. Paul, Minnesota. In 1958, she joined God's Volunteers, the musical traveling team of the NAB. She married LeRoy Kiemele in 1961 and together they raised four children. For over sixty years, Joanne faithfully supported LeRoy in their many pastorates and military chaplaincy locations, playing organ and piano and leading women's Bible studies. She leaves behind her loving husband, their four children, and seven grandchildren. A live-streamed memorial service was held at Olympic View Baptist Church on January 15. It can be seen at <https://olympicview.churchcenter.com/episodes/106439>. Contact LeRoy at ljkiemele@earthlink.net

or 253-651-7526.

Herman Effa, 88, was ushered into his heavenly rest on January 18, 2022, after a long battle with leukemia. Herman was born to Julius and Olga Effa in Springside, Saskatchewan. He followed Christ at age 12 and was baptized the following year. He prepared for ministry at Christian Training Institute in Edmonton, Alberta; Winnipeg Bible Institute; Winnipeg College; and North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, which also awarded him a doctor of Divinity degree in 1993. He married Ardath Schmierer in 1953; they partnered in ministry for over sixty years. They were blessed with their children Allan and Jerilyn. They pastored in Edmonton, Winnipeg, North and South Dakota, and Michigan; served as missionaries in Brazil for ten years; and were on staff at the NAB International Office for ten years in the missions department. After retiring in 1996, Herman and Ardath led twenty-three teams to Brazil and Mexico. The memorial service was held on January 30 at Hillview Baptist Church in Edmonton. Contact Ardath at ardatheffa@shaw.ca or 587-520-3834.

Milton Zeeb, 91, entered into the presence of God on January 30, 2022, in Mesa Arizona. Milton graduated the NAB seminary in Sioux Falls, North Dakota, in 1956. He pastored churches in South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania before serving for twenty-years as the regional minister for the South Central region. Milton and his wife, Alice, retired to Mesa, Arizona. He devoted his final years to Alice, who continues to reside in an Alzheimer's group home. Milton leaves behind Alice and his two daughters, Faith Creech and Joy Brinton, and their families. Faith and her husband, Chris, previously pastored some NAB churches and are now with Converge. You can reach them at faithdcreech@gmail.com.

For more information about many of these obituaries, please contact the Stollers.

IN NEED OF PRAYER

Ken and Esther Schmuland have both been given great reports from their oncologists. Praise the Lord! Contact them in Post Falls, Idaho, at 208-777-3039.

Dr. Peter and Doris Fehr, former NAB missionaries to Cameroon and former Sioux Falls Seminary board member (Peter), turned 90 years old in January. In celebration, their family is organized a “card shower.” If you would like to bless Peter and Doris with a card or note, you may send your greetings to: Peter and Doris Fehr, 5415 69th Ave. N. Apt. 433, Brooklyn Center, MN 55429. Peter had a brain bleed recently and needs prayers for recovery in a retirement center in St. Paul, Minnesota. Doris has Alzheimer’s and is in another part of the care center.

Elsie Lewandowski is having difficulties with her eye prosthesis due to some swelling in her eyelid. This has caused her journey to Romania to be delayed, and the unpredictability and persistence of the swelling has medical people stumped. Contact Elsie in Edmonton, Alberta, at elsielew55@gmail.com.

ON THE MOVE:

Audrey Littman has moved to assisted living at Good Shepherd Lutheran Home, Suite 47, 4702 Northmount Dr., Wetaskiwin, AB T9A 3T3 Canada.

Herb and Myrtle Bachler, retired NAB pastor and former chaplain at South Country Village, Medicine Hat, an NAB retirement community, have moved to Red Deer, Alberta, to be closer to family.

Jim Renke retired from being the regional minister for the Upper Mississippi Region in August 2021. He now pastors at Village Church of Lincolnshire, Illinois. Currently, Ron Norman and Phyl Putz are sharing the responsibilities as interim regional ministers.

Chris Gorman resigned as regional minister for the Northwest Region in October 2021 to be more involved with the local chaplaincy program for the first responders in Olympia, Washington. He will stay involved at Timberline Baptist Church. Marcus Elmer is the current interim regional minister.

Dave Ewing has retired from being the Eastern Association’s regional minister. He and his wife, Jean, will remain in their home in New York.

Carol Potratz has retired as visitation pastor at Zion Baptist Church in Edmonton, Alberta. After nearly fifty years of active ministry with the NAB, her heart still remains in ministry, with memories of years in many overseas countries and positions with the NAB in North America. She will remain in her home in Edmonton. Send her a note at carol.potratz@yahoo.com.

Dr. Donald N. Miller, former NAB pastor, seminary administrator, and humanitarian, has written a number of little booklets chronicling his illness. Don has been dealing with kidney dialyses for many years and now, along with heart failure, he has other complications. His latest booklet, *How to Die (And Live) with Dignity* is available free of charge by simply requesting a copy from him at 12814 NW, Bishop Rd., Hillsboro, OR 97124 or at dnmiller@whiz.to.

CELEBRATIONS AND GATHERINGS

On October 2, 2021, there was a gathering of NAB retired workers at Faith Baptist Church in St. Paul, Minnesota, with twelve present for coffee and great fellowship.

On October 5, there was gathering at Pizza Ranch in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, with fifteen present.

After Thanksgiving, seven retired workers gathered at Ken and Esther Schmuland’s home in Post Falls, Idaho, for Chinese food and great fellowship.

In Portland, Oregon, on December 17, retired workers had a great fellowship meal.

In December, over twenty-five retired pastors and missionaries got together at a restaurant in Edmonton, Alberta, to have a fellowship time of sharing and worship.

On January 20, there was a gathering in Phoenix, Arizona, with fifteen present. Save the date for February 21, 2023, in Phoenix with Harry Kelm!

On February 24, there was a gathering of retired workers in Tacoma, Washington.

When is your local gathering?

Notice: Due to the large number of items in this delayed scheduled printing of the Servant Link, we have had to abbreviate information on many items.

For more information on these items or new information for the next edition of Servant Link, please contact Ron and Joan Stoller at Stoller@Japan.email.ne.jp or by phone, either 503-629-5053 or 503-709-4041.