In Memoriam

2019
2019 ANNUAL CONFERENCE MEMORIAL MESSAGE
GRANT HAGIYA

I recently attended the Memorial Service for one of the giants of our Japanese American Christian Churches. Although he was from a different denomination, and much older, I had worked with him and admired his ministry for many decades. As I sat through his Memorial Service I was deeply grateful to God for his life and ministry.

Likewise, we celebrate the lives of our California-Pacific Annual Conference saints who have entered God’s eternal heaven. I am no less grateful for their lives and ministry, and all the people they touched and transformed in their careers. I share with you the deep loss of not having them with us daily, but also, I am consumed by gratitude for their lives and work.

May God provide comfort and courage for all of you in the coming days, but most importantly, may you know that your loved one awakens to God’s light, color and love. God will take care of them now and always!

Blessings,

Bishop Grant

Bishop Grant
Deceased Bishops

Bishop Benjamin Chamness
December 22, 2018

Bishop William B. Oden
December 22, 2018

Bishop Judith Craig
1/18/2019

Bishop C. Dale White
March 29, 2019

Deceased Spouses

Mrs. Mary Ann Hunt
November 10, 2018

Mrs. Mary Jean Russell
December 27, 2018
Clergy
Cynthia Abrams

October 11, 1960 – January 11, 2019

ABRAMS, CYNTHIA J. (P.93; F.96) C-P 93 Whittier: First, Assoc; 97 (¶337.1) Western NY; 99 Claremont: Nat’l UM Native-American Center; 2003 (Jan 16) EM: General Board of Church & Society, Program Director for Drug and Alcohol Concerns; 15 General Board of Church & Society, Director, Health and Wholeness and Special Assistant to the General Secretary for White House and Congressional Affairs

Cynthia was born in Buffalo, New York, as the first surviving child of Melba and Rev. Dr. Marvin Abrams. She first lived on the Cattaraugus Reservation in Seneca Territory. At age six, the family began a series of moves to Falconer, Kennedy, and Rochester, New York, where she graduated from East High School and then to California, where her beloved Dodgers play.

In California, Cynthia graduated from California State University, Long Beach with a degree in Journalism and from Claremont School of Theology with her Master’s in Divinity. She was ordained by the United Methodist Church. She served at Whittier: First United Methodist Church and First United Methodist Church in Sheridan, New York. She also served as Executive Director of the National United Methodist Native American Center. In 2003, Cynthia began her work at the General Board of Church and Society in Washington, DC, where she taught and fought for social justice around the world. She was a social justice warrior!

Cynthia was also Cindy and Auntie Cindy to a large, loving, and extended family. She will be forever missed by those who survive her, including her parents; two sisters, Robin (Rick) Abrams-Duarte and Ruth Ann Abrams; two brothers, Joseph (Nicole) and M. Donald (Robyn); nine nieces and nephews, one great-nephew, one great-niece, and a great number of aunts, uncles, and cousins (last numbering over 30).

We know that she goes to join those who went before her, including her beloved Grandma Ruth and Grandma Muriel.

Well done, good and faithful servant.

-Family
The Rev. David Achón Gómez was born in Caibarién, Cuba on December 15, 1925 in a Christian Presbyterian family very faithful to the Lord and to the church. His parents, Florencio Achón and Angelina Gómez, were pillars of the church, occupying positions of elder ruler and deaconess, and giving their Christian testimony in every place and time.

David studied at the Presbyterian College of Caibarién and belonged to the youth and Christian Effort groups of his church. Years later the family moved to Sancti Spíritus. David studied high school in Sancti Spíritus and the Progressive College of Cárdenas Presbyterian, where he sang in the choir and participated in several organizations. In La Progresiva he worked as co-director of the building and dormitory of male pupils. In 1953 he entered the Evangelical Seminary of Theology in Matanzas, where, in 1955, he met Raquel Gutiérrez, who became a music teacher and choir director at the seminary. David and Raquel join their lives after David graduates from the seminary and begin their ministry in the Presbyterian Church of Guines. Later they receive an appeal from the Presbyterian Church of Cabaiguán.

After leaving Cuba in 1968, and arriving in Los Angeles, California with his family, David finds work with the California and Arizona Conference of the United Methodist Church. In 1975 he was received as a Provisional Member in the Conference and in 1977 he was received as an Elder in full connection. He served in the following United Methodist Churches:

1969 - 1973 Worked in a joint Ministry between the Presbyterian Church of Normandie Avenue and the Rosewood United Methodist Church. (Around 1972 the ministry in the Presbyterian Church ended and the Hispanics came to Rosewood).

After entering the Retirement status for the 3rd time, he started attending Downey UMC. As a church hire he worked with the Hispanic Ministry of Downey UMC until December 1917.

David and Raquel had only one son, David Achón Jr. David became a widower in 2013 and he passed away on May 1st, 2019. He is survived by his Son.

- Osvaldo & Zoila García and Ana-Haydée Urda
James Kay Brewster was born in Elbow Lake, Minnesota, on December 21, 1935. The Brewster family moved to Woodland, Washington, when he was 5 years old. Jim graduated from Woodland High School. The Brewster family lived there until 1953 when they moved to San Jose, California. Jim met his beloved wife, Arlene, when they were in 9th grade in Woodland. She moved away that same year, but Jim said he was going to marry her someday.

Jim graduated from San Jose State University. Jim and Arlene rekindled their friendship, which grew into the love story that lasted through both of their lives. Jim and Arlene were married on December 22, 1956. Their children, Matt and Julie, were added to the family and they settled down in Southern California. Jim worked in the aerospace industry for a few major companies, but mostly for Northrup Corporation.

Jim and Arlene volunteered as youth directors for many years in the United Methodist Church. They were the youth parents for the youth dorm at Annual Conference for many years and traveled with the youth and young adults of the Conference to jurisdictional and general conferences and events.

Jim returned to seminary and received his Master of Divinity from CST. He was ordained a Deacon in 1985 and an Elder in 1989. He worked in churches in Ontario, Torrance, and Maui. Although he retired in 1999, he continued to pastor churches until 2009.

Jim and Arlene moved into their residence in Baker Homes. As a “retired” pastor, Jim, worked for Cokesbury and was the interim pastor two different times in Lancaster. He also helped several pastors take sabbaticals by filling in for them. In retirement, Jim and Arlene traveled and attended sporting events and plays and concerts. He was a caregiver for his wife during her battle with cancer until she passed away in 2015. Jim was a grandparent to Clark, Jenee, Paul, Blake and Katy. He was a great grandparent to Zooey, Marley and Henry. They were his joy! And so many received joy and were blessed by his positive and upbeat daily posts on Facebook (it became his ministry and connection when it became difficult to get out).

Jim died on November 3, 2018. All of his days were spent loving, listening and sharing his love of life and people. He helped youth and young adults hear their call into ministry. He became a parent, grandparent, dear friend, and colleague to so many.

-With love, Matt Brewster and Julie Elkins (children)
Reverend Leroy Ishmun Brown was born in Kingston, Jamaica and grew up primarily in North Carolina. He was born to Jacob and Emma Brown and had 11 brothers and sisters.

Prior to becoming a pastor, he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte North Carolina, and received his Master of Divinity from Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California. He served over 32 years as pastor of many United Methodist Churches within the Cal-Pac Conference as well as in Seattle, Washington, and Berkeley, California. He was an active member of Black Methodists for Church Renewal and of Ebony Prophets.

He was also very actively involved in the community as well as being a chaplain for Los Angeles County. He was part of many community groups being especially concerned with the problems of youth and those who struggled to a rightful place in life.

Reverend Leroy Brown always had a song on his heart and most knew him knowing that he wasn’t just a great preacher but he also could sing like no other.

Prior to him passing away he moved back to North Carolina to be closer to his siblings and other family. He moved back to California in September 2018 and resided with his daughter Moné Brown until he passed away in the comfort of her home. He had a lot of love with him and is missed dearly.

He leaves behind his daughter Moné Brown, sons Ishmun Leroy Brown, Ishmun (Lee) Leroy Williams, Byron Hudson; grandchildren Kyera, Tamara, Jordan, Brayonn, Branay; and great-grandchildren Kaiden, Chayce, and Dior.

He may not be here physically any longer but we know that he is at peace as he would say and love to sing: “His Eye Is On the Sparrow and We Know He Watches Me.” Sunrise July 11, 1936, Sunset February 11, 2019 We will continue to miss you, Sunshine.

— Moné Brown,
Harold Eldon Carlson, known to his friends and community as “Pastor Johnny,” went to be with our Lord at the age of 88. He had been a resident most recently in Tustin but a long-time resident of Hemet, Burbank, and Anaheim.

Johnny is survived by his daughter, Diana Carlson, and his son and daughter-in-law, John and Michelle Carlson; his grandchildren: Jillian Felver, Kaitlin Carlson, Tyler Carlson and Garrett Carlson. He is also survived by his sister, Mrs. Margaret-Ann “Peggy” Carlson.

He is predeceased by his wife of almost 62 years, Rilla, who was his partner in music, ministry, and fellowship.

Johnny was born on March 6, 1930, in Wasco, California, to Harold Emil-Ludwig and Aimee Carlson and grew up in a Swedish home, Swedish being his first language. He graduated from Hollywood High School and worked his way through college working for the California and Oregon Forestry Services. He attended Mount San Antonio College, then Redlands University, graduating in 1950 with his Bachelor of Arts. It was at Redlands where he met his future wife, Rilla Alice Stickney.

Johnny and Rilla were married on Sept. 4, 1954 and then left shortly thereafter to Atlanta, Georgia where Johnny attended Candler School of Theology at Emory University. Upon his graduation, he returned to pastor in the Southern California-Pacific United Methodist Church Conference serving as a Senior Pastor for 42 years. He then served as a Minister of Visitation for various churches in Hemet where he and Rilla retired. Johnny served United Methodist congregations in Redondo Beach, Oceanside, Hemet, West Anaheim, Upland, Westminster, Huntington Beach and Burbank throughout his 42 years. He was also involved in the United Christian Ashram, serving as an evangelist and on the National board. He was very active in the Red Cross serving as a county chair in several counties.

Johnny loved to read, travel (Europe, Scandinavia, Yosemite National Park), go camping, hiking, and swimming. He loved to attend baseball games and watch the Dodgers. He enjoyed playing and watching golf and watching college football (especially USC). He will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved him.

-Diana Carlson
Dorothy Jean McCallum Chapman died surrounded by her family in Mt. Pleasant South Carolina. She was born in Little Current, Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada.

She is survived by five children from her first husband, Donald. They are: Susan, Donald, William, Robert, and Milne. She was Oma to her grandchildren: Donald, David, Heide, Elizabeth, Sarah, Kristin, and Lauren. She had two grandchildren: Ashlynn, Carrie Lynn, and Quinn, a great-grandchild.

Her life took a turn and she married Donald Hugh McCallum in December 1944. So, she began her role as a military wife and mother making homes from Alaska to Germany, from Ft. Riley, Kansas and Ft. Hood, Texas.

She never lost sight of her education goals and graduated from Central Michigan University with a bachelor’s in Education and a master's in Special Education.

She lost Donald in 1970, but was prepared and took a teaching position. One position took her to Guam as a special education teacher and there she met her second husband Orlando "Orrie" Chapman, a United Methodist pastor. Her goal to be a Methodist minister was realized when she moved from Guam to Claremont, California, where she received a degree from the Claremont School of Theology and was ordained. She was appointed to Trona and Randsburg. After retirement she served Waller (Texas) UMC.

She and Orrie moved to Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina. However, after 16 years of marriage, she was widowed again. Later, she moved to McDonough, Georgia, with her son, Robert. When it became evident that she needed to be in specialized care, she moved back to Mt. Pleasant where she spent her last days.

Jean was an artist and sketched beautiful charcoalss of nature as well as whimsical characters for her kids while teaching. She was an adventurer; there was no trip that she was not ready to undertake, travelling widely in Europe, the British Isles, and the South Pacific.

She will be interred with Donald Hugh McCallum in Arlington National Cemetery, in Arlington, Virginia, when it is scheduled. Her family will have an Irish wake that she would’ve enjoyed and there will be a formal religious graveside service in Arlington.

Her mortal body served her well for 97 years but now her soul has "slipped the surly bonds of earth" and her spirit will surely, to paraphrase John Magee, “dance on laughter-silvered wings to touch the face of God.”

-Milne McCallum
Donald L. Diegelman
April 5, 1932 - January 16, 2019

A Man of Great Faith and Great Strength

Donald Leroy Diegelman was born to John and Stella Diegelman on April 5, 1932, at Rice Maternity Hospital in Los Angeles, California. He grew up in his Los Angeles home with his older sister, Lois, and graduated from George Washington High School in 1950. A few years later he joined the U.S. Navy and was honorably discharged in 1955 after serving on the U.S.S. Moore during the Korean War. He graduated from Pepperdine College in 1959 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Subsequently, he attended and received degrees from Los Angeles State University, Fuller Theological Seminary, The School of Theology at Claremont, and Grace Graduate School.

After his time in Seminary during the 1960’s, he went on to serve as a pastor in The United Methodist Church for almost 35 years in 8 different congregations in California and Oregon. He retired from the church in 1999, and settled to his home in Vista, California.

In 1964 he married JoAnn Wilson Diegelman and they had their two sons; Mark in 1964 and Chris in 1967. They were married for 25 years until JoAnn’s death in 1989. Later that year he wed his second wife, Dorothy Mary Jackson. They were married for 26 years until her death in 2015. After Dorothy’s passing, Don moved to Stevenson Ranch, California, in 2016 to live with and be closer to his two sons. He is now free and at peace while he walks hand in hand with God.

Donald is survived by his two sons, Mark and Christopher; his grandchildren Andrew (Jennifer) and Haley; his niece Ellen, and many grandnieces/nephews and great-grandnieces/nephews.

-Diegelman Family
A soldier in WW II, a Pastor/Shepherd, an imperfect man serving a perfect God. Our dad, Ernie Fritschle, loved to travel and on Tuesday, January 22nd, he left on his dream trip; one he planned and longed for. He won't be returning, as his destination is heaven, and the reunion there is just what he wanted. In his 100 years here, he traveled all over the world. His passion was the gospel and he frequently said the keys to a long life are: faith, purpose, and staying active (he retained the ability to stand on one foot well into his eighties). His 10 years as a missionary in India left him with a love for the country, its people, and its food. It was a love he shared with everyone around him; speaking Bengali or Hindi whenever he got the chance; sharing chai and samosas with us; and reminiscing about his experiences.

That's just the way Ernie was. His wisdom was delivered with matter-of-fact nonchalance, or mischievous wit, or his puppet Moeno, or the heartfelt truth of faith. He never saw a plant he couldn't bring back to life, he loved the high desert, and he could turn anything into a pancake including leftover beef stew. He loved the Lord with all of his heart, soul, mind, and strength. This is the cornerstone of his legacy and a great comfort to those he leaves behind: his brother, his children and their spouses, grandchildren, great grandchildren, colleagues, and friends. He was a truly great man.

-The Family
David Lincoln Henry, Sr. was born in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He was the third child of Madeleine Little and James Henry. He is preceded in death by his parents and his older brother, Jim.

Dave attended Rutgers Preparatory School, New York University, and Pacific School of Religion. He is survived by his loving wife of 69 years, Clara House Henry; his sister, Virginia Maxwell; his four children: David Henry (Kate Burroughs), Sangeet Henry (Nidhi Rice), Robin Henry, and Anne Henry (Tim Hernandez); 10 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Dave had a long and storied career working as a chemist for numerous companies and being an aerospace engineer in Southern California. Dave and Clara decided to escape the Southern California rat race and fled to Maui in 1973.

On Maui, Dave was a charter sailboat skipper, real estate salesman, taxi driver, radio announcer, painting contractor, remodeler, ceramic tile installer, and handyman.

From 1987-1989, he attended The Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, California, where he received his Master of Divinity degree and was commissioned as a United Methodist pastor. He served in the California-Pacific Annual Conference, serving on Kauai through Hurricane Iniki and retired in 1994.

After retiring, he returned to Maui where he was a volunteer for numerous charitable organizations. During their retirement, Dave and Clara spent 14 summers trailering around the United States and Canada, visiting family, volunteering, and staying in many beautiful locations.

In December 2017, Dave & Clara realized it would be good to be closer to family. So, in February 2018 they moved to Oahu to share a home with their daughter Anne, and her family. Dave loved his family and always made time to do activities together, both when his children were young and with his extended family in retirement.

David Lincoln Henry, Sr. passed away in the hospital on August 12, 2018, from complications after a heart attack, surrounded by loving family.

-The Family
Edward A. Hoffman
July 26, 1930 - February 19, 2019

HOFFMAN, EDWARD A. (T.55; F.61) SCA 55 School; 56 Monterey Park: Asst.; 59 Sun Valley; 65 LA: Maynard Memorial; 67 LA: La Plaza, Assoc & Southeast Area Group Min.; 68 Wilshire: Assoc; 69 UCSB: Campus Minister; PSW 77(Apr) SDSU: Campus Minister; 83 CSULB: Campus Minister; C-P 85; 95 Retired (¶452.2c)

Edward A. Hoffman (“Ed”), was born in San Diego, California, to Everett and Evelyn Hoffman.

As a child of the Great Depression he was imprinted with values and an outlook on society that, above all, emphasized the importance of justice, equal rights for all, and positive outcomes across the socio-economic spectrum.

He is survived by his children Stephen, Karen, John, David, Anna, 9 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

He attended local San Diego public schools followed by advanced education at San Diego City College, San Diego State College, USC, Boston University, and Claremont School of Theology.

After his ordination, Ed worked as a United Methodist pastor, chaplain, and campus minister in a variety of postings including Monterey Park, Sun Valley, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, San Diego and Long Beach.

He got great satisfaction from his work guiding, mentoring, pastoring, and counseling students in his campus ministry assignments. Ed enjoyed nothing more than deep discussions of theological and social issues with his congregants and students.

Ed traveled far and wide in his life including trips to the Middle East, Asia, Europe, Central/South America and 48 States. Many of those trips involved leading groups of Students and research into local religious and social issues and events.

Upon retirement from the Conference, he lived in Mission Beach San Diego, California. He actively participated with and supported Habitat for Humanity, International Rescue Committee, Casa Cornelia, and Doctors without Borders.

For fun and relaxation Ed loved to fish, read, and watch his grandchildren grow up.

He became known as the Wise Sage of his little Mission Beach community offering guidance and friendship to all he met and knew.

In 2015, after many years of life in Mission Beach, Ed moved to the Wesley Palms community in Pacific Beach. Ed greatly enjoyed life there and befriended many residents and made strong connections with the caregiving staff. His expressions of gratitude to the caregivers stood out amongst the staff at Wesley Palms. His family also is grateful for the care he received there. Ed was a compassionate, unconditionally loving and empathetic Friend, Husband, Pastor, Father, Grandfather and Great-grandfather. Ed loved his family and his family loved him for his patience, guidance and, most importantly, for instilling his children with a sense of justice, gratitude, kindness, and dignity.

-Family
Kuh Chung Kim was born in Seoul, South Korea, the eldest of nine children. He graduated from the Methodist Theological Seminary in South Korea in 1956, and served in the South Korean Army as a chaplain for five years. In 1961, he attended Scarritt College for Christian Workers in Tennessee, and was awarded a Master’s Degree. He then entered Garrett Theological Seminary, in Illinois, and earned a Doctorate in Sacred Theology. He served as an associate pastor at Christ United Methodist Church in Lafayette, Indiana, during his doctorate studies.

Kuh Chung married Kyung Sook Park in June 1966. They moved to Los Angeles, California, in 1970, where Kuh Chung served as a volunteer Sunday School teacher for nine years at Robertson Korean United Methodist Church. His father, Reverend Kwang Woo Kim, established the Woodland Hills Korean United Methodist Church (WHKUMC) in 1980 where Kuh Chung served as the senior pastor. In addition to his ministry at WHKUMC, he and Kyung Sook travelled to Kazakhstan, Turkey, and Israel on mission trips, and he served as president of the Korean Caucus. Although Kuh Chung officially retired in 2001, he continued to serve the Lord as a volunteer pastor at the Southern California Christian Church in Torrance for another 17 years.

Kuh Chung loved the Lord, his family, and his congregants dearly. He was a humble man with a deep and well rooted faith. His favorite part of the ministry was “pastoring” – caring for and helping people. He inspired, helped, and touched many people throughout his life. One of his favorite Bible verses was 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you,” which he lived out daily.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Kyung Sook, a son, Daniel, two daughters, Grace and Susan, eight grandchildren, Sophia, Juliana, Jonathan, Hannah, Elizabeth, William, Henry, and Mia, and seven siblings.

-The Kim Family
Rev. Yung Chol Kim was born in Pyongyang, North Korea. He is survived by his wife, Sook Kyung Kim, his three children, Jane Moon, Jason Kim, and Susan Kim, and his seven grandchildren. He was a deeply loved pastor, husband, father, and grandfather who faithfully and humbly served and loved the Lord with all of his heart, mind, soul, and strength to his very last breath.

He attended Central Theological Seminary in Seoul, Korea, and Drew University in Madison, New Jersey, from which he earned his Doctor of Ministry.

Rev. Kim served at a Methodist Church in Seoul, Korea, and upon immigrating to the United States, he served at United Methodist churches in New Jersey (Northern NJ Conference) and California (California-Pacific Conference). In 1964, he served at Summit United Methodist Church, in 1967 he served at Westside United Methodist Church, in 1972 he served at Emanuel United Methodist Church, in 1978 he served at Wesley United Methodist Church, in 1985 he served at Torrance: Hope United Methodist Church, and in 1996 he served at Gardena United Methodist Church in retirement after nearly 40 years of fulltime ministry.

In addition to his fulltime ministry duties, he was very passionate and highly involved in the efforts to reunify North and South Korea and in the human rights movement. He initiated and mobilized various prayer groups throughout New Jersey and California.

His favorite hymn was “On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand” and his favorite Bible verse was John 3:16.

His family is thankful that he passed very peacefully and painlessly in his home. His funeral services were held on September 21, 2018, in San Diego, California and on September 22, 2018, in Palos Verdes, California, where his body was laid to rest at Green Hills Mortuary.

-Jane Moon
Professor Rolf Paul Knierim and Hildegard Emma Knierim were in a fatal car accident on September 29, 2018, while driving near Winslow, Arizona. They were both born in Germany, Professor Knierim in Pirmasens, and Hildegard in Edenkoben. They met at the age of 5 and were married on June 2, 1955.

In 1966, Professor and Mrs. Knierim and their five children moved to California at the invitation of the School of Theology at Claremont, where he took a full professorship position in Old Testament theology and Christian antiquity studies.

Professor Knierim developed the Old Testament Ph.D. program at the Claremont Graduate School and was an internationally known scholar of Old Testament theology. He was a supportive and respectful colleague and a highly appreciated doctoral mentor. MDiv students used to admire the way he “preached his lectures,” sharing his knowledge with passion. What stands out is the energy, somewhat formal civility, and passion that he brought to every occasion. Rolf brought that same energy, and, especially, civility, to debates over issues in Old Testament studies. Rolf was a leader in mid and late 20th century biblical theology, and at the same time a person who addressed emerging questions with intensity.

Once he proudly displayed his gardens and lemon tree, heavy with fruit. Tilting his head towards his visitor with an air of intense yet joyous engagement, he extolled California's "Mediterranean climate," and with it, his good fortune at landing at Claremont School of Theology and the Claremont Graduate School of Religion.

Rolf and Hildegard were lifelong companions bonded by shared life experiences. “The intricacies of their stories are beyond the scope of this announcement,” their family shared. “They touched many lives around the world in positive and sometimes profound ways, which can only be recounted by the innumerable individuals that hold these experiences and their accompanying stories. Justice, truth, honesty and discovery were their motivation. Remembered by friends as ‘Tell me something new!’ and ‘Doctor-mother,’ they lived not for themselves, but for family and those who are in need.”

They were preceded in death by brothers Werner and Helmut Knierim and Albert and Erick Salm; daughter Barbara Kruells; niece Nina Keller-Henman; and granddaughter Kaylee Leiper.

They are survived by their children, Johannes, Eva, Eberhard and Gabriele; and four grandchildren, Diana Westfall, her husband Pierce and their children Faye and Ember, Thomas Kruells, Ashley Burrows and Keeghan Knierim.

-Online with emendations
Kenneth McMillan

December 20, 1934 - October 20, 2018

McMILLAN, KENNETH E. (T.60; F.62) SCA 60 School; 61 San Luis Obispo, Wesley Foundation; 63 LA: Garvanza; 68 Fountain Valley; 71 Sierra Madre; PSW 77; 78 Newport Beach: Newport Center; 84 (Sep) LB: Los Altos; C-P 85; 2002 (Jan 31) Retired; 09 (Mar 1) (Anaheim: United, Interim); 09 Retired; 11 (Oct 15) (Pasadena: First, RA) (50%); 2012 Retired

(Long Beach Press-Telegram)

Kenneth Edward McMillan was born, raised, and received a Bachelor of Arts in Music in Santa Barbara. While at a national gathering of Methodist college students, he heard God’s call to ministry. He answered, “Yes.”

Ken primarily saw himself as a pastor, believing that “the bishop can appoint a minister to a church, but it was the congregation that allowed him or her to become their pastor.” He was devoted to the craft of preaching and respected the responsibility and power of the pulpit. His sermons inspired and challenged those who heard them, reflecting his often-stated admonition: “Never go to a church where you must hang up your mind at the coat rack.”

Ken was a man of integrity. He believed in asking the difficult questions. He was a constant advocate for social justice. He participated in the Selma-to-Montgomery march for voting rights. He was on the forefront of bringing women into the ordained clergy and was an advocate for LGBTQ inclusion. In 1996 he was honored as the National Council of Christians and Jews’ “Humanitarian of the Year” and South Coast Inter-Faith Council’s “Clergy of the Year.”

Within the Cal-Pac Conference Ken served on the Boards of Ordained Ministry, Diaconal Ministry, Global Ministry, Pension and Health Benefits, and the Council on Finance and Administration.

During his time as chair of the Board of Pension and Health Benefits, he guided the conference through the challenging health care minefield, always maintaining a balance between meeting the needs of all for whom the board bore responsibility, while working within the limits imposed by financial realities. He did this with grace and integrity, and with the utmost care for all. To honor him and his heart for caring ministry, the board established a fund in his name that continues to provide financial assistance to retirees and spouses in need.

Ken loved the seashore, mountains, and fishing. He loved travel, time with friends, and a good joke. He loved great music and baseball. He loved time with his family, especially his grandkids.

He is survived by his wife of almost 60 years, Patty; children Jerry (Susan) and Kathy (Martin); his brother, Robert; five grandchildren, and one great-grandson. He leaves us as an inspiration, an empty space, and a lasting memory of the many ways he touched each of us.

-Patty McMillan
Loyce McWee

September 1, 1932 - September 29, 2018

Loyce’s family roots provided strategic, problem-solving instincts and a knack for making things happen. Growing up in Los Angeles instilled strong values, determination, and resilience.

Attending Occidental College, she married Jim McWee. She followed to the 1950s norms of homemaking but also taught in LA’s inner-city schools. She moved into motherhood and shifted her joy of teaching to leading children’s programs at local Presbyterian churches and mentoring young neighbors.

When her second child showed signs of cerebral palsy and visual impairments, Loyce unwittingly became a pioneer in applying the theories of neuroplasticity and social learning. Trusting her instincts, she and Jim created an early intervention environment in their backyard, designing it for the entire neighborhood. Loyce identified the community’s unmet social and learning needs and advocated for change. As her children grew, she increased her community involvement by volunteering especially at St. Matthew’s United Methodist Church (SMUMC). One favorite endeavor was a summer art school held at SMUMC for the entire school district.

In the 1970s, dissatisfied with her homemaker role, she became dedicated to volunteering at SMUMC’s preschool where she was asked to teach a severely disabled blind child to sit up unsupported and feed herself. Loyce’s teaching approach, determination, and skilled task-analysis helped the child unexpectedly achieve these developmental milestones. Loyce quickly figured out how to balance parenting and a successful marriage with full-time studies in special education and Braille. For the next 20 years, she taught K-12 blind and visually impaired students, many of whom today enjoy the economic rewards of working professionally.

By the 1980s, Loyce began to sense a deeper call and she made plans for an encore career. She felt a sense of God's presence to take on the mantle of service in a formal way. This led to more graduate work, and to working in full-time ministry. She navigated the Church’s deacon ordination process.

Loyce served in official diaconal positions—ranging from local outreach to leading several medical mission trips to Mexico. Loyce also served as a hospital chaplain, provided congregational care, led children’s and senior programs, and was active as a worship leader bringing the Light of Christ into all the shadowlands of the world.

After retiring, she and Jim enjoyed their final years in Orange County, California, with occasional trips to visit their adult children in Washington and San Francisco.

-Marjorie McWee and Deacon colleagues
Emilio E. Müller was born in Cardenas, Cuba. He graduated from La Progresiva Presbyterian school in his hometown in 1963. He then went on to study at the Seminario Evangelico de Teologia in Matanzas, Cuba. In 1967, he married Gisela Villagarcia. When the Cuban government took over the School, he – along with many other seminary students - were sent to work in government work camps cutting down sugar cane in the fields. He and Gisela had three children before she and her family were granted a visa to leave the country in 1970. Emilio had to stay in Cuba three years before he could reunite with his wife and children.

In mid-1974, Emilio and Gisela divorced and he moved to Tampa, Florida, to be closer to his family. There he met and married Juana Elina “Ellie” Bacallao in 1976. The two moved to Georgia so that Emilio could complete his theological studies. In 1979, he graduated from Candler School of Theology and returned to start serving in the Florida Conference. He served in Tampa and then in Key West before being called to serve at the Board of Global Ministries in New York. Serving with that office he traveled throughout the continental United States helping small churches, both new and established, to work through financial matters. After several years in the field, he was called back to the pulpit to serve in Wisconsin. He would share 11 years with Emmanuel/El Buen Pastor in Milwaukee before serving in Renton, Washington. After a few years there, he went to serve in the Cal-Pac Conference from which he retired.

Emilio loved serving the Lord and spent many years fostering that love among many others, both clergy and lay. He had a special love for Latino/Hispanic ministries and was exceptional at motivating and bringing up leaders. God truly used him to help mold and guide many.

In September of 2018, he was diagnosed with lung cancer which turned out to be extremely aggressive. He opted for hospice. God called him into eternal rest in November. A month after his passing he was joined by his beloved Ellie. Emilio and Ellie are survived by their three children, Lisel Laslie (Chris) of Tallahassee, Florida; Karell Müller of Miami, Florida; and Sheila Castellano (Pablo) of Houston, Texas and well as their five grandchildren, Ian and Emma Laslie and Deanna, Maya & Arianna Castellano.

- Rev. Sheila Castellano (daughter)
Ana Maria was born in Toreon, Mexico. Her husband was Lemuel Dominguez. Her sons were Lemuel, Jr., Esteban, and Daniel. She graduated from Seminario Juan Wesley in Monterrey, Nuevo León. Later in the United States, she graduated from the Claremont School of Theology.

She served as senior pastor at Calexico UMC, Long Beach: Latin American UMC, Pomona: Westmont UMC, Pomona Valley Hispanic Ministry, and Norwalk: Christ UMC.

Her greatest strength and greatest weakness was that she wanted more love out of this world than what was allotted to her.

- Daniel Dominguez
Rev. Ilse Nottrott Peetz was born in the eastern part of Nazi Germany where her mother and three older brothers were sent to keep safe from the saturated bombing in Berlin. In 1945, she became a refugee walking on a trek around northern Germany toward the American Sector.

She lived in a refugee camp and watched her mother cooking with camp survivors using Care Packages received from her American relatives. Here she saw mission work in action—she lived it, she was hungry, she was poor, she was homeless.

Ilse became an immigrant to America and married her first cousin in Los Angeles in 1963. Carl, a UCC pastor spoke German so that she could understand and learn to do it later herself. She worked in East Harlem with the American Friends Service Committee, did mission work, and supported Bread for the World.

She cherished the Cal-Pac Hunger Committee connected with Church and Society; Peace with Justice; United Methodists Women; organized CROP Walks; and was president of Church Women United. She went to college with her son who also became a pastor. She attended Antelope Valley College, California State University, Northridge, and the School of Theology Claremont to earn a master’s degree.

Finally, Ilse was appointed and called to unite Kaumakani and Kekaha United Methodist churches to form West Kauai United Methodist Church in 1994. She pastored Pearblossom: Community United Methodist Church and Glendale: First German United Methodist Church.

She traveled to East Africa to find her grandfather’s roots as a missionary and to India where our grandparents were missionaries.

After giving birth 50 years earlier in the same hospital, she was discharged after nearly a month to be at peace at home with hospice. She had a good and strong heart, but at the end had nothing left to pump because of a tumor and internal bleeding.

She explained that, “While I prayed to God to lift me up, I saw Jesus with a Welcome sign”. I heard her soul leave with a peep.

Ilse is survived by her brother, husband, son and his wife, with four grandchildren in western North Carolina.

-Carl Peetz
Isabelle Rimbach

March 14, 1933 - January 10, 2019

Isabelle Towns Rimbach died peacefully in her sleep, with her children at her bedside. Isabelle Towns Payant was born in Baltimore, Maryland, and attended Catholic schools in her youth. Then "Izzie" went to Wilson College in Pennsylvania and became a second-grade teacher. Isabelle met her husband to be, Guenther Rimbach, when they were both counselors at a camp for underprivileged children in upstate New York. Guenther was from Germany, and was attending Johns Hopkins University. On May 18, 1957, Guenther Carl Rimbach and Isabelle Towns Payant were married in the Cathedral Church of the Incarnation in Baltimore.

In the summer of 1957, Guenther and Isabelle moved to Riverside, California, where Guenther had been offered a job teaching at the University of California, Riverside, and Isabelle taught second grade. In the following years they had three children, and Isabelle retired from teaching to become a full-time wife and mother.

In 1976, when Isabelle and Guenther were members at Riverside: Grace, Isabelle preached her first sermon, "Alive to God." There were very few women in the ministry at that time, but Isabelle felt that God was calling her to serve the church, and she persevered in her calling despite resistance. Isabelle attended the Claremont School of Theology and received her Masters of Divinity degree in 1981 and was ordained. She was appointed the Associate Pastor at Upland, then she was the pastor at Murrieta United Methodist Church, where it was her joy to lead the Murrieta congregation in building a sanctuary and more than triple their membership. Pastor Isabelle's last appointment was where, again, she led a building program resulting in the construction of a new hillside church. In July of 1996, she retired from the active ministry to spend more of her time with Guenther.

Isabelle and Guenther Rimbach became a part of Riverside: Wesley. During their retirement, Isabelle and Guenther greatly enjoyed traveling across the United States and Canada. Guenther C. Rimbach passed away on the 31st of December 2004.

In her later years, Isabelle continued to travel with her children. Back home, she assisted at Wesley. She also supported many charitable and social causes.

Isabelle is survived by her three children, Christa, Karen and Karl Rimbach; her daughter-in-law, Virginia Rimbach; her grandson, Niklas Rimbach; her sister, Mimi Daleng; many other family; her good friend, Arthur Beacom; and by her numerous friends and the many parishioners whose lives she touched.

-The Family
Robert Shepard Jr.

July 26, 1935 - October 3, 2018

Bob was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, and, following a succession of moves due to his father’s military career, settled in Berkley, California. Bob graduated from Berkley High School and entered the University of Louisville on an ROTC scholarship. After his graduation in 1957, he was immediately commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps attaining the rank of Captain. In 1960 he matriculated at the School of Theology at Claremont from which he was awarded the Master of Theology and Doctor of Ministry degrees.

Bob was ordained as a United Methodist Minister by Bishop Gerald Kennedy in 1961. He and his wife, Linda, were married in 1962. Bob faithfully served the five churches to which he was appointed, and retired in 2000.

One of the hallmarks of Bob’s ministry was the compassionate concern for those he served. In his ministry he was involved in the civil rights movement with Bishop Mel Talbert and Reverend Ken McMillan among others. His involvement in the interfaith activities at his early churches became a lifelong commitment.

Bob was passionate about promoting awareness and tolerance between racial, cultural and religious lines. He encouraged all of his congregations to participate in the sharing of interfaith services, cultural exchanges and trips to promote those ideas. He taught classes, and participated in religious panel discussions on radio and television with those of different faiths. In Orange County, he organized the first interfaith council with Imam’s, Rabbi’s, Catholic priests and Protestant clergy. This led to several interfaith trips to Rome, Jordan and the Holy Land. It spoke to his wish: “My heartfelt dream is that we can look at the world through other people’s eyes and learn to walk in other people’s shoes.”

Our children wrote this: “One advantage of being in our family is that we learned firsthand how to love God and one another. We learned very early on that everyone should be treated with respect, love, and acceptance no matter what they looked like, where they came from, or what they believed. Love your neighbor. There were never lectures, just discussions.”

Bob continued to teach tolerance and acceptance for the remainder of his life. His prayer was that his gift of love and acceptance for all would continue through his children and grandchildren and beyond.

Bob is survived by his wife Linda, five children and four grandchildren.

-Linda Shepard
James Dudley Slay, Jr. was born in Atlanta, Georgia. He grew up in rural Mississippi, mostly in the town of Hattiesburg. His father, JD Slay, Sr. was also a Methodist pastor. He became one at a very early age and dedicated his whole working life to the ministry. JD Slay, Jr went on to Emory University for his seminary work and ultimately earned his Doctor of Religion from Claremont School of Theology in 1972.

Early on, Jim dedicated much of his preaching to the civil rights movement and endured the difficult times that existed in the late fifties and sixties. His real, self-proclaimed purpose in life was helping others as he dedicated many hours to serving the hungry and homeless, veterans and seniors who needed assistance. His life philosophy centered around being able to accomplish anything with a positive attitude and having gratitude in your heart.

Jim served churches in Mississippi from 1954-1967. He then moved to serve at St. Matthews United Methodist Church in Hacienda Heights, California, from 1967 until 1971. He moved to Redondo Beach, California, and served at Redondo Beach First United Methodist Church until he moved into his second career as a therapist at Redondo Beach Medical group, which was to become Healthcare Partners Medical Group. Jim remained in this profession for 35 years and finished his career as the Director of Mental Health Services.

Jim was married to Barbara Ward in 1953 and they were married for 21 years. He is survived by his six children: James Dudley Slay, III, David Slay, Carol Slay, Lauri Valentin, Lisa Van Atta, and Andy Slay. He has seven grandchildren: James Dudley Slay, IV, Jon Slay, Jacob Slay, Benjamin Slay, Demi Valentin, Tori Valentin and William Valentin. He also had one great-grandchild, James D. Slay, V. Everyone lived within two hours of one another and this was especially important to Jim as he had a deep love for his family and cherished all family gatherings.

- Andrew L. Slay
Rev. Robert Smith was born in Birmingham, Alabama. He did his undergraduate work at Tuskegee Institute. While at Tuskegee he discovered a young lady in the incoming freshman class. They began a loving relationship and finally married in 1956. To that union were born two children, Robert Ernest, and Carolyn Jeanette; both born in Boston, Massachusetts.

In 1959, they began serving Riverside Park Methodist Church in Indianapolis. He was the first African-American to be received into Full Connection in the Indiana Conference.

In 1966, Robert took an appointment to serve as Director of Religious Extension Service, sponsored jointly by Tuskegee Institute and the National Council of Churches of Christ. He had a few close calls with the KKK in the rural areas where he was helping to organize Black pastors and their communities.

In February 1968, after the Watts Riot, he was invited by the late Dr. Irwin Trotter to come to Watts to serve LA: St. John's. He loved a challenge and was equal to the task.

In 1969, Rev. Mr. Smith was elected Chair of the Urban Department of the Conference Board of Missions. For eight years he gave leadership to the whole urban missional strategies for the Annual Conference. At the same time, their second daughter, Darlene Frederica, was born.

After leaving LA: Wesley and the San Diego superintendency, he served Long Beach: Los Altos as the first cross-racial senior pastor for this Church. After only one year, he was invited to go to Harlem by Bishop Roy Nichols. After serving four years in Harlem, Bishop Jack Tuell invited him to the California-Pacific Annual Conference as Council Director in 1988. One year later, he was asked to serve as District Superintendent of the Los Angeles District. He did this for six years while going through cancer surgery and radiation therapy, along with all of the side effects.

Throughout his ministry it has been said that he was dedicated to the Church and to God and has been a great influence in so many lives. He was indeed a beloved servant of God who now has been welcomed into Heaven.

Rev. Smith is survived by his wife, Gwendolyn; two sisters, Ms. Ethelyn Ming and Mrs. Jimmye Lou Hagins (Milton); three children: Robert E. Smith (Mary Ann), Carolyn J. Ortega (Tommy) and Darlene F. Goins (Vernon); eleven grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren; a host of nieces, nephews and cousins.

To God be the glory.

-Mrs. Gwendolyn Smith
James L. Swenson, a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, an ordained Methodist minister for 60 years, a U.S. Army Veteran, a faithful husband and father, was called home on March 31, 2019, after a year-long battle with melanoma.

Born March 21, 1934, in Glen Ridge, New Jersey, Jim moved to Southern California at the age of four with the family. He graduated from Glendale High School in California, attended UCLA in 1952-53, where he played freshman football before being drafted by the Army during the Korean War. A last-minute reassignment by the Army switched him to border duty in Germany for his two years of service from 1953-1955. Upon returning home, he graduated from the University of Redlands in 1958. It was at Redlands where he met his wife, Joan Annette Ashla, whom he was married to for 48 years, prior to her passing in 2004.

He received his seminary degree from Garrett Theological School at Northwestern University in 1962. He was ordained by the United Methodist Church, and his first appointment as pastor was to the First United Methodist Church in Big Bear Lake, California. In 1964 he and Joan were sent as missionaries to Hawaii, where he was the minister at Aldersgate UMC in Honolulu before transferred to Kilohana UMC.

He then took a special assignment to serve as Director of Community Development at Palama Settlement, a social services agency in the Kalihi-Palama neighborhoods of Honolulu. He was appointed by Governor Ariyoshi to serve as the first director of the State Health Planning and Development Agency, where he served from 1977-1981 before becoming executive director of the Hawaii Economic Development Corporation and Pacific Venture Capital.

In 1982 he returned to full-time ministry and was pastor of Wahiawa UMC before being appointed District Superintendent for Hawaii UMC in 1984. He returned to the mainland in 1990 and after a year at district UMC headquarters, Jim took a Senior Vice President post at the School of Theology at Claremont, where he served until retirement in 1999 to Prescott, Arizona. But Jim didn't really retire; he just transitioned into more volunteer work serving in the Prescott UMC, the local Lions Club and the Smoki Museum. He also led work teams across the nation and the world helping those in need, including New Orleans, North Dakota, Mississippi, as well as Chile, Ethiopia, Guatemala and Kenya.

His final work was with Kairos prison ministries working with inmates at the Soledad state prison complex. He is survived by wife Ann Hansen of 13 years, son Peter and daughter-in-law Bella of Kaneohe, Hawaii; son Mark of Gilbert, Arizona; nephew Eric Swenson of Merced, California; niece Peggy Jacobson of Santa Cruz, California; nephews Jeff and Ron King; step-sons Brian and Christopher; four grandchildren, Andrew, Krystle, Paul (wife Autumn) and Michael Swenson; and three great-grandchildren, Noah, Owen and Milo Swenson.

-The Family
Stephen Tseng was born in Fujian, Xiamen, China. Because of war, he followed the Republic of China government to Taiwan in 1947. After attending high school for a year, he joined the special military training program and was involved in many top-secret missions. During one of his missions, the saving grace of God helped him evade the enemy who was pursuing him. Stephen was so moved by how God saved him that he gave up the military life and entered into Tainan Theological College and Seminary in Taiwan.

After he graduated, he served as an assistant and translator to the principal and professors at the Central Taiwan Theological Seminary where he also met Eunice Wu. They were married on September 17, 1962.

Stephen established many churches in Taiwan before moving to Chicago, Illinois, in 1979. He helped out many Chinese churches in the Chicago area. On June 6, 1982, he was ordained by the Northern Illinois Annual Conference as an Elder in the United Methodist Church. From 1990 to 1999 he ministered in the Blessed Chinese United Methodists Church in Rowland Heights, California. He was known for leading the Evergreen Fellowship and many community-related services. After retiring from the formal ministry, he continued to involve himself in ministry through teaching Sunday School and Bible study in a local church. He enjoyed and loved fellowshipping, mentoring, and praying for the saints.

Stephen went to be with the Lord March 24, 2019. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Eunice, two daughters, Grace and Ann and by two grandchildren.

-Ann Lin
Epeli Uhamaka

August 29, 1946 - December 21, 2018

UHAMAKA, EPELI (RL.11) C-P 2001 (First Tongan of Pomona Valley); 05 (Compton First, Assoc) (50%); 10 (Jan 1) (Compton First, Assoc) (25%); 11 Retired

Epeli Uhamaka was born in Vaotu’u, Tonga, the eldest son of Meliame and Lisiate. Receiving a primary education in Vaotu’u before continuing to Atele Tonga College for secondary school, he also attended Atenisi University Institute as both a student and a math teacher, teaching calculus and statistics. His young professional life consisted of his employment as a civil servant serving as Co-operative Assistant for the Tongan government in 1976, Director of the Tonga Co-operative Federation shortly after, and an appointment as the inaugural Secretary for the Australian High Commissioner Office in Tonga. While serving as Co-operative Assistant, he was awarded a two-year scholarship to Lou Borough University in London.

Epeli met his love, Alena, in Tonga and married her September 29, 1977. They emigrated to Hawaii with their growing family in 1981 and finally settled in California in 1984. Epeli worked for the Chino Unified School District as a School Bus Driver for 17 years. He was also appointed as a local pastor in 2001, serving the Pomona First UMC and the Compton First UMC, each for five years. Epeli’s significant career as primary school-aged transporter and parson drew to a close when he finally retired in 2010.

Epeli is remembered as an authentically free spirit who undertook any task with tenacity and always gave credit to God for his special talents. He is remembered by his family and friends for his favorite hymn, “There is a Time for Everything,” and his favorite phrase, “I am who I am. This is who I am. I am blessed and so be it.” Epeli was not scared of death but rather looked forward for the sweet day he would be reunited with his Lord. Epeli is survived by his wife of 41 years, Rev. Alena Uhamaka, two daughters, four sons, and 19 grandchildren.

-Rev. Alena Uhamaka
Solomone ‘Ofa-ki-muli ‘Ulu’ave was born in Tonga. He started school at GPS Angaha (Elementary School), entered Hofangahau College (Free Wesleyan High School), and moved with his parents to Hawaii in 1981. He graduated from Kahuku High School in 1987.

Although Solomone grew up as a PK, he was more interested in completing his education and working to support his family. However, God had a plan for his life when Solomone felt God was calling him to ministry; so he packed and returned to Tonga to attend the Sia’atoutai Theological School. After four years and earning his certificate of theological studies, he returned to his home church as a lay preacher and preached the gospel wherever and at all times. He was blessed to meet the love of his life, Luseane Finau, and they were married in May 1999 before being appointed to his first appointment at Ewa Beach UMC followed by Lihue UMC, then to Pearl City: Trinity UMC from 2012 until he passed away.

Solomone was well known in the Tongan community and churches where he served as Pastor ‘Ofa (“Ofa means “Love”) and he truly lived up to his name. He had a strong faith in God, a great sense of humor and a loving and caring spirit that modeled the redemptive love of Christ to everyone he encountered. ‘Ofa’s ministry was more invested in developing the youth and young people’s program and he enjoyed being involved with youth, including leading youth camps as Hawaii Tongan Ministry Youth Director for many years. Pastor ‘Ofa was loved by many because of his positive energy, passion, and openness to talk and share with whomever he came in contact.

Although Pastor ‘Ofa went through struggles with health issues in the last few months, that didn’t stop him from doing what he loved the most which was serving God and His people. ‘Ofa’s vision for the church was to involve people of all ages, cultures, and all levels of experiences.

Solomone ‘Ofa-ki-muli will be remembered with his smiling face and a humble heart of great spirit that was open to all people. He had a lasting impact on his friends and congregants to live an abundant life and be faithful to the Lord. He is survived by his wife, Luseane Finau ‘Ika ‘Ulu’ave, sons Sione Hikifo’ou Jr and Niutupu’ivaha Christian ‘Ulu’ave, and daughter Fangailupe HolyFaith ‘Ulu’ave. Thanks be to God.

-Rev. Dr. Kalesita Tu'ifua
Charles Woodworth was born to Harry and Louise Woodworth, long-time residents of San Pedro, where he was raised. He graduated from San Pedro High School. He joined the Army, where he met and married his first wife, Sunshine. He was a WWII veteran and went on to graduate from UCLA with a Masters in Psychology. He taught at Harbor College and then attended the Baptist Seminary in Covina where he graduated and was ordained a Baptist minister. At one time he was the pastor of Town & Country Baptist Church in Bakersfield.

At a point in his life, Chuck went back to seminary and, after two years, was ordained a United Methodist Pastor. At one point he was appointed to Grandview United Methodist in San Pedro, which was the church he attended as a boy. Throughout his life, Chuck spent spare time volunteering and helping others in a variety of ways.

In 1979, he was preceded in death by his first daughter, Sara Gayle. He then met and married his second wife, Kathleen. They made their home in Bakersfield until her death.

At the time of his death, Chuck was with his companion Carmella Mayes. He is survived by his four remaining children, Chuck, Jr. (Beth), Allyn, David (Kathy), and Matt; four grandchildren, Chip, Josh, Phil and Ryan; and four great-grandchildren.

—The Family
Dr. John A. Zimmer of Ventura, California, passed away at the age of 97. He was born in Jerome, Arizona (2-2-22), and pursued a life of social justice and a love for learning. He earned a B.A. (University of Redlands), an M.Div. (Boston University School of Theology) and a Ph.D. (University of the Pacific, Stockton, California.) For over 65 years, John preached thought-provoking and justice-centered sermons to churches in California and Arizona. He devoured books and chocolate with equal passion, and traveled to over 70 countries with Dixie Gene Zimmer, his wife of 72 years.

John A. Zimmer is survived by his wife Dixie, four daughters, seven grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, and countless mentees.

- Zimmer Family
Spouses
John W. Bohler

May 10, 1949 - July 2, 2018

John W. Bohler, 69, passed away peacefully after living several years with Lewy Body Disease. His memorial service was held July 13th at Dayton: Grace United Methodist Church. He was born in San Diego and raised in the Mission Hills United Methodist Church by Mary Nell and Bob Bohler—“pillars” of that Church.

A screenplay writer by training (UCLA), John, a Stanford grad, served in the Coast Guard Reserves for 20 years. He worked various jobs, including Transcultural Director at United Theological Seminary, in Dayton, Ohio. Volunteering was important to him. He held various offices in local churches and with PTA’s, volunteered at The Other Place (a homeless shelter), Greater Dayton Christian Connections (the city-wide ecumenical center), and the Dayton View Triangle Neighborhood Association. John also volunteered as coach for many years—softball and soccer.

John and Carolyn (seminary professor and pastor) met at Mission Hills United Methodist Church and were married 39 years. They raised two children in Dayton—daughter Alexandra and son Stephen. (Stephen died in 2003 when a first-year student at New York University.) Then John and Carolyn returned to California to Tustin: Aldersgate United Methodist Church and Redlands: First United Methodist Church, where John taught youth Sunday School, led discussions of movies, and even learned to play the bells.

Carolyn (retired grandma), Alexandra (architect), granddaughters, Kya (3½) and Alana (1½), and Alex’s husband Eric will carry on John’s passion serving the community.

-Carolyn and Alexandra Bohler
Dorothy Taylor Duncan

October 27, 1929 - January 26, 2019

Dorothy Catherine Welbon was born in Bakersfield just before the depression hit. We often joked that she caused it – the whole world felt a shift when she arrived! She grew up an only child in Riverside, California. She graduated from Whittier College in 1951 with a degree in Speech Therapy. At Whittier, Dorothy met Everett Taylor and they married in 1951. He became a pastor and they had three children – Mark, Rachel and Deborah. Dorothy worked as a Special Education teacher during much of the time Everett served churches. Everett passed away in 1988 and is buried in the Shandon Cemetery.

In 1996, Dorothy married Robert (Bob) Duncan, and we gained a brother, Rob. Her three children married and she gained grandchildren (Lee and Annie, Allyson and Emma) and finally a great-grandson, Benny. She loved being a mother and a grandmother. She was overjoyed to be a great-grandmother. She was very happy to be able to have everyone in the family together for her last Christmas. Having family around was very important to her. She is also survived by her second husband, Robert Duncan.

Dorothy enjoyed traveling - starting with Hawaii in 1956 and a work team to India in 1966 that included travel to the Holy Land and Asia. She worked with World Neighbors in Honduras and traveled to Nepal, Russia, and many other places. Her last trips were to Brazil in 2012 and to South Africa in 2016.

She worked to bring peace to the world through the Fellowship of Reconciliation, Women in Black, and many other organizations working towards peace for all around the world.

She loved gardening and always had both vegetables and roses in her garden. She continued to prune the roses and work the gardens around Friends House as long as she could.

She is buried with our father in Shandon Cemetery.

— Her Children
Joyce Setsumi Inoue Fiske, 85, passed away peacefully after a long battle with Alzheimer’s disease. Born in Mountain View, Hawaii, the third of six children, she was a third-generation Japanese American who grew up in Na’alehu and later attended college at the University of Hawaii in Honolulu.

Upon graduating from college in 1954, Joyce married Bob Fiske, who was then director of the Methodist Student Center at the University of Hawaii.

Joyce worked as a Discharge Planning Specialist at Queen’s Hospital in Honolulu from 1975 to 1986, where she acquired the status of a master’s in social work without a degree.

Alongside her husband, Bob, Joyce served the United Methodist churches in Hawaii from 1958 to 1994. After retirement, she and Bob moved to Prescott, Arizona, to reside closer to their children. A faithful servant of God, she gave herself generously and unreservedly to others, especially to those who needed friendship and caring.

A beloved wife, mother and grandmother and a creative seamstress, master cook and baker, she loved music and singing in the church choir. Joyce’s humor, wit and selfless spirit will be sorely missed by all.

Joyce is survived by her husband, Bob Fiske; daughter, Julie (Bob) Huck, sons, Stephen Fiske and Timothy (Annette) Fiske; eight grandchildren: Danny (Kaille) Huck, Nathan Huck, Kyle Huck, Maili Huck, Heather (Jake) Roberts, Chelsea (Brandon) Swanson, McKenna Fiske, and Keaton Fiske; great-grandchildren, Nora Roberts; sisters, Yaeko Tengan and Pearl (Roy) Nako; and brother, Ron Inoue. Joyce was preceded in death by her parents, Taichi and Ayako Inoue; and brothers, Takeshi Inoue and Howard Inoue.

-Rev. Robert Fiske
Masaye Fujita
December 13, 1917 - May 19, 2018

Masaye Esther Fujita (Esther) was born Tacoma, Washington. The days were busy with American school, Japanese school, girls club, sports and choir practice; and then also helping Papa in his shop. Weekly marches to the community bath house were rewarded with stops at the ice cream shop!

Esther and Jonathan were married in April 1941 and sailed to Japan just a few months before December 7, 1941. They were swept into war with Jonathan drafted into the Japanese navy and Esther staying with his parents. She was treated very badly by many because she was an American citizen, and had no idea what family in Tacoma was experiencing.

During and just after the war, Esther and Jonathan’s family grew with the addition of children Sumiko, Keiko, Ichiro, and Tsuguo. Keiko was with the family for only a very short time but remained steadfastly in Esther’s heart. With the end of the war, Esther began to work for the US Government as a secretary/translator.

In 1959 the family moved to Denver, Colorado, where Jonathan served a church. Esther continued to work for the US government at the Finance and Accounting Center in addition to being a full-time mother and pastor’s wife.

The year 1970 found Esther and Jonathan moving to Los Angeles, California, and Centenary United Methodist Church. Family life and church life remained very full, but retirement from the government career allowed Esther to pursue other outlets including sumi-e painting, calligraphy, and ikebana flower arranging. Her abilities as a wonderful hostess and cook followed her everywhere.

Esther moved with Jonathan to Nozomi United Methodist Church. Esther continued to serve as a dedicated pastor’s wife, church member, musician, hostess and cook while making many friends.

The early 1990’s found Esther moving to Pennsylvania, and the Japanese Christian Church of Philadelphia. She transferred back to Huntington Beach, California, and the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection where Jonathan served as the Japanese-speaking pastor. Esther continued to share through music, hostessing and cooking. Family members remember watching in awe as she directed the church choir in her 90’s!

Esther was also a very loving mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She always put concern for her family and others before herself. Her organizational skills were phenomenal and evidenced everywhere: in her kitchen, in hundreds of photo albums and journals, and correspondence. She continued to be the ‘ultimate’ hostess even up to a few days before her passing.

-The Family
Patricia Hoffman was born in Las Vegas, Nevada, to Charles and Ida Taylor. She passed away in Escondido surrounded by her children.

Pat moved around a great deal in her early life because her father was a master carpenter who went where the work was. She told us that she went to a new school practically every year. Finally, her family settled for good in San Diego during her high school years where her father became a labor leader and the president of the San Diego Carpenter’s Union.

Pat was a very athletic child and could still do a mean cartwheel well into middle age. In high school she met her future husband, Ed. Pat worked to help support Ed as he finished college and graduate school. They had a great adventure when they bundled up their new baby son, Stephen, and spent a year on the east coast while Ed attended Boston University.

When Ed became a minister, the family moved around the greater Los Angeles area and four more children filled up the tiny parsonages. After squeezing in classes at many different institutions between children and jobs, Pat earned her own degree at Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena, then her master’s degree at CSULA. She became a teacher and thrived in the diverse and challenging Pasadena public schools.

The essence of Pat’s life was very simple: family, hard work, family again. She woke up early, rarely sat still, never got tired, and didn’t believe in illness. She had two green thumbs and loved to garden - which she, typically, called yard work. One of her grandsons drove by her house when she was into her eighties and saw her out mowing the lawn just after dawn.

Pat was generous with her money, belongings, and time. She was always a teacher. She was non-materialistic but also very firmly anchored to both the sense and structure of a home.

She was at once selfless in that she would give or do anything for other people, but also had a huge sense of self and a forceful personality.

Pat was predeceased by her husband, Ed, and her sisters Charlette and Sue. She is survived by her sister Colleen and also by her children and their families.

-The Family
Professor Rolf Paul Knierim and Hildegard Emma Knierim (nee Salm) were in a fatal car accident while driving near Winslow, Arizona. They were 90 and 89 years old, respectively. They were both born in Germany, Professor Knierim on July 8, 1928 in Pirmasens, and Mrs. Knierim in Edenkoben. They met at the age of 5 and were married on June 2, 1955.

In 1966, Professor and Mrs. Knierim and their five children moved to California at the invitation of the School of Theology at Claremont, where he took a full professorship position in Old Testament theology and Christian antiquity studies. The family stayed in Claremont for the next 52 years.

Hildegard was a gracious host to friends and colleagues, often sharing a favorite German recipe in handwritten script. She was a devoted Christian, living her faith with deep love for her family and friends and offering a gentle and generous Christian witness, whether in her church, home, or neighborhood. She supported Rolf with deep love.

Rolf and Hildegard were lifelong companions bonded by shared life experiences. “The intricacies of their stories are beyond the scope of this announcement,” their family shared. “They touched many lives around the world in positive and sometimes profound ways, which can only be recounted by the innumerable individuals that hold these experiences and their accompanying stories. Justice, truth, honesty and discovery were their motivation. Remembered by friends as ‘Tell me something new!’ and ‘Doctor-mother,’ they lived not for themselves, but for family and those who are in need.”

They were preceded in death by brothers Werner and Helmut Knierim and Albert and Erick Salm; daughter Barbara Kruells; niece Nina Keller-Henman; and granddaughter Kaylee Leiper.

They are survived by their children, Johannes, Eva, Eberhard and Gabriele; and four grandchildren, Diana Westfall, her husband Pierce and their children Faye and Ember, Thomas Kruells, Ashley Burrows and Keeghan Knierim.

-Online with emendations
A Veteran of the United States Army, a son, father, brother, husband and grandfather. He loved hiking and being a volunteer to serve meals to those less fortunate. His contributions through community service helped many lives. Greatly missed will be his remarkable sense of humor and outstanding moral code. Goodbye to an incredible man, goodbye Dad.

-Jennifer Middle
Portia Pasamonte
July 29, 1929 - July 12, 2018

Portia (Garcia) Pasamonte, 88, of Santa Ana, California, the daughter of Cresencia V. and Dionisio C. Garcia, was born in Tondo, Manila, Philippines and passed away peacefully in her home in Santa Ana.

Portia grew up in Pangasinan as the fourth child in a family of eight children. She studied nursing and graduated from North General Hospital in 1951. She came to the United States in 1955. She attended nursing school at Boston University in Boston, Massachusetts, where she received a nursing degree. She married David R. Pasamonte, a pastor in the United Methodist Church, on September 1, 1957.

She and her husband moved to California in 1963 when he was appointed pastor of the First United Methodist Church in Wilmington. They served for six years. At every city to which they were appointed, Portia worked as a registered nurse at one of the city’s hospitals. Their assignments included churches in New Hampshire, California, Arizona, and Hawaii.

She became a naturalized citizen in 1999 when she took the oath at the United States District Court in Los Angeles.

As a pastor’s wife, she was always the consummate hostess at every meeting and function they hosted at the parsonages. She also sang with the church adult choir and played with the bell choir when the church had one. She was a member of the United Methodist Women group.

Though Portia and her husband were never blessed with children of their own, they brought into their homes two poodles, Panda and Gigi. These two fortunate pets were loved and pampered as if they were children. For relaxation, Portia was into crafts and also learned to make pottery and created a few figurines.

Portia was preceded in death by her parents, four brothers and two sisters. She is survived by her sister, Priscilla G. Quisol and several nieces and nephews.

- Lilia Milloy
Florence E. Lutz Perry

August 3, 1924 - July 12, 2018

Flo was born in Massachusetts. In 1945, Flo entered Boston University School of Social Work. She met her husband, Bob, at Boston University School of Theology. They married on May 29, 1949. After Bob was ordained in the New England Conference of the Methodist Church, Flo was often the unpaid choir director and organist. She worked as a social worker and substitute teacher to supplement their income.

Bob and Flo had four children: Stephen, Laurel, David, and Robyn.

In 1960, Bob told her that he felt that California was his “spiritual” home. This was a major change in Flo’s life. Flo grieved and gave into tears all the way across the country.

They arrived in Knollwood, California, at the end of June. The Conference had contracted with Knollwood Country Club to use their dining room for Sunday services. The Knollwood Methodist Church was nicknamed “The Church of the 19th Hole.” During this time, Flo found work with Los Angeles County Social Services. She was the choir director and pianist, church secretary, and the president of Women’s Society of Christian Service.

When they were moved to the Redlands: University, Flo began work on her master’s Degree in Education. In San Bernardino: Emmanuel, Flo taught fifth grade, then became the principal of Muscot and Emmerton elementary schools. She also joined PICO, a social justice community that focused on political community action.

Bob and Flo transitioned out of local church ministry and Flo joined San Bernardino: St. Paul’s. Flo became active in their music ministry. She taught at Clare Cherry Elementary School and eventually became vice-principal.

In semi-retirement, Bob and Flo began travelling. They loved visiting England, Scotland and Ireland. Their children and grandchildren have fond memories of these travels.

Bob and Flo moved to Sacramento in 1996. Flo began tutoring and teaching Haiku and being a mentor for young people who were in the criminal justice system. When Bob died in 1998, Flo didn’t slow down. She got involved with Church Women United and spiritual direction. She continued writing. She was politically active and spoke out for social justice. She tutored children in reading and math and adult literacy.

Flo Perry was an inspiration to her family. She loved hosting family gatherings and cooking for them. Her brownies are the stuff of family legend. She was generous, loving and helping. She will be missed and remembered for her vitality, energy, and enthusiasm.

-Robyn Jovalis
Loyce Sharp was born in Oklahoma City Oklahoma. She was the youngest of three sisters who married Nazarene ministers.

Loyce was born with a voice of an angel. A high soprano voice that had depth and beauty that combined with her own personal beauty brought attention to her and great pleasure to all who heard her.

Her family moved to Louisiana, where she was an ROTC commander in high school and was voted Mardi Gras queen. She attended Bethany Nazarene College where she studied voice. She immediately met her future husband, David Livingston Sharp, who was a graduating senior. Their first date was on Valentine’s Day 1945 and they were married six months later. David became a Nazarene minister. Being a minister’s wife was not something Loyce really wanted. She had seen the life of a minister in her own family and relatives thought she would like to try something different. However, her love for David was strong and she joined him in this endeavor.

They started in small churches in the south where their first child, a daughter Micholyn, was born. They moved westward to Oklahoma where their second child, David Sharp, Jr., was born and eventually to Pasadena, California. Loyce always sang in the choir and was always a major soloist wherever they were pastoring.

Loyce and David eventually felt the ideas and principles of the Nazarene Church were not suitable to their values and eventually joined the United Methodist Church. Loyce was very brave in this new start. Wherever they moved, she always made the home beautiful for her family, friends, and visitors.

When David retired, he became a partner in the Rose Parade Seating Company of Pasadena and Loyce worked right along beside him in running the business. She took up golf and became quite a good golfer —something she and her husband enjoyed very much together until late in their lives. When they were in their late 80’s, they moved to the Santa Barbara area near their daughter where they fully enjoyed the last years of their lives.

David passed away in 2011 and Loyce showed great strength and courage as she continued her life in Santa Barbara. She passed away peacefully with her daughter at her side.

She is survived by her two children; five grandchildren, Michael Vance, Taylor, Wade, Chelsea, Justin; two great-grandchildren, Justin Frederick Brown and Lexi Emery Sharp.

-Family
Ann Leone Bode Thede

May 10, 1927 - August 10, 2018

Ann Leone Bode Thede is survived by two sons, Stephen and Paul; three grandchildren, Brandon, Garret, and Makena; and a daughter, Joanne Carol Thede Ferreira.

Ann was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She attended North Central College in Naperville, Illinois, where she met her roommate's brother, Gaius Thede, a pre-theological student. They were married on May 27, 1950. Ann taught 6th grade while Gaius was completing seminary after which they moved to their first church in Pleasant Prairie, Minnesota.

With some apprehension, Ann took on the role of pastor’s wife. Two sons, Steve and Paul, were born before they moved to Dixon, California, in 1957 where they served "The Dixon Community Church" while Gaius completed his Doctorate in Theology and where their daughter Joanne was born. Ann took care of the children, and continued in her role as pastor’s wife while also teaching 4th grade at Travis Air Force Base.

In San Luis Obispo, Ann immediately became a part of that ministry, spending time talking, counseling, and having fun with students, many of whom became part of their extended family, and with whom she developed lifelong relationships. Gaius accepted a job in Hawaii. In an effort to serve students, Ann also went back to school, earning a Master's in Counseling and Guidance from the University of Hawaii in 1975.

The Thede family had always taken a month-long vacation, touring and camping at National Parks every summer and they found a way to go back to the mainland to do so, borrowing a camper bus from one of the former San Luis Obispo Wesley students. They invited a couple of Wesley students from Hawaii to join the family in what became an annual Hawaii Student "Bus Trip" continuing for over 20 years.

Upon the arrival of their first grandchild, Brandon, they moved to Irvine, California, to be close to family. After Gaius passed away in 2008, Ann remained in Irvine, enjoying family and new friends and overcoming two bouts with Lymphoma. In 2017, she moved to an assisted living facility near Palo Alto. Still full of life, she again made new friends, participated in group activities including a "me too" protest in her last weeks. She kept having fun, including kayaking and viewing a total eclipse. She also had numerous trips to Hawaii and toured Europe on a river cruise.

In the company of family, Ann finally succumbed to the lymphoma. She was 91.

-Theede Family