



The Lowell Johnson

June 22, 2013

The Rev. Dr. David Lowell Johnson of Lancaster, PA, died on June 20, 2013, at the age of 72 after a courageous battle with leukemia. David was born in Willow River, MN, on September 17, 1940.

David was the fourth child and only son of Rev. Elmer and Ruth Johnson (both deceased). He was married to Mary Ann Brenneman November 28, 1968 in Lubbock, TX. They have three children, Peter Christian married to Michele Kewitsch of Edina, MN; Eric David married to Megan Filston of Decatur, GA; and Anna Christina married to Don Slother Jr. of Alexandria, VA.

David is survived by his soul mate and wife Mary Ann, his children, and his siblings Sylvia Flancher (Leon) of Ormond Beach, FL, Rhoda Young (Roger) of Columbia, MO, and Phyllis Stevenson (Don) of Plymouth, MN. He is also survived by seven grandchildren: Alexander, Andrew, and Liam Johnson, sons of Peter and Michele; Scott, Phinehas, and Leif Johnson, sons of Eric and Megan; and Sidney Slother, daughter of Anna and Don. He is further survived by many cousins, nieces, and nephews. Preceding him in death is grandson Christian, son of Peter and Michele.

Growing up in the upper Midwest as part of a pastor's family, David was steeped in the Lutheran tradition. He graduated from high school in Oberon, ND in 1958, and Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN in 1962. After

two years of seminary at Augustana Theological Seminary in Rock Island, Illinois, David worked with the Tanganyika Christian Refugee Service in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, a program managed by the Lutheran World Federation based in Geneva. This was his first international service experience that would define his life and vocation. In 1967, he received his Master of Divinity from the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago.

David was ordained in 1967 and first served Christ Lutheran Church in San Angelo, TX (1967-1970). He then served Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in San Antonio, TX (1971-1977), Maadi Community Church and St. Andrew's United Church of Cairo in Cairo, Egypt (1978-1982), and St. John Lutheran Church in Fargo, ND (1982-1988).

From 1989-1997, David served as Representative of the Lutheran World Federation, Department of World Service, in Jerusalem and the Middle East. In this role he oversaw the Augusta Victoria Hospital and related social service programs for Palestinian refugees during turbulent years. During this period, David served on the board of the Global Mission of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. His international experience, accumulated wisdom, and deep contributions in international and interfaith relations earned him an Honorary Doctorate from the Academy of Ecumenical Indian Theology and Church Administration in Chennai, India in 1996.

From 1998-2005, David served as senior pastor of The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity in Lancaster, where he especially celebrated that church's storied history and inner-city presence. Early in retirement, he served as Acting Chief Executive Officer and President and later Director of Church Relations at LutherCare in Lititz in 2006-2007. David served as acting regional director for the Middle East in Amman, Jordan for the American Friends Service Committee in 2008. His activities in "retirement" demonstrated his energy and unrelenting passion for connecting with and serving people in Lancaster and across the globe.

In each of his parishes, David had a confident and caring style of ministry. David lived a life of deep commitment to marginalized people. He consistently upheld, with rare courage and dedication, Christian values of stewardship and service. As a Christian leader and ecumenical partner, he profoundly contributed to the life and witness of the church in society.

David was a popular and thoughtful speaker on the Middle East and Islam, led the Middle East Interest Group in Lancaster, and served on the boards of the Jerusalem-based Spafford Children's Center, Churches for Middle East Peace, and the Lancaster Interchurch Peace Witness.

David's pride and love of his family was unparalleled, and his influence profound. He opened the world to his West Texas bride and his three children, instilling in them a strong sense of global vocation and purpose. He often reflected with pride on the chosen professions and callings of his children, all of whom are engaged in international development, service and mission at high levels. He defined family broadly by embracing his daughters- and son-in-law, and had an unwavering love and pride for his seven grandchildren.

All are invited to attend a visitation on Tuesday, June 25 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at The Groffs Family Funeral Home, 528 West Orange Street, Lancaster (corner of Orange & Pine Sts.), and a memorial service at 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday, June 26 at The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity at 31 South Duke Street in Lancaster. Visitation will also be held from 10:00-10:45 a.m. Wednesday before the service.

In lieu of flowers, the family wishes memorials to be directed to either the Lutheran World Federation in Jerusalem or the Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund in Lancaster. Donations to LWF can be made by check payable to "The Lutheran World Federation," noting that the donation is made in the memory of the Rev. Dr. David Johnson, and mailed to Rev. Mark Brown, The Lutheran

World Federation, PO Box 19178, Jerusalem, Israel 91191. Donations to the Martin Luther King Scholarship Fund can be made to The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity in Lancaster, noting that the donation is made in the memory of the Rev. Dr. David Johnson, to later establish a scholarship in his name.

Tribute Wall



“ *The Lowell Johnson*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *Dear Mary Ann, Peter, Eric and Anna,
I just heard of the death of David and wanted to convey my heartfelt condolences to each of you. The year I spent with David and all of you in Cairo was and is a highlight of my life. David made me feel apart of your family and shaped my formation as a pastor. He was always caring, insightful and supportive and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. I pray God will keep all of you in his peace and grace.*

In God's Peace,

Rev. Stan Steele

Rev. Stan Steele - July 12, 2013 at 11:30 AM



“ *Of all the Pastors I have had in my life, Pastor David Johnson is the Pastor I will most remember as my mentor. Given the timing of his years at St John in Fargo, the ages of our children and my increasing involvement in the leadership of St John, David was quite the influence on my faith growth.*

I am sure my father, Bill would have shared the same feelings. I had lots of fun playing church league softball with Peter and Eric as well. I don't remember David playing, but I know he was a big fan.

Rest in Peace, Dave

Dave Fabian - June 30, 2013 at 10:55 PM

TJ

“ *May God's healing spirit be with you all....you truly become my family
While living in Egypt and shall never forget your kindness and love!
And I join many others who declare. El Hummidallah for David and his
Love and his new life! With love and affection !
Rev Dr Thom Johnson*

Thomas Johnson - June 26, 2013 at 05:48 AM

GB

“ *Dear Mary Ann and your loving family -
David was a true inspiration to anyone who knew him. We enjoyed knowing him during the years we shared at Trinity. I am sure your love and support throughout his fight helped him through the difficult path of his leukemia.*

We hope that memories of your life together and the happy times you have had will help to ease the pain in the coming weeks and months. You are all in our prayers.

*Fondly -
Gil and Kathy Bailey*

Gil and Kathy Bailey - June 25, 2013 at 02:08 PM

PT

“ Dear Mary Ann,

I was sorry to hear of David's passing. My sincere condolences to you and your family.

You will remember me visiting you and David from LWF headquarters in Geneva when David and I worked together in the Lutheran World Federation. The echoes of the round house now bring back many memories.

Big hug,

Peter Tyler

Peter Tyler - June 25, 2013 at 11:44 AM

RP

“ *Thank you David, well done, good and faithful servant!
May God's presence bring comfort and strength and joy to David's family and friends.*

Reverend Sandra R Mackie, Gettysburg, PA - June 25, 2013 at 11:31 AM

LF

“ Dear Johnson Family, on behalf of all colleagues in the Lutheran World Federation and especially in the Department for World Service I want to extend our condolences to you. We are saddened by the death of our colleague David Johnson, who served the Lutheran World Federation as Representative in Jerusalem and the Middle East. He and his committed services are well remembered in Jerusalem and in Geneva. We thank God for his life and his service for the Church and for the World. My God bless you all with faith, hope and love which is stronger than the forces of death. "If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord." Romans 14:8
On behalf of the Lutheran World Federation
Eberhard Hitzler
Director
LWF Department for World Service

Lutheran World Federation - June 25, 2013 at 10:35 AM

DM

“ I will forever treasure the time Bev and I spent visiting and traveling with David and Mary Ann. These experiences in large measured shaped my view of the world. I think I am a better person because of them. He will continue to live through those he touched.

David Meyers - June 25, 2013 at 09:07 AM

JF

“ Dear Johnson Family,

We are saddened to learn of David's passing. Our thoughts and prayers are for him and your family. We knew David through his work with the American Friends Service Committee. We are grateful for his work with AFSC in a period of transition. He was graced with the kindness, deep concern, and pastoral skills that suited him so well for this work, as I am sure for all of his other work. We are thankful, especially, for his years of service in Jerusalem and his attention to the needs and rights of the Palestinian people. May God comfort you in your loss. Allah yerhamo (may God have mercy on him). Jim and Deborah Fine, Ankawa, Erbil, IRAQ

James Fine - June 25, 2013 at 08:59 AM

JH

“ *MaryAnne and family, Sylvia and Leon, Rhoda and Roger, Phyllis and Don and families;*

We are saddened by Cousin David's death, particularly for the loss we know each of you now bears. It was humbling to read the obituary, written with such obvious love and respect for husband, father, brother, grandfather. He was a gifted leader for good and will be greatly missed. May God's love and grace comfort you in this time.

Janet and Edwin House - June 25, 2013 at 04:05 AM

MH

“ Dear Johnson Family,
I have been keeping up with Pastor David's illness via the Prince of Peace prayer chain, and how courageously he fought his illness, and how all of you bravely supported him. I did not attend Prince of Peace Lutheran Church when he was the pastor here, but I was Peter and Eric's kindergarten teacher, at Camelot Elementary School, a short distance away from Prince of Peace. You may not remember me by my married name, but I may have been Miss Carlos Hattenbach when I had the boys in my class. They were delightful, and so were their parents. Anna was on the way, and Mary Ann requested that they be in the same kindergarten class, rather than having one in the afternoon class and one in the morning class. With both of them in the same class, she had a bit of time to prepare for the eminent arrival of Baby Anna, and didn't have to spend the day driving the two of them back and forth from school all day. If I recall correctly, I could tell the boys apart because one had a freckle on his upper arm. I am so sorry to hear of the passing of the patriarch of your family. I pray that you can feel the comfort of God's loving arms at this difficult time. Mrs. Carlos H. Haun, San Antonio, TX

Mrs. Carlos Haun - June 24, 2013 at 11:04 PM

JD

“ Dear Eric and Family,

My condolences to you for your lost. You all stood strong by your father's side through his fight. My prayers go out to each of you. Please let your memories of him and his loving spirit comfort you at this time.

Jerlawnda Davis - June 24, 2013 at 04:30 PM

BG

“ *Mary Ann, Peter, Eric, Anna and family,
Our prayers are with you as you mourn David's death. He led an
"abundant" life as a servant leader. His obituary is well written and
notes his many roles and places of service in this world. He will be
greatly missed, but never forgotten! God bless and keep you. May
others help as you begin to imagine life without him.*

Beth Grosen - June 24, 2013 at 04:12 PM

DW

“ *Maryann, Peter, Eric, Anna and your entire family.
I am sorry to hear that David lost the fight against his leukemia.
David will always have a very special place in my heart. His loving
and caring nature definitely was shown to my family while serving in
Fargo, ND.
My prayer and thoughts continue with your family during this time of
grief.*

Dianna Woodard - June 24, 2013 at 03:35 PM

PC

“ *It was an honor and a joy to know David and work with him here at
Luther Acres -Lititz. His life and commitment to service to the church
and all people was an inspiration to us all. He will be greatly missed.
You are all in our thoughts and prayers.
- Chaplain Walt Cleckley*

Pastor Walt Cleckley - June 24, 2013 at 10:53 AM

JE

“ Dearest Johnson family,
I am saddened to hear of David's passing and can only reflect on his kindness, fairness and love that he had for all of God's children. I am honored to have served in ministry with him for three and one half years at Holy Trinity.

May God's peace surround you all in the days, weeks and years ahead without David's physical presence among you, but his memory and love comfort you always.

In Christ's love,
Jeffrey Engroff

Jeffrey Engroff - June 23, 2013 at 11:46 AM

MB

“ Our prayers are with you, Eric and Megan, and the rest of your beloved family as you celebrate David's life. His obituary testifies to a life well-lived...the life of a good and faithful servant and a caring husband, father, and grandfather. May your family know God's peace and love during this time.

In Christ's love,
Melissa and Spencer Banzhaf

Melissa and Spencer Banzhaf - June 23, 2013 at 09:22 AM