

A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING
FOR THE GIFT OF LIFE IN

Lowell Larson

AND THE HOPE OF NEW LIFE



1924-2020

SEPTEMBER 19, 2020 | 11 AM
VINJE LUTHERAN CHURCH

PRELUDE

Music that was significant in Pastor Larson's life and ministry

Borning Cry

John C. Ylvisaker

E'en So, Lord Jesus Quickly Come

Paul Manz

Ave Verum Corpus

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Unto the Hills

John Campbell/Charles H. Purday

Holy God, We Praise Your Name

Clarence Walworth

Holy God, we praise your name; Lord of all, we bow before you.

All on earth your scepter claim, all in heaven above adore you,

Infinite your vast domain, everlasting is your reign.

Hark! The glad celestial hymn angel choirs above are raising;

Cherubim and seraphim, in unceasing chorus praising,

Fill the heavens with sweet accord; "Holy, holy, holy Lord!"

Lo, the apostolic train join your sacred name to hallow;

Prophets swell the glad refrain, and the white-robed martyrs follow;

And from morn to set of sun through the church the song goes on.

Holy Father, Holy Son, Holy Spirit, three we name you,

Though in essence only one; undivided God we claim you

And, adoring, bend the knee while we own the mystery.

WELCOME

GREETING

PRAYER

PSALM 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—From where will my help come?

My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber;

He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper, the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in

From this time on and forevermore.

SOLO Beautiful Savior

Beautiful Savior, King of creation,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Truly I'd love thee, truly I'd serve thee,
light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

Fair are the meadows, fair are the woodlands,
robed in flow'rs of blooming spring;
Jesus is fairer, Jesus is purer,
he makes our sorrowing spirit sing.

Beautiful Savior, Lord of the nations,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Glory and honor, praise, adoration,
now and forevermore be thine!

ROMANS 8:31-39

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SERMON

DUET There's A Wideness in God's Mercy

There's a wideness in God's mercy, like the wideness of the sea;
there's a kindness in God's justice which is more than liberty.
There is no place where earth's sorrows are more felt than up in heaven.
There is no place where earth's failings have such kindly judgment given.

There is welcome for the sinner, and a promised grace made good.
There is mercy with the Savior; there is healing in his blood.
There is grace enough for thousands of new worlds as great as this;
there is room for fresh creation in that upper home of bliss.

For the love of God is broader than the measures of our mind;
and the heart of the eternal is most wonderfully kind.
But we make this love too narrow by false limits of our own;
and we magnify its strictness with a zeal God will not own.

'Tis not all we owe to Jesus; it is something more than all;
greater good because of evil, larger mercy through the fall.
Make our love, O God, more faithful; let us take you at your word,
and our lives will be thanksgiving for the goodness of the Lord.

CELEBRATION OF THE GIFT OF COMMUNION

HEBREWS 12:1-2

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

PRAYERS

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into
temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever and ever.
Amen.

COMMENDATION

DUET Children of the Heavenly Father

Children of the heavenly Father safely in his bosom gather;
nestling bird nor star in heaven such a refuge e'er was given.

God his own doth tend and nourish, in his holy courts they flourish;
From all evil things he spares them, in his mighty arms he bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever from the Lord his children sever;
unto them his grace he showeth, and their sorrows all he knoweth.

Though he giveth or he taketh, God his children ne'er forsaketh;
his the loving purpose solely to preserve them pure and holy.

REMEMBRANCES

BENEDICTION

O Lord, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world lies hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then in thy mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last.

Let your Spirit teach us how to sorrow. How to love. How to hope.
How to serve and how to give thanks.

ORGAN POSTLUDE Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way
with countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,
the one eternal God, whom earth and heav'n adore;
for thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.

PARTICIPANTS

CLERGY

Pastor Justin Ask
Pastor Dane Skilbred

ORGANIST MUSICIANS

Karen Wojahn
Myra Quale
Jim and Marilyn Tiede

Lowell Larson died peacefully of natural causes at age 95 on May 10, 2020 in Claremont, California. He was a beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and Lutheran minister. Lowell was born in LacQui Parle County, Minnesota on October 22, 1924. Lowell married Helen Akerson on April 28, 1946, and they had five children and 47 years of marriage until Helen's death in 1993.

After high school in Appleton, MN, Lowell graduated from Augsburg College and Luther Seminary in Minneapolis in 1948, He had a long career of 40 years as a Lutheran minister, serving three congregations. In 1948, Lowell assumed his first parish in Morris, Minnesota where he remained until 1960. He then accepted a call to First Lutheran Church of Northridge, California and remained there until 1974. That year he returned to Willmar, Minnesota where he served as pastor at Vinje Lutheran Church until 1989 when he retired.

Lowell and his wife Helen retired to Pilgrim Place in Claremont, California in 1989. They both loved this special retirement community and had been on a waiting list there for years before moving in 1989.

Unfortunately, Helen suffered strokes and died at an early age of 74 in 1993. Lowell continued to enjoy Pilgrim Place, contributing in a strong, quiet and thoughtful way to the community and its values, often in leadership positions. He was very grateful for the abiding support of that community as he lived independently for decades and, over the last year of his life, in the assisted living and skilled nursing facilities.

Throughout his adult life, Lowell was an avid duck hunter. He loved his home state of Minnesota and during retirement, spent four months out of the year at the family cottage on Lake Florida, just outside of Willmar, MN. His close friend and companion, Betty Hess, joined him there for most of those summers. These summer months were filled with wonderful memories with his children, grandchildren, friends and neighbors. Lowell and Betty also traveled extensively, including several trips to Norway.

Lowell loved a good conversation. He was attracted to Pilgrim Place because of its shared values and diversity of perspectives on Christianity and current events. He was known throughout his ministry over 40 years for being open minded, a good listener, and a gentle guide as people confronted questions of faith and life. Lowell was a longstanding member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Claremont.

For the past twenty years, Lowell developed a deep love and appreciation for Shakespeare. In early February 2020, he was honored in Claremont for two decades of leadership in establishing and nurturing informal groups to read and act the plays of Shakespeare. As one participant in those groups wrote: “Over the last 19 years, I have met an incredible group of people because of him, all the while nourishing our passion for Shakespeare and Elizabethan theatre. He was a model for the idea that retirement from work does not mean putting the brain on hold. “

Lowell is survived by five children and their extended families—Ted Larson of Eureka, CA; Thom Larson of Ojai, California; Carol Larson of Santa Cruz, CA; Eric Larson of Morro Bay, CA and Evan Larson of Salt Lake City Utah. He also is celebrated by eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. He was lovingly referred to as “the grand one” by grandchildren and “the great one” by his great grandchildren.

Lowell’s family will forever cherish his memory, remembering one of his favorite lines from e.e. cummings poetry: “i carry your heart (i carry it in my heart)”



SUPRISING ME

(by Lowell Larson as he turned 90)

It wasn't supposed to happen like this
Three score and ten was the Word
Or maybe if you're strong (or lucky)
four. And here they are--Four and Ten,
Surprising me.

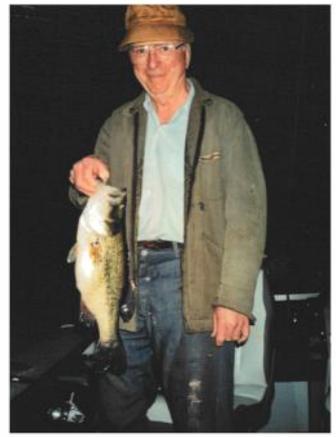
Somehow it seems OK. In spite of loss,
disappointments and the exploding,
burning, melting, drowning of our world--
I feel an undeniable contentment,
surprising me.

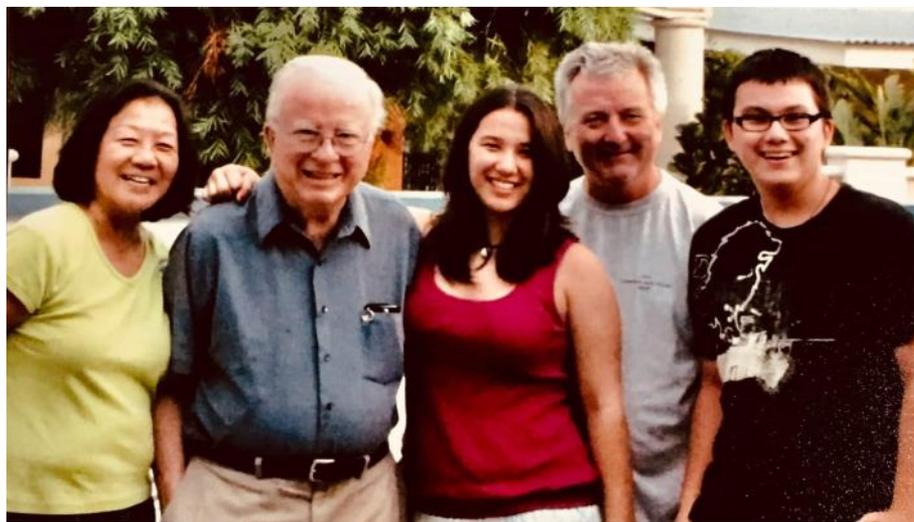
Am I brain dead? Am I heartless?
There is awareness. There is sorrow.
There are gestures of compassion and,
dare I hope, as well, the peace of Christ,
surprising me?

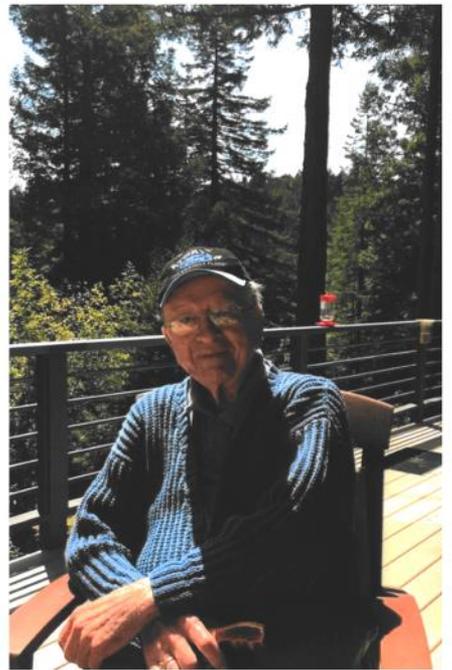
I knew briefly as a young man the
composer who promised that God
who was there for my "borning cry"
will be there when I close my eyes,
surprising me.











On behalf of the family, our heartfelt thanks to all who are present today. The Vinje congregation and Willmar community were so special to Lowell.

Everyone is invited to a socially distanced lunch at The Oaks at Eagle Creek, 1000 26th Avenue NE