

**M**erlin Kenneth Norris was born near Graettinger, Iowa on June 15, 1935, to Martin and Edna (Biggaard) Norris. He was baptized into the Christian faith on August 25, 1935 at Lost Island Lutheran Church, Graettinger, Iowa. He was confirmed on June 5, 1949 at the same church.

Merlin received his elementary education at a rural school in Lost Island township and in Graettinger Consolidated school, graduating from Graettinger High School in 1954. He then went on to receive his bachelor's degree from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, in 1958. Merlin received his theological degree from Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa, in 1962.

On August 12, 1956, Merlin was united in marriage to Marietta Zitterich, his high school sweetheart. Their marriage was blessed with three children, Barbara Renee, Rodney Ivan, and William (Bill) Friedrich.

Merlin was ordained into the Christian ministry at Lost Island Lutheran Church on June 17, 1962. "Pastor Norris" embraced his Christian calling serving the Iowa parishes of St. Donatus (St. John's, St. Donatus, and St. Paul, Lamotte) 1962-1966; Scarville Lutheran Parish (Immanuel, Scarville and North Prairie, rural Scarville) 1966-1976; Fjeldberg Lutheran, Huxley, from 1976-1989 and Good Hope Lutheran, Tironka, from 1989 - 2000. His ministry expanded to the entire community in which Merlin and Marietta lived. He thoroughly enjoyed visiting with whomever he came in contact with. Merlin retired from active ministry in 2000 and he and Marietta moved to Lake Mills, Iowa. He then served for many years as interim and visiting pastor for many area churches.

Merlin was known for his beautiful, well-manicured flower beds. He was proud that many of the perennials had a personal history to them. It gave him pleasure to share his flowers, whether it be the blooms or cuttings of the plant. In the winter, the downstairs became Merlin's flower room(s) where he could take cuttings from the annual flowers of the past summer to start for the next summer's flower beds. Another hobby would be the Scandinavian bell pulls Merlin would stitch. Marietta's job was then to meticulously hand sew the background and the bell pulls on to finish the project.

Family and relationships were of utmost importance to Merlin. First, and foremost, was his rock and supporter, Marietta. Family reunions, birthdays, and holidays were always special and meant to be celebrated! Merlin cherished and maintained life-long friendships with numerous people. His kind, caring, accepting personality endeared him to many.

Merlin is survived by his wife of 64 years, Marietta of Lake Mills; his three children, Barb (Brian) Abele of Leland; Rod (Shelene) Norris of Lake Mills and Bill (Sheila) Norris of Huxley; his six grandchildren, Allison (Bob) Greenfield of Lake Mills; Sarah (Nick) Kuennen of Pella; Anthony (Devan Register) Norris of Lakewood, Colorado; Ashlyn (Jerry) Morse of Storm Lake; Joshua Norris of Des Moines and Jessica Norris of Huxley; and six great-grandchildren, Kenlie and Gage Greenfield; Brynn, Carew and Elle Kuennen and Everleigh Norris. He is also survived by a sister-in-law, Jan (Bob) Meyer; special nieces and nephews: Karyn (Troy) Leininger; Kim (Jay) Venzon; Kyle (Amee) Norris; and Kirt (Mandy) Norris. He is also survived by Marietta's sister, Jeralda Arcularius and her brother, Eldon Zitterich as well as Marietta's nieces and nephews.

Merlin was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Keith (1984) along with Marietta's siblings; Merle and Lois Zitterich, Justin and Hazel Zitterich and Lois Zitterich.

Glory Be To God!

*In Loving Memory of*

# MERLIN K. NORRIS

**Departed from this Life**

Friday, May 29, 2020

At the age of 84 years, 11 months and 14 days.

## **Funeral Service**

Tuesday, June 2, 2020

10:30 AM

Immanuel Lutheran Church

Scarville, Iowa

## **Clergy**

Pastor Randy Baldwin

Pastor Joel Guttormson

Pastor Melinda McCluskey

## **Organist**

Ruth Sheldon

## **Special Music**

Vocalists:

Daryl Sherman and Jim Scholbrock

*Children of the Heavenly Father*

*Softly and Tenderly, Jesus Is Calling*

*Precious Lord, Take My Hand*

*Lift High the Cross*

## **Honorary Pallbearers**

Merlin's nieces and nephews

Karyn & Troy Leininger

Kyle & Amee Norris

Kim & Jay Venzon

Kirt & Mandy Norris

## **Casket Bearers**

Merlin's Beloved Grandchildren

Allison Greenfield - Sarah Kuennen

Anthony Norris - Ashlyn Morse

Joshua Norris - Jessica Norris

## **Interment**

North Prairie Lutheran Cemetery

Rural Leland, Iowa