# A Service of Holy Communion and Thanksgiving for the Life of Stanley Norris Olson

March 17, 1946 — September 12, 2025



In the Mexican state of Michoacán, the celebration of the Day of the Dead coincides with skies turned orange and black as monarch butterflies arrive to overwinter. The return of the monarchs and the annual return of the beloved dead have intertwined in story, ritual, and celebration. In the north, too, butterflies are signs of life's cycles: changing from caterpillar to chrysalis to fragile flight; death within life and life within death.

1:00 pm
Central Lutheran Church
Minneapolis, Minnesota

# GATHERING-

#### **GATHERING MUSIC**

Chad Winterfeldt

Director of Music Ministry, Grace University Lutheran Church

Please stand as you are able when the + indicates throughout the service.

#### + GATHERING WORDS

Amber Ingalsbe

Co-Pastor, Grace University Lutheran Church

The assembly rises and faces the baptismal font at the church entrance.

Welcome in the name of our Triune God, the Trinity of Love, Creator, Christ, and  $\pm$  Spirit of Comfort. We are gathered to worship, to proclaim the Easter promise, to remember before God our brother Stan, to give thanks for his life, to commend him to our merciful Redeemer, and to console one another in our grief.

#### + THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Stan's grandchildren

Finnegan & Ian McBride, Freya & Sila Henning-Olson

At this font, we trust in the baptismal promise that holds Stan forever. Here, we give thanks to God for this gift that is Stan's and ours. For when we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of God, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with Christ in death,

we shall certainly be united with Christ in the resurrection.

Water is poured into the font by Stan's four grandchildren.

# Congregational responses are in bold print.

#### O gracious God, we thank you.

For at the birth of creation, you brooded over the waters; through the floodwaters of a new beginning you sustained life; you tamed the Red Sea's mist and mud; and you quenched the thirst of your people with water from a rock.

#### O beloved Christ, we praise you.

For you walked on waves and calmed stormy seas; you welcomed the Samaritan woman at the well; you healed at the pool of Siloam; and you poured out your life for the renewal of all creation.

### O Holy Spirit, we invite you.

For you rain down Pentecost-fire on your church anew, anointing us as one body, empowering us to do justice. In these waters, we, with Stan and all your beloved, are named, treasured, and claimed by your expansive love, today, tomorrow, and to the end.

O Blessed Trinity, we proclaim your praise, giving thanks amid tears and laughter, sorrow and joy, for this gift of grace that welcomes and washes over all. **Amen. Thanks be to God.** 

#### + PROCESSIONAL HYMN

All Are Welcome

**ELW 641** 

The family processes in accompanying Stan on the completion of his baptismal journey.



Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950
Music: TWO OAKS, Marty Haugen
Text and music © 1994 GIA Publications, Inc., 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com. 800.442.3358.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.

#### + PRAYER

The grace of Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.** 

Let us pray.

O God of grace and glory,

we remember before you today our brother, Stan.

We thank you for giving him to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth.

In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn.

Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up

by the resurrection of Christ Jesus

so that we may live in confidence and hope

until, by your call, we are gathered to our heavenly home

in the company of all your saints;

through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Easter life.

Amen.

# -WORD-

#### **WORDS OF THANKSGIVING**

Bishop Jen Nagel Minneapolis Area Synod

**POEM** — In Blackwater Woods, by Mary Oliver

Mark Knutson, friend

Look, the trees are turning their own bodies into pillars

of light, are giving off the rich fragrance of cinnamon

and fulfillment,

the long tapers of cattails are bursting and floating away over the blue shoulders

of the ponds, and every pond, no matter what its name is, is

nameless now. Every year everything I have ever learned in my lifetime

leads back to this: the fires and the black river of loss

whose other side

is salvation, whose meaning

none of us will ever know.

To live in this world

you must be able to do three things: to love what is mortal;

to hold it

against your bones knowing your own life depends on it;

and, when the time comes to let it go,

to let it go.

#### **PSALM 121**

- <sup>1</sup>I lift up my eyes to the hills; from where is my help to come?
- <sup>2</sup> My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.
- <sup>3</sup> The Lord will not let your foot be moved nor will the one who watches over you fall asleep.
- Behold, the keeper of Israel will neither slumber nor sleep;
- <sup>5</sup> the Lord watches over you;
  - the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
- <sup>6</sup> the sun will not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.
- <sup>7</sup> The Lord will preserve you from all evil and will keep your life.
- <sup>8</sup> The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in, from this time forth forevermore.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

#### **SCRIPTURE READING** — Romans 8:31-35, 37-39

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Larson, friend

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not withhold his own Son but gave him up for all of us, how will he not with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup> Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? It is Christ who died, or rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will affliction or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? <sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than victorious through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> 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.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.



Music: Caribbean traditional; arr. Mark Sedio, b. 1954 Arr.  $\odot$  1995 Augsburg Fortress.

#### + GOSPEL — John 13:1-10a

The holy gospel according to John.

#### Glory to you, O Lord.

<sup>1</sup> Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. <sup>2</sup> The devil had already decided that Judas son of Simon Iscariot would betray Jesus. And during supper <sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands and that he had come from God and was going to God, <sup>4</sup> got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. <sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." <sup>8</sup> Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me." <sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean."

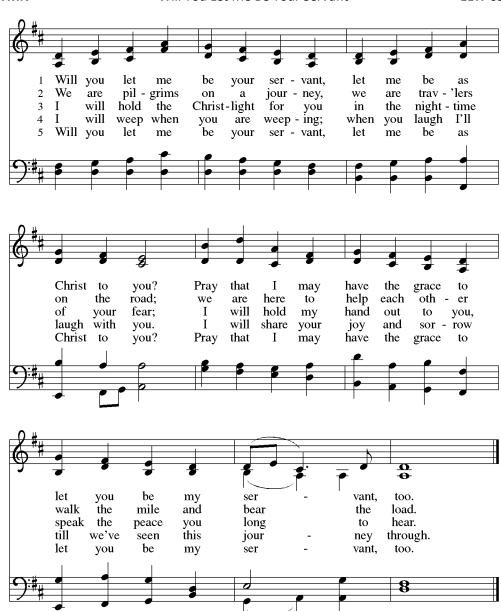
The gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

**SERMON** 

Justin Lind-Ayres Co-Pastor, Grace University Lutheran Church





Text: Richard Gillard, b. 1953 Music: THE SERVANT SONG, Richard Gillard; arr. Betty Pulkingham, b. 1928 Text and music © 1977 Scripture In Song, c/o Integrity's Hosanna Music (ASCAP), c/o Integrity Media, Inc., 1000 Cody Road, Mobile, AL 36695.

#### + AFFIRMATION OF FAITH — Apostles' Creed

Let us affirm our faith together guided by the words of the Apostles' Creed.

I believe in God, the Father almighty,

creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried;

he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again;

he ascended into heaven,

he is seated at the right hand of the Father,

and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. Amen.

#### + PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Rev. Dr. Stephen Larson, friend

Each petition ends: God of mercy, hear our prayer.

#### + SHARING OF THE PEACE



#### + GREAT THANSGIVING

God be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to our God.

Let us give thanks to our gracious God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right.... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Text: Per Harling, b. 1945
Music: DU ÄR HELIG, Per Harling
Text and music © 1990 Ton Vis Produktion AB, admin. Augsburg Fortress in North America,
South America, and Central America, including the Caribbean.

#### + WORDS OF INSTITUTION

#### + LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, Our Mother, in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

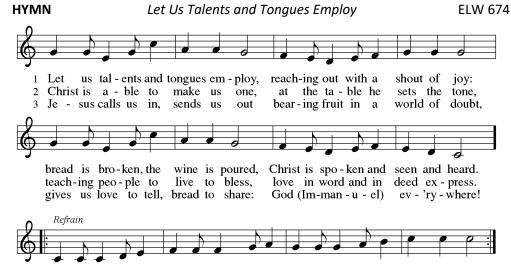
#### + INVITATION TO COMMUNION

#### **COMMUNION CELEBRATION**

Servers:

Rev. Dr. Marie Olson Purcell, Stan's niece Rev. Erik Olson, Stan's nephew Rev. Dr. Barbara Lundblad, friend Rev. Kate Reuer Welton, friend

#### **COMMUNION HYMNS**

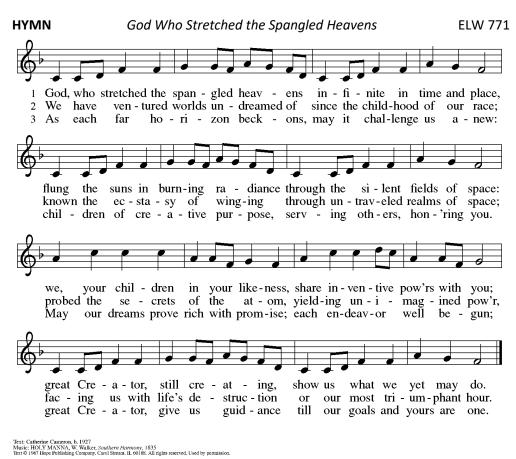


Je-sus lives a-gain, earth can breathe a-gain, pass the Word a-round: loaves a - bound!

Text: Fred Kaan, b. 1929 Music: LINSTEAD, Jamaican folk tune; adapt. Doreen Potter, 1925–1980 Text and music of 1975 Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, IL 60188, All rights reserved. Used by permission.



Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586–1649; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878 Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598–1662



**HYMN** 

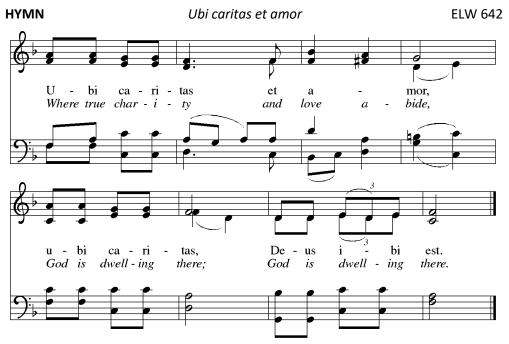
# Dona nobis pacem

**ELW 753** 

After the introduction and singing through once in unison, please join in singing as a canon, a cappella.



Text: Traditional Music: DONA NOBIS PACEM, traditional



Text: Latin antiphon, 9th cent.; Taizé Community; tr. With One Voice

Music: TAIZÉ UBI CARITAS, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994

Text and music № 1979 Les Presses de Taizé. GIA Publications. Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638, www.giamusic.com, 8004423358. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

English text № 1995 Augsburg Fortress.



Text: Matthew 28:5; Taizé Community
Music: BE NOT AFRAID, Jacques Berthier, 1923–1994
Text and music: 0 Les Presses de Taizé. GJA Publications, Inc., agent. 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638. www.giamusic.com, 800,442,3358.
All rights reserved. Used by permission.

## **TABLE PRAYER**

Life-giving God, in this simple meal you have set a banquet uniting us

with all your saints at your table of mercy.
Sustain us on the journey,
strengthen us to serve in neighborly love,
and send us forth as witnesses to your resurrection hope,
through Christ Jesus, our Savior and our Song.

Amen.

# -SENDING-

#### + SUNG BLESSING

May the Longtime Sun

The family gathers around the urn as the blessing is sung.

May the long time sun shine upon you, all love surround you, and the Christ light within you guide you on your way home.

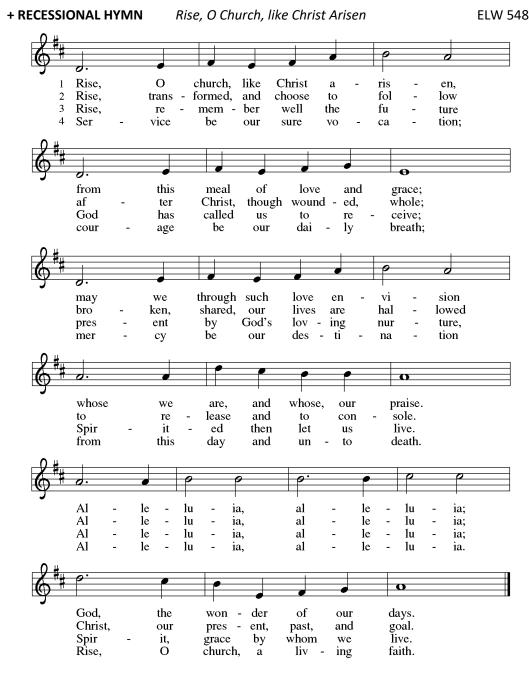
#### + COMMENDATION

Let us commend Stan to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer.

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Stan. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming, a beloved of your own claiming.

Welcome and receive Stan into your eternal home, into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

Amen.



Text: Susan Palo Cherwien, b. 1953 Music: SURGE ECCLESIA, Timothy J. Strand, b. 1958 Text © 1997 Susan Palo Cherwien, admin. Augsburg Fortress. Music © 1997 Augsburg Fortress.

#### + DISMISSAL

Let us go forth in peace, in the name of Christ. Amen.

**SENDING MUSIC** 

Voluntary in D Major

John Stanley

This voluntary was played at Stan and Nancy's wedding 54 years ago.

All rights reserved, OneLicense.net license #A-716575.
From SundaysandSeasons.com. Copyright 2025 Augsburg Fortress. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission under Augsburg Fortress Liturgies Annual License #SAS103452

Thank you to Pastor Peter Nycklemoe, Life Passages Coordinator Michael Acuña Dee, Food Service Coordinator Mark Carroll, and the Central Lutheran Church community for their hospitality in hosting this service and reception today.

Following the service, you are invited to the reception area for light refreshments.

#### **Gathering Stories**

The stories people remember and tell about us say so much about who we are. Stan touched and influenced so many of us in so many ways, and we'd like to gather your stories and memories about him to help our family remember who he was and understand the many ways he impacted people's lives.

You can scan the QR code to the left or go to <a href="https://tinyurl.com/StanStories">https://tinyurl.com/StanStories</a> to get to a website where you can type your stories. Any sort of story is great--poignant, funny, mundane. No story is too big or too small. Please feel free to submit multiple stories and don't worry too much about grammar or formatting.

If you prefer, you may also email stories and photos to Stan's daughters Maren & Christa. Their email addresses are olson.maren@gmail.com and christajolson@gmail.com.

Please share the link with anyone you know who might have a story to share.

# The Upward Curve of Hope

by Stan Olson

Tenacious cedars ring our northern lakes.
Living at the edge, they make do with a slip of land, facing constant wind, undermined by waves, pushed by expanding ice.
Their fate is certain, and they lean closer and closer to the water.
But always, they reach up. They grow.
Pulled by adversity, but with renewing purpose each trunk forms an upward curve of hope.

So may your life curve up in the midst of challenges.
As you grow toward death and life, may the Spirit lift you
Your life tells a Christ story.
Look! You curve toward God.



**Stanley Norris Olson**, child of God, died suddenly on Friday afternoon, September 12, 2025. He was 79. In death, as in life, he is surrounded by the love of his family and a vast community.

Stan was born March 17, 1946 in Fort Dodge, Iowa and grew up in Eagle Grove, IA. He was baptized on April 14, 1946 at Evangelical Lutheran Church in Eagle Grove. His parents, Norris Delmar Olson and Joyce Dorthy (Narland) Olson raised their four children to lives of joy, abundant love, and care for others. Faith and learning were family priorities, and they set Stan on a lifelong path of service to God and neighbor.

He began his education in a one room school-house-Pine View School-across the road from his family farm and then graduated from Eagle Grove High School. After attending Waldorf College (A.A. 1966) and St. Olaf College (B.A. 1968), Stan went to Luther Seminary for his M.Div (1972) and then to Yale University, where he earned his Ph.D in New Testament in 1976.

In his ministry as a parish pastor in Duluth and New Ulm, Minnesota; as a teacher at Luther Seminary; as bishop of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); as Executive Director for Vocation and Education in the ELCA; as President of Wartburg Seminary; as Interim President of Trinity Seminary in Columbus, OH; and, in retirement, as an active member of Grace University Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Stan was always a leader with a servant's heart. He built relationships, listened deeply, and reminded those around him of the goodness and kindness of God. Whatever his role--colleague, mentor, spouse, parent, grandparent, and friend--he strove to begin always with grace, and he lived unfailingly his confidence, from Romans 8, that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

For 54 wonderful years, Stan shared his life with Nancy Lee (Stuckey) Olson. They met in Suitland, Maryland in 1971, when Stan was a pastoral intern and Nancy the music director. They rapidly fell into a love that sustained them through the years. They were partners in life and often in ministry, caring for their communities, their family, and the world. Together, he and Nancy raised two daughters with great love, teaching them the value of community, faith, kindness, integrity, and curiosity about the world. He instilled in them an abiding delight in words and stories and a begrudging appreciation for terrible puns. Stan and Nancy taught their children and grandchildren to love the outdoors and to notice beauty. The lakes, rocks, and pines of northern Minnesota became a defining family place. At home, Stan and Nancy walked together almost every day, watching eagles soaring over the river and birds at the backyard feeders, witnessing the changing seasons. As he wrote, "We've had a fantastic life together."

True to his lowa farm boy roots, Stan loved to build and repair things and work with wood; and he took great joy in his garden and house plants. His appreciation for the natural world and his creative spirit led him to watercolor painting, poetry, and pen and ink drawing. He was his daughters' first and best writing teacher and their life-long guide on matters personal, professional, and practical.

In addition to his beloved wife, Stan is survived by his daughters Maren Olson (Jamie McBride) and Christa Olson (Anna Henning) and grandchildren Finnegan, Freya, Ian, and Sila. He is also survived by his siblings Carmen Peter, Julia Wentz (Chris Simoni), and Kent Olson (Linda), his brother-in-law Richard Stuckey, and cherished nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents, his aunts and uncles, his brothers-in-law John Wentz and Leonard Peter, his sister-in-law Rusty Stuckey, and his cousins Erik Budd, Eloise (Olson) Cohen, Gary Kist, Mike Kist, and Mark Madson.

In lieu of flowers, please consider donations to Grace University Lutheran, Luther Seminary, Wartburg Seminary, or Lutheran World Relief.