



George W. Evans Jr.

January 5, 1934 - June 10, 2014

George Wesley Evans, Jr., passed away at his home on June 10, 2014. He was 80.

George Wesley Evans, Jr. was born January 5, 1934, in Columbia, PA, along the banks of the Susquehanna River. He was the only son of George Wesley and Carrie Estella McCall. His father had many jobs including working at the Grinnell Foundry and as a projectionist at the movie theater in Columbia.

Pastor Evans attended Columbia High School where he met his future bride, Jean L. Greenawalt. As a young man he was inspired by Pastor Bradley T. Gaver, of First English Lutheran Church in Columbia. Pastor Gaver recognized the fire and the drive within young Pastor Evans and encouraged him to attend college. Pastor Evans was accepted and attended Gettysburg College receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy. He also served as the first Commander of the Zeta chapter of Sigma Nu Fraternity while at Gettysburg College. His future bride attended Penn State; he frequently travelled by hitchhiking between campuses. On one trip, Pastor Evans was delivered to the object of his affection by Rosie Greer, who at the time was playing football for Penn State.

Inspired by Pastor Gaver, and recognizing the call, Pastor Evans entered the Lutheran Theological Seminary to become a pastor himself. While in

seminary, he joined the Navy's Theological Student Program and was commissioned as an Ensign. Nineteen fifty-eight was an eventful year for Pastor Evans and Jean. He graduated from the Seminary was ordained and the couple welcomed their first child, Karen Elizabeth Evans. Pastor Evans took up his first calling to Grace Lutheran Church, Jersey Shore, PA. One year later he was called to St. Stephen's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lancaster, PA. He served that congregation until called to move to Christ Lutheran Church in York, PA. While serving as pastor in Lancaster and York, he completed his training as a Navy Reserve Chaplain. He was assigned to the First Ordinance Field Maintenance Company, Marine Corps Reserve Training Center in Columbia and the couple welcomed their second child, Brian George Evans, born in Lancaster.

While in York, Pastor Evans was called to active duty with the Navy. After completing training at the Naval Chaplain's School in 1966, he was assigned to the USS Ajax in Sasebo, Japan. The Evans' family moved to Sasebo for this tour, which supported the Navy during the Vietnam War. Two years later, the Evans family returned to the US when Pastor Evans was assigned to be the Regimental Chaplain, First Infantry Training Center, Marine Corps Base, Camp Lejeune, NC. After two years he was deployed to the Vietnam War as the Regimental Chaplain, Eleventh Marine Regiment, First Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific stationed in the Republic of Vietnam. While deployed the family moved to Mountville, PA and grew with the arrival of their third child, Lisa Jean Evans. When Pastor Evans returned home, he remained assigned to the First Marine Division stationed at Camp Lejeune, NC. During this tour, he served as the Dean of the Protestant Chapel and Administrative Chaplain.

In 1974, he was assigned to the Naval Reserve Personnel Center, Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington, DC, as the Director of the Naval Reserve Chaplains Program. Remaining in Washington, he was transferred to the staff

of the Chief of Chaplains serving under Admiral John J. O'Connor. In this role he served as the Director of Plans, Programming, Budget and Accessions. He directed the Religious Program Specialist rating. This effort resulted in a significant expansion of the Navy Chaplain Corps. From this position, he was promoted to the rank of Captain in the Navy and was selected to be the Chaplain of the Marine Corps.

As the Chaplain of the Marine Corps, he served on the staff of the Commandant of the Marine Corps from 1979 until 1982. He directed the activities of the Navy Chaplains serving the Marines. In this role, he was involved in the rescue and support of Marine casualties involved in the Mt. Fuji Fire and their families (the largest peace time disaster for the Marine Corps), along with the families of those Marines being held hostage in Iran. Additionally, Pastor Evans was a significant contributor to the development of the Marine Corps Family Service Centers and in establishing Marine Corps policies for drug and alcohol abuse.

In 1982, he returned to service with the Navy as the Chaplain on the USS Dwight D. Eisenhower, CVN 69. Following his deployment at sea he returned as the Command Chaplain for the US Naval Base, Philadelphia. This was his last tour in the military. During his 24 years of military service Pastor Evans received many awards and commendations which included the Legion of Merit Bronze Star with Combat "V", two Meritorious Service Medals, Navy Commendation Medal, Meritorious Unit Citation, and Armed Forces Reserve Medal. Pastor Evans was awarded the Certificate of Commendation of the Secretary of State, the Certificate of Commendation of the Commandant of the Marine Corps, and was named Chaplain of the year in 1972 by the Reserve Officers Association. In 1979, Pastor Evans' alma mater Gettysburg College conferred the Doctor of Divinity upon him.

After retirement from the Navy in 1986, Pastor Evans went right to work taking up a calling at Atonement Lutheran Church in Wyomissing, PA. As senior pastor, he took up the reins of a large, active parish. He undertook a significant addition to the church, which included adding a sanctuary and a narthex. Beyond his responsibilities with the church, he was instrumental in the establishment of the Rainbow Home in Berks County. This is a facility to care for those afflicted with HIV and AIDS in the terminal stages. The effort was an interdenominational group for the purpose of pulling together resources to care for complex patients from their community.

In 1992, he accepted the call from The Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in McLean, VA. Again he directed a dramatic expansion of the church. The expansion was both in physical size and followers. He developed a deep relationship with many of the parishioners. He had many who he would lead from participation in the Children's Christmas Service through the baptism of their children. As the leader of the religious lives of the members of Redeemer, he performed many weddings and funerals. Most notable was the funeral for his good friend Chief Justice William Rehnquist at St. Marks Catholic Church in Washington DC. In his free time, he collected his sermons and writings in a book, *That We May Have Life*. While at Redeemer he was honored by the Parents Friends and Allies of Lesbian and Gays for his efforts on behalf of the community.

Pastor Evans retired after 14 years of guiding the Redeemer community. Retirement was accentuated by serving as interim pastor for St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Cordova, MD. In a short period of time, Pastor Evans established a firm bond with the St. Paul's parishioners. When St. Paul's had their call answered for a permanent Pastor, Pastor Evans became a member of the parish.

Pastor Evans' career both in the military and civilian life included being a

faithful husband and father. He raised three children who have married, each having families of their own, and providing him with seven grandchildren. In retirement on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, he would welcome his family to his home to enjoy all the treasures the Chesapeake Bay offers. Pastor Evans and Jean frequently visited the children and grandchildren to take in a soccer game, observe Irish Dance or observe a choral performance.

The central theme of Pastor Evans' career was service; service to the military, service to his parishes, and services to the community. Every area he touched was better for his involvement. Additionally, Pastor Evans provided invocations in the US House of Representatives, the US Senate, the Cotton Bowl, and the opening of the season for the Miles River Yacht Club.

Pastor Evans was active his entire life. Unfortunately, the end came too soon and too suddenly. He is survived by his wife, Jean, of 58 years; three married children, Lisa Jean Evans Steel, Adam Bruce Steel, Karen Elizabeth Evans Yergin, James Arthur Yergin and Joan Mary Sleik Evans, Brian George Evans; and seven grandchildren, Marleigh, Gwyneth and AJ Steel, Emily and Sam Yergin, and Katie and Kenneth Evans.

A funeral service will be held on Saturday, June 21, 2014, at 11 a.m., at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 12095 Blades Road, Cordova, MD 21625.

A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday, July 19, 2014, at 11a.m. at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 1545 Old Chain Bridge Road, McLean, VA 22101.

Burial will take place in Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Wounded Warriors Foundation or the Alzheimer's Association.

Cemetery Details

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA

Previous Events

Service

JUN 21. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Paul's Lutheran Church
12095 Blades Rd.
Cordova, MD

Memorial Service

JUL 19. 11:00 AM (ET)

Lutheran Church of the Redeemer
1545 Old Chain Bridge Road
McLean, VA 22101

Tribute Wall



“ George W. Evans Jr.

October 26, 2023 at 06:42 PM



“ George W. Evans Jr.

January 28, 2023 at 12:44 PM



“ George W. Evans Jr.

January 28, 2023 at 08:03 AM

SL

“ I am so sorry for your loss. The death of a loved one is the most difficult thing we deal with. I wanted to take this time to express my condolences to you for your loss. May you find comfort from Jehovah God's word the Bible. (Psalms 83:18) The Bible promises: "the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out." (John 5:28,29) Jesus Christ promised that millions now dead will live again on this earth and have the prospect of remaining on it forever peaceful paradisaic conditions. (Isaiah 65:21,22) You can have the hope of being reunited with your dead loved ones. The Bible also promises: "And the last enemy, death, is to be brought to nothing." (1Corinthians 15:26) Death will be removed from all the earth. Tears of sorrow will vanish. (Revelation 21:4) No one will die from natural causes or weep. These are promises that will soon be a reality. The Bible plainly states: "It is impossible for God to lie." (Hebrews 6:18) May you find comfort from these promises. And may Jehovah God of all comfort be with you. (2Corinthians 1:3,4)

For more encouragement please visit www.Jw.org.

sherries lee - July 03, 2014 at 12:23 PM

PR

“ I am deeply saddened by the passing of Pastor Evans, a dear friend and mentor. He hired me for my first call at Atonement Lutheran Church , Wyomissing, Pa. in 1988. It was a special moment in the history of Atonement Lutheran, a flagship church in Berks County, to hire a black candidate as a Pastor there. But he made sure it happened and he made doubly sure that it was successful. I am eternally grateful for his effort and his friendship and his guidance. I remember the institutions he built, the sermons he preached, the theological discussions he engaged us in,i.e. Steinbruck and Co., the compassion he felt for the poor and brokenhearted, and I remember the love he had for Ms. Jean and his children. Great is too small a word to describe him, and I regret not being able to speak to him before he passed, but I am sure that I will see him again on the other side. God bless you Pastor Evans.

Pastor Luther Route' 6/19/14

Pr.Luther Route - June 19, 2014 at 01:32 PM

JE

“ How can we possibly write just a few comments about a life such as this? Pastor Evans was courageous and caring beyond measure. We will never forget him. We still regularly repeat pearls of wisdom from Pastor Evans. In particular, we are lately sharing his advice that "everything stops for death." We remember the torn sweater he hung on his office door; a reminder (pulled out of a clothing donation bin) that we should always treat the poor with the same dignity as everyone else. We remember his instruction regarding truly Christ-like forgiveness, which he described as a "re-virgination" of one's attitude towards a transgressor. We remember his courage in questioning anti-intellectualism within the church as it became popular at the turn of the century. We remember his courage in conducting our marriage ceremony in 2001, for which he risked his very career and reputation. Godspeed, Pastor Evans. If we see you beyond the Pearly Gates, we'll know we've arrived at the right place.

Jim&Gerry Erickson-Nepomuceno - June 18, 2014 at 06:59 PM

TB

“ He was an amazing man and will be missed greatly by his immediate family and his significant extended "family." So sorry for your tremendous and sudden loss.

Tracey Baylin - June 16, 2014 at 04:31 PM

EK

“ *Pastor Evans and Jean are fondly remembered by our children and Dan and I. His "substitute pastor" service at Luther Place Memorial Church in Washington, DC led us to join Atonement Lutheran when we arrived in Reading. Many will remember the mutually spirited, pointed, advocacy, but always loving discussions between he and Pastor John Steinbruck - a particularly memorable one occurred as they were waiting for the wedding processional to begin for our daughter Elizabeth's wedding - it stopped abruptly as they walk into the altar area to greet the wedding party - but it did scare the soloist who didn't know them both and feared the worst! We love you both and will miss Pastor George immensely - he lived a full and loving life!*

Eve Kimball, MD - Reading, PA

Eve Kimball - June 14, 2014 at 02:15 PM

AC

“ *We are saddened to learn of the passing of George! I was on the call committee of Atonement Lutheran Church to select a new Senior Pastor. After hearing him preach and meeting with him, I immediately knew he was a great match for our church as Senior Pastor. We were blessed to have such an outstanding individual serve as our pastor. He led with wisdom, enthusiasm, compassion, and great administrative skills!*

Our memories of George will live on. Our prayers are with all of the family.

*With caring and sympathy,
Anita Lewis Chaney and family*

Anita Lewis Chaney - June 13, 2014 at 05:01 PM