



Rev. Alvar W. Gustafson

September 16, 1920 - April 9, 2008

Rev. Alvar W. Gustafson, 87, of New Britain, passed away at Hartford Hospital on Wednesday April 9, 2008 from injuries received in an accident. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Viola Holmes Gustafson; a son, Dr. Alvar Gustafson, Jr. and his wife Evie of Quincy, MA; two daughters, Marci Kirchoff and her husband Ron of West St. Paul, MN; and Celia Gillard and her husband Lloyd of South Glastonbury; two grandsons, Erik Gustafson of Quincy, MA and Jon Kirchoff and his wife Erin of Minnetonka, MN; two granddaughters, Krista Engebretson and her husband Tyler of Eden Prairie, MN; and Kaitlin Gillard of South Glastonbury; and a brother, Reuben Gustafson of New Britain.

Rev Gustafson was a native of Worthington, MN, received his B.A. Degree from Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN, and was ordained from Augustana Lutheran Seminary in Rock Island, IL. He also studied at the University of Chicago and at Union Seminary in New York City. He received his Doctorate of Divinity from Hartford Seminary. Rev. Gustafson served on the board at Gettysburg Seminary and Hartford Seminary. He served at Trinity Lutheran Church and Concordia Lutheran Church in Chicago; was Senior Pastor at First Lutheran Church in New Britain for 29 years, retiring in 1985. Then he served as Interim Pastor and Associate Pastor at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Forestville for five years and was a member there. He was a member of the New Britain Museum of American Art; the New Britain Art

League, a member of the Lifelong Learning Association at Tunxis Community College and the New Britain Camera Club. He also served on the New Britain Zoning Board of Appeals under three mayors.

A Memorial Service will be held Monday April 14, 2008 11 AM at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 355 Camp Street, Forestville, CT 06010. Burial will be at the convenience of the family. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Memorial Fund. The Carlson Funeral Home, New Britain is in charge of arrangements. We place our dear and loving husband, father and grandfather in the arms of our Lord. Please share a memory or note of sympathy

Tribute Wall

JS

“ Dear Viola: I was sending a condolence for Betty Grant when I went through the listings at Carlson's. To my surprise I came across Alvar's. I'm so sorry and I will remember him in my prayers. I you get this, email me. Luv Janet

Janet Sinkiewicz Sola - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

TF

“ May the memories lighten the heavy load placed on your heart.

*With Deep Sympathy,
The Kostek Family*

The Kostek Family - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

ET

“ Words cannot express the sadness I have for Celia, Mrs. Gustafson and all your family. Your father was such a compassionate man, he brought calmness and peace where ever he went. When my mom was in NBGH with cancer, he would come see her, bring her communion and prayed with her.He gave her such peace in her final days.I am so sorry for this tragic event for such a wonderful man. God bless you all
Eva Tyz

Eva Tyz - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

TA

“ *Dear Mrs. Gustafson and Family*

We were so sorry to hear of Pastor Gustafson's passing. He certainly will be missed by everyone who knew him.

We all hold many wonderful memories of him at First Lutheran Church, including the confirmations, the marriages of both ourselves and John and Leslie Mangan, plus all of our children Rich, John, and Kristen going through all the programs Pastor brought forth.

Our prayers and deepest sympathy go out to all of you, we know he is in the Lord's arms and is very peaceful.

*Tom and Sandy Kallberg Abucewicz and family
John and Leslie Kallberg Mangan
Bill and Dale Kallberg*

Tom and Sandy Abucewicz - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

KM

“ *I was so terribly sad to hear about Paston Gustafson. He was such a big part of my life, growing up in First Lutheran Church. Janny and I have often commented on how lucky we were as kids, growing up in such a loving family. A big part of that family was our church. It meant so much to all of us. Please know that all of you are in my thoughts and prayers. Always, Karen*

Karen Anderson McConnell - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ Dear Mrs. Gustafson and family: You and your family have been in my prayers at this sad time. I dropped Bea off to go to the memorial today, sincerely wishing that I could, too, but Multiple Chemical Sensitivities prevent my being with crowds of people. We will all miss Pastor Gustafson and his ready smile and kind words. May God be with each one of you forever. Sincerely, Lillian Stitham

Lillian M. Stitham - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

PP

“ To the family: I have so many memories of your family and growing up at First Lutheran with Pastor G as my pastor. He is a huge part of my memories there. He was so proud of me when I was Youth of the Year, and when I caravanned and Youth Mssioned and made it a point to tell me so. When I came back to New Britain for visits after being married he would always hug me and tell me I looked "wonderful". I especially remember Alvar Jr. He must be about the same age as my brother John.....perhaps a bit older. I don't remember the girls as well as they were much younger than I. Viola, you were the perfect minister's wife as it was defined in the 1950s. In retrospect it seems now that it must have been really a strain at the time that people held you to certain expectations of what a minister's wife "should" do and felt free to tell you so. I think you handled that role with a lot of grace.

God comfort you all, and please know that Pastor G made a big difference in my life. I feel so sad that he died in the way he did.
Polly Peterson Young

Priscilla Peterson Young Polly - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JA

“ I was so sad to hear of your loss. What a wonderful man Pastor Gustafson was - he certainly had a tremendous influence on me in my early years at First Lutheran. I have so many fond memories of him -his kind and gentle ways as well as his intelligence and spirituality. He was a fine role model for all of us who were fortunate to have him as our pastor. Please know that you are all in my thoughts and prayers.
Always, Janice

Janice AndersonSmyth - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AB

“ Dear Mrs. Gustafson and Family,
We are deeply saddened by the passing of Mr. Gustafson. After being our neighbor for nine years we became used to seeing him out in the yard tending his beautiful flowers and plants. He always had a kind and friendly word to say to us and our two children. We will miss him very much and always think of him with fondness.
God Bless,
The Belliveau Family

Amy and Peter Belliveau - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

TY

“ Dear Gustafson Family,

We are so sorry for your great loss! You were so blessed to have had a truly loving and wonderful husband, father and grandfather. We met Alvar at Ty and Krista's wedding last summer. It was evident, by the words he spoke and his kind ways toward others, that He loved his Lord and his family very much. He also had a joy that comes with living for His God and furthering His kingdom. We were glad and blessed to have had the opportunity to meet him.

We pray that, during this time of pain and sorrow, God will wrap you all up in His strong arms and tenderly love, and strengthen you. May your hearts be comforted with the comfort that only our loving God can give.

*We love you and are praying for you.
With deepest sympathy,*

Tom and Serene Ysteboe - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

LS

“ Dear Viola and family,

*Sincere sympathy to all from my family and me. We will miss a wonderful, happy, smiling friend. He always had a good word to say and what a memory he had. May God be with you all.
Sincerely, Louise Swanson*

Louise Swanson - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RK

“ We are saddened to hear of Alvar's untimely death. He was a good friend and wise colleague during our years at Gloria Dei--a gift to us and to Christ's Church.

We're sorry not to be able to be with you for his memorial service. Know that you are in our prayers; God keep and comfort you.

Rebecca Bourert & Jeff Kinney

Rebecca Bourret & Jeffrey Kinney - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

LB

“ I was sorry to hear of Pastor Gustafson's passing. I was confirmed by him, and my oldest daughter was baptized by him. I remember his sermons called *The Gospel According to Peanuts*. They were always relevant and enjoyable. Sincerely, Linda Leach Bodoin

Linda Leach Bodoin - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RE

“ Dear Gustafson family,

Our memory of this dear man are from the wedding of Krista and Ty. An exceptional kindness was noticed as he watched out for Vi and was so helpful. He carried her purse for her in the processional to lighten her load. When he gave the prayer at the reception, one could tell that his heart was full of thanksgiving and praise to the Lord. He clearly was a man of God both in words and actions. He now is trouble free and has moved up for the BIG WEDDING.

We know the loss is great so the sadness of those left without him is tremendous. We are praying that God's loving presence, with His arms around you all, is a comfort! Psalm 121.

We love you and are sending our sympathy as we also grieve with you at this time.

*Love and prayers,
Rich and Jeanene Engebretson*

Rich and Jeanene Engebretson - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

KC

“ *It was a privilege to have Pastor Gustafson at our church. I am grateful to have had him as a teacher throughout confirmation classes, as well as his guidance when I married my husband, Bill. We want to extend our thoughts, prayers and sympathy to the family.*

Kathy Tillman and Bill Cahill - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

PJ

“ *May your memories of Pastor G bring peace and happiness. He was a wonderful man, I remember fondly my youth and confirmation years at first lutheran 1970 with both Pastor and Mrs.G. I thank you all for those memories.*

It was truly a pleasure to see and speak with him once again when he had a photo display at the First Church Gallery.

Remembering you all with fondness.

Pat Johnson - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MD

“ *I was so sorry to hear about Pastor G's passing. I have fond memories of acolyting and confirmation classes at First Lutheran and had lost track after his retirement. My deepest sympathy to the family.*

Melinda Blankenburg Dawley - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RF

“ *We are so very sorry to hear about your father. Although we suspected that there was a spiritual presence in Celia's life, we didn't know her father was a minister. It is obvious in the character of your family that his example and message fashioned the warmth, kindness and sincerity that is so very evident in your household. Please know that Richard and I are thinking of you at this time and offering prayers for your entire family. With open hearts and hands...Randy & Rich*

Randy James & Richard Fugmann - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ I'll miss all the wonderful pictures Alvar took at the meetings of the Lifelong Learning Assn. He was so generous of his time and talent.

Maureen Sonstrom - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

EF

“ our deepest sympathy goes to Mrs Gustafson and family Paster Gustafson will be greatly missed his compassion towards others will live on forever

Elizabeth Johnson & Family

Elizabeth Johnson & Family - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

JC

“ My heartfelt prayers and thoughts go out to Mrs. Gustafson and her family during this time. Pastor Gustafson gave so much of himself to so many over the years. His kind, humble, caring manner and quiet sense of humor were always evident. He made you feel that you mattered. He is well loved. I will miss seeing him at church.

Judy Centurelli - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

MJ

“ to Mrs. G and family this is hard for me because for the last 28 years you have both been so close to our hearts Paster G was there for both of us he helped us make our confirmation being our teacher and confirmed us he asisted at our wedding which ment a whole lot to the both of us we will miss Paster G alot and going to church and being able to see his great big smile when he saw us and having his arms wrapped around me in a great big hug will soarly be missed our sympathy and all our love is with you and your family Mrs G

*Love with our whole hearts
Michael & Denise*

Mike and Denise Johnson - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

AL

“ To all the family and especially Celia and Mrs. Gustafson- I am so sorry for your loss. Knowing him all the years I did -what a wonderful man, husband, father and grandfather. I always enjoyed his calm peaceful nature and interesting conversations. His love of art and his talented skill- I love the work he did and the special photo picture of First church he gave to me thru Celia. I treasure the memory of having lobster with you all at the shore last year when my help you remember his great smile, the good times and how long and full his life was. He will be missed by many and I pray for everyone to get thru this painful time and tragic loss. I love you all!

Ann Linton - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM

RK

“ Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you with many fond memories of the years we served together in Connecticut. Jack and Renny

Rev. John & Renetta Kidder - September 20, 2016 at 12:00 AM