



Celebration of Life
Bruce Laetsch
September 14, 1929 – January 2, 2022



Sunday, January 16, 2022, 1:00pm

PRELUDE

GREETING

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Dying, Christ destroyed our death.
Rising, Christ restored our life.
Praise the Lord.

People: The Lord's name be praised.

*OPENING HYMN #110

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

***A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;
our helper he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;
his craft and power are great, and armed with cruel hate,
on earth is not his equal.***

***Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing,
were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he;
Lord Sabaoth, his name, from age to age the same,
and he must win the battle.***

***And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,
we will not fear, for God hath willed his truth to triumph through us.
The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
his rage we can endure, for lo, his doom is sure;
one little word shall fell him.***

***That word above all earthly powers, no thanks to them, abideth;
the Spirit and the gifts are ours, thru him who with us sideth.
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;
the body they may kill; God's truth abideth still;
his kingdom is forever.***

OPENING PRAYER

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Ecclesiastes 3

PSALM 23

STATEMENT OF FAITH OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

We are not alone, we live in God's world.

We believe in God:

**who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

**to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,**

to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

1 Peter 1: 3-9

James Laetsch

EULOGY

Charles Laetsch

THE PRAYER OF COMMENDATION

THE 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. Amen.**

*HYMN #700

Abide with Me

***Abide with me; fast falls the eventide; the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee, Help of the helpless, O abide with me.***

***Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day; earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;
change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me.***

***I need thy presence every passing hour. What but thy grace can foil the tempter's power?
Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be? Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with
me.***

***I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless; ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory? I triumph still, if thou abide with me.***

***Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes; shine through the gloom and point me to the
skies. Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; in life, in death, O Lord, abide
with me.***

THE BLESSING

POSTLUDE

Rev. Darren Cushman Wood, Senior Pastor, presiding
Heather Hinton, Organist

*In compliance with CDC recommendations, persons over 2 years old are required to wear a
mask or facial covering while in the building, through January 31, 2022.*

—North UMC Board of Directors

W. Bruce Laetsch, 92, passed gently in his sleep on Sunday, January 2, 2022. It is with sorrow, but also with a tremendous sense of peace and comfort that we say goodbye to our father, grandfather, and great-grandfather. His beloved wife of 60 years, Joyce, preceded him in death in 2012.

Bruce was born September 14, 1929 in the frontier town of Hailey, Idaho to Rev. Walter and Marie Laetsch. Being the child of a Baptist minister meant the family moved to several pastorates during Bruce's youth, primarily in the state of Washington. When WWII began, Bruce's father joined the Army Chaplain Corps and was assigned to Stout Field in Indianapolis, IN. The family settled in Irvington and Bruce attended Thomas Carr Howe High School his freshman year as did his future wife Joyce Ticen. As the war progressed, his father was reassigned to Ft. Benning, GA. When the war ended, the family once again settled in Indianapolis where Bruce finished his senior year at Howe HS. Bruce's father was the new pastor at Garfield Park Baptist Church and happily this is where Joyce also attended. The couple began dating in 1948 during Bruce's college years at Butler University where he majored in history and political science and played varsity tennis. After graduation, Bruce immediately left for Marine Corps Officer Candidate School in Quantico, VA. On a weekend leave, he and Joyce were married by his father at Garfield Park Baptist, on November 11, 1951.

Bruce proudly served his country as a Marine Corps Officer in Korea in 1952. After the conflict ended, Bruce was discharged back to Indianapolis. He attended graduate school at Butler to obtain his teaching license and his master's degree in education. During this time, he also joined the Marine Reserves and stayed active with them until he reached the rank of Major. Bruce taught at Wood High School from 1953-1978, one of only 5 teachers to have taught there the entire life of the school. After the closure of Wood HS, he headed social studies departments in other Indianapolis Public Schools: Thomas Carr Howe, Crispus Attucks, and finally Washington High School. He retired in 1991.

Bruce and Joyce settled in the Garfield Park area for their entire marriage and were devoted to that community. As a family, the Laetsch's were always actively involved in their church communities which included Garfield Park Baptist, Broadway United Methodist, University Heights Methodist and finally, North United Methodist. Volunteer activities included a homeless shelter program called Interfaith Hospitality Network, Meals on Wheels, and Neighborhood Watch. Bruce also served for 6 years with the Citizens Police Complaint Board in Indianapolis. Both Bruce and Joyce enjoyed being very active in several tennis leagues up into their 80's.

He is predeceased by his parents and more recently by both his sister, Margaret Rowland of Scottsdale, AZ and brother, Watson McMillan "Mac" Laetsch of Berkeley, CA. Bruce is survived by his children: Linda (Dale) Petrie of Crawfordsville, Donna (KC) Thomsen of Greenwood, Charles (Mary) Laetsch of Milton, GA, and James (Susan) Laetsch of New Palestine. He was the very proud grandfather of 3 granddaughters and 6 grandsons and the great-grandfather of 8 great-grandsons. Family and friends gathered for his 90th birthday event and it was a fitting celebration of a life well-lived and carried with it the respect and pride due to a wonderful man. We were blessed to have known you and are eternally grateful for the strong foundation of Christian values that you imparted.

The family would like to thank the nurses, caregivers, and friends who helped and visited him in these past months. Whether you called, visited, or sent cards please know it was much appreciated.

Donations to North United Methodist Church 3808 North Meridian St. Indianapolis 46208 or to The Indianapolis Humane Society would be appreciated.