



John Craig Beem

February 3, 1935 - December 26, 2014

John Craig Beem was born on February 3, 1935, in Waterloo, IA, to Seth and Ella (Linus) Beem. He was baptized and confirmed at Trinity Lutheran Church in Waterloo, IA. John graduated from West Waterloo High School in 1953. He graduated from Wartburg College in Waverly, Iowa, in 1957.

John was united in marriage to Carla Karsten on August 4, 1957, at Trinity Lutheran Church in Waterloo, IA. The couple moved to Dubuque, IA, where John attended Wartburg Seminary and graduated in 1961. John was an intern in Clara City, MN, and began his pastoral ministry in Humboldt, IA. He then served other parishes in Muskegon Heights, MI, Dubuque, IA, and Oshkosh, WI. He became bishop of the East Central Wisconsin Synod in 1994 and retired in 2000. John and Carla moved to Alexandria where he continued doing interim ministry at various congregations. He was active as a leader in the formation of Living Word Lutheran Church, an LCMC (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ) congregation. John loved teaching, especially Bible studies.

John enjoyed fishing, camping, boating, building, gardening, chopping wood, and teaching many kids to water ski, and card games, especially bridge. He was active in Habitat for Humanity, the Sunrise Lions, and volunteered in the community in many ways.

God bless the memory of John Beem, and well done my good and faithful servant.

John died on Friday, December 26, 2014, at home surrounded by his loving family at the age of 79. He is survived by his wife, Carla of Miltona; children, Stephanie (Steve) Courts of Rochester, Jeffrey (Joanie) Beem of Omro, WI, Natalie (Kevin) Christian of Muskegon, MI, and Matthew Beem of Worthington, MN; grandchildren Jared Beem, Lucan and Cody Christian, and eight great grandchildren; sister Anne (Charles) Hesse of Iowa City, IA; and one niece and three nephews. John was preceded in death by his parents, Seth and Ella.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 AM on Wednesday, December 31, 2014, at Living Word Lutheran Church in Alexandria. Visitation will be Tuesday, December 30, 2014, from 4-7 PM with prayers at 6:45 PM at the Anderson Funeral Home in Alexandria.

Memorials are preferred to either: Hospice of Douglas County - 725 Elm Street Suite 1200 Alexandria, MN 56308; Douglas County Habitat for Humanity - 1211 North Nokomis NE Alexandria, MN 56308; Lutheran World Relief - P.O. Box 17061 Baltimore, MD 21298-9832; or Living Word Lutheran Church - 1722 16th Ave E Alexandria, MN 56308

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 30. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Anderson Funeral Home
659 Voyager
Alexandria, MN 56308
<http://andersonfuneral.net>

Prayer Service

DEC 30. 6:45 PM (CT)

Anderson Funeral Home
659 Voyager
Alexandria, MN 56308
<http://andersonfuneral.net>

Visitation

DEC 31. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Living Word Lutheran Church
1722 16th Ave E
Alexandria, MN 56308

Memorial Service

DEC 31. 11:00 AM (CT)

Living Word Lutheran Church
1722 16th Ave E
Alexandria, MN 56308

Tribute Wall



“ Anderson Funeral Home and Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of John Craig Beem



Anderson Funeral Home - December 30, 2014 at 05:00 PM

CW

“ Our sympathy to you, Carla. With great fondness, we think of the wonderful times we shared with you and John at your home and at our summer trailer. May you find comfort in Christ's love
Bill and Carol Waltmann

carol waltmann - January 08, 2015 at 04:14 PM

BL

“ When I think of John I think of him as a bishop, I think more of him as a pastor's pastor. He truly cared about each of us in the parish and made that evident in many tangible ways. I feel privileged to have served with him and pray God will sustain you of his family. We sorrow, but not as those who have no hope!!!!
Pastor Bill Lawson
Trinity Lutheran Green Bay (Ret)

Bill Lawson - January 01, 2015 at 02:32 PM



“ *Carla and family*

John truly was a wonderful pastor and child of God! I want you to know how much I appreciated both you and John as members at Our Saviors in Oshkosh. I will never forget the Christmas Eve service where John was helping set up folding chairs in the narthex. A visitor asked who is that guy? Oh he is just our bishop. I was truly humbled by his servants heart. He walked the walk of Christ!

May the hope found in Jesus bring healing and hope.

*Peace
Dean Desilet*

Dean Desilet - December 31, 2014 at 04:34 PM

TH

“ *May peace be to the memory of Jon. He was my first bishop as a new pastor in central Wisconsin, and was truly a pastor to me and mentor. He will be deeply missed. I admired him and looked up to him, and he had a great impact on my life and ministry. -Rev. Tim Housholder*

Tim Housholder - December 31, 2014 at 09:28 AM

PC

“ *On the behalf of the South Dakota Congregations of the Augustana District of the LCMC, I extend to you our prayerful support as you release Bishop John to our God. May the faith and courage he lived by also sustain you in the coming days.*

*In Christ's Service,
Pastor Tom Christenson
SD Service Coordinator - Augustana District, LCMC*

Pastor Tom Christenson - December 30, 2014 at 09:05 PM

NJ

“ My sympathies to Carla and your children/grandchildren. You and John were such a wonderful addition to Peace Lutheran Church in Oshkosh. I will always remember the energy that he had and his wonderful bible studies. He served his Lord and has earned his rest. He always told us that, if he didn't know the answer to a question, we should ask it when we get to heaven. I know he is asking a lot of questions! Until we meet again...

Nancy Judkins
Oshkosh, WI

Nancy Judkins - December 30, 2014 at 08:24 PM

CW

“ I enjoyed wonderful conversations with John over a period of years.....such a thoughtful and insightful man.I shall miss those times but will remember John as a bundle of energy and full of joy.He will be greatly missed especially by his family but they,and we, will have fond memories which will last.Nothing can take away our memories.

Chris Worley - December 30, 2014 at 05:18 PM

TJ

“ Dear Carla and Family,

We are saddened to hear of John's death. We will always remember John as our pastor at Holy Trinity and a mentor who started me on the path to ordained ministry when he and you were in Michigan. He has been a very important and instrumental person on our family's journey in life and ministry. May the light and promise of the Christ Child, his life and ministry, fill you with all hope. Thanks be to God for John.

Tom and Kaye Jones

Tom and Kaye Jones - December 30, 2014 at 01:04 PM

CS

“ Chuck and Carolyn Stork purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of John Craig Beem.



Chuck and Carolyn Stork - December 30, 2014 at 09:32 AM

JB

“ We will miss John. He was a good friend and bishop. We'll not forget his support. He called one Friday night to see how Pam was feeling- Friday night. We kinda told him to go do something fun instead of calling on a Friday night. But, that was who John was. Our hearts go to Carla and family as you grieve and celebrate all at the same time. We join you in spirit. Jim & Pam Bump

Jim Bump - December 30, 2014 at 08:26 AM

RS

“ Dear Carla and Family, Tom and I are deeply saddened to hear of John's death. John was at Holy Trinity, Dubuque, IA while I was in Seminary, and was a great mentor for me while I was on the NE Synod staff, also a very supportive ECSW Bishop. Both you and John were such a blessing to Our Savior's in Oshkosh, which is my home congregation. While he will be greatly missed on this side of the thin veil between life and eternal life, we all know he has heard, 'Well done, good and faithful servant' Blessings and Peace Rev Sue Sheffer-Meyer and Rev. Tom Meyer



Rev Sue Sheffer_Meyer - December 29, 2014 at 10:37 PM

MP

“ Mike Petersen purchased the Holiday Homecoming Basket for the family of John Craig Beem.



Mike Petersen - December 29, 2014 at 08:35 PM

CM

“ Dear Carla and family, Sharyl and I want to share our deepest sympathy at John's death. In this time of sorrow we pray that the hope of the resurrection through Jesus Christ will comfort and sustain you.

We remember with thanksgiving our year with you in Michigan while I interned with John. John's commitment to parish ministry was a model that stayed with me all my ministry. Of course, there were the fishing trips. Our paths crossed again serving together in the Iowa District and in the Conference of Bishops. We treasure these memories.

John was always a strong leader in the church. We never doubted John's commitment to Jesus and the Gospel and John's love for the church.

May Jesus through the Holy Spirit give you peace. Curt and Sharyl Miller

Curt and Sharyl Miller - December 29, 2014 at 07:07 PM

RF

“ I remember with fondness when John would come to Stony Lake Camp in Michigan for catechism camp. He always had time to listen to and talk with the staff and then invite them to come to lead worship at Bethlehem for camp Sunday. We always loved the people and food at the church. And who could forget the water skiing. So happy you included that in the obit. He was always determined to get every counselor up on water ski's.

Rich Ferne

Rich Ferne - December 29, 2014 at 07:00 PM



“ *Secret Garden Basket was purchased for the family of John Craig Beem.*



December 29, 2014 at 05:41 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John Craig Beem.*



December 29, 2014 at 04:54 PM



“ *Carla,
We are so saddened to hear about the death of John. You and your family have been in my prayers for the last few months and will continue to be in the weeks ahead. John was a great champion of the parish pastor and always spoke of his congregations ministry with joy. He was a great teacher in his congregation and for all the, then young, pastors in our Oshkosh pericope group. We had many lively discussions about law and gospel, always leaving as friends and colleagues. You too were a great support to Bill and I in those Oshkosh years...and fun too. God bless you with his comfort and peace. Greet Jeff and your whole extended family. Pastor Cath and Bill Mode.*

Pastor Cath and Bill Mode - December 29, 2014 at 11:12 AM

LH

“ I was sorry to hear of John's passing. He was a great comfort to me during the time I was serving on the ELCA sexuality task force, 2001-2005. He and I roomed together for one of the Solid Rock conferences held at Luther Seminary (if I remember correctly), and had an opportunity to discuss the issues I was involved in at that time. He is the one man who almost makes me believe in bishops -- if all bishops could be like he was, there would have been no need for a Reformation or some of the things we've had to experience since the formation of the ELCA. We will miss his kind manner and demeanor and his true pastoral heart.
--Rev. Lou Hesse, Augustana district pastor

Lou Hesse - December 29, 2014 at 10:34 AM

CT

“ Dear Carla and family -- we were privileged in our East Central Synod of Wisconsin to have John as a fellow pastor and then bishop among us. He was very dedicated to our Lord and His church -- a pastor of faith and conviction. I join many in thanking our Lord for his ministries and years of service within the church. May God give all of you His Spirit to meet the challenges of these days.
Peace, Chuck Tews, Waupaca, WI

Chuck Tews - December 29, 2014 at 10:31 AM

DB

“ Carla & Family - John was a blessing and an inspiration to so many. I will never forget his care and compassion as our Bishop. May the promise of God's never ending love give you comfort and strength.
Don Behrendt, Green Bay

Don Behrendt - December 29, 2014 at 08:47 AM

DP

“ *Dan And Pat lit a candle in memory of John Craig Beem*



Dan and Pat - December 28, 2014 at 05:37 PM

DC

“ *Dan and Pat Collins purchased the Let It Snow for the family of John Craig Beem.*



Dan and Pat Collins - December 28, 2014 at 05:35 PM



“ *carla and family- was saddened to hear of john's passing. he had a great impact on me as a teen/young adult at bethlehem. he married my beloved and i 46 years ago. i will never forget his smile, laughter and his heart to reach people in the heights..he was a man before his time. may GOD comfort your hearts now and in the days ahead..richard and linda (cole) miller*

Linda Miller - December 28, 2014 at 01:51 PM

DD

“ Carla, we are so sorry to hear of John's passing. He was such an asset to the Oshkosh community and we missed you both when you retired and moved away. We remember our chats during bridge about Big 10 football and also of our Michigan roots. John was a great guy and we know he will be missed dearly by you and your kids.

Darcy and Mike Duffy

Darcy Duffy - December 28, 2014 at 08:34 AM

RH

“ Carla and family - my deepest sympathy to all of you for the loss of John. Thank you for notifying us in Muskegon of your loss. I have many great memories of John and your family while attending Bethlehem Lutheran - those very impressionable teenage years. Thank you for sharing your lives with us.

Renae Hesselink

Renae Hesselink - December 28, 2014 at 08:13 AM

SB

“ Dear Carla and family - I have many fond memories of your time at Bethlehem Lutheran in Muskegon. Thank you for sharing that time in your life with us. John was a bundle of energy and always game for anything!

*Our deepest sympathies,
Skip and Sharon Boczkaja*

Sharon Boczkaja - December 28, 2014 at 07:03 AM

BT

“ Our deepest sympathies to John's family. John was a great bridge player and such a vibrant, happy, and genuine person. We were sad when they moved from Oshkosh. Our special sympathy to Carla. Wally and Becky Tiles

becky tiles - December 28, 2014 at 06:34 AM

GD

My deepest sympathy goes out to Jeff and Joannie and family, my prayers are with you all. Gloria Domskie

Gloria Domskie - December 28, 2014 at 09:22 PM

SC

Dear Carla and family, I am not sure Chris, Katie and I would have made it those early years without Pastor Beem's care and support of us in those days at Peace. He will always hold a special place in our hearts, Sue Samuel Christian, Chris Badalik and Kate Leigh. We hold you all in prayer.

Susan Christian - December 29, 2014 at 03:48 PM

DC

*I am grateful to The Lord for John's example of faith in Christ and his love for Carla and the family. He was passionate for the truth of God's Word and loyalty to the Lutheran Confessions. He was helpful to me in my own vocation of ministry.
--Dan Christ*

Dan Christ - December 31, 2014 at 08:29 AM

AA

*We sure did miss John when he left Oshkosh Peace Lutheran Church, he was a great Pastor and helped our family through difficult times, He always had a smile and a laugh. Carla and family you have our deepest sympathy and are in our prayers.
Arlene Augsburg Family.*

Arlene Augsburg - January 01, 2015 at 04:19 PM