

Celebrating the Life of Reverend Leonard E. Dalberg

October 9, 1925 – April 21, 2016

Leonard Edwin Dalberg was born in Stratton, Ontario, Canada in 1925. He was the second eldest of eight children born to Carl and Signe Dalberg. He worked on the family farm and hauled pulp wood until he left Canada at age 21 and enrolled in the Lutheran Bible Institute in Minneapolis, MN. There he met his wife, Anabelle Hanson, and they married in 1950. He attended Augsburg College, graduated from Augustana Seminary, and was ordained in 1956. During his ministry, he served five parishes: Faith Lutheran in Caldwell, ID (1956–1960); Elim Lutheran in Ogden, UT (1960–1967); Good Shepherd Lutheran in Concord, CA (1967–1976); Our Saviour's Lutheran in Orange, CA (1976–1984); and Bethania Lutheran in Solvang, CA (1984–1988). After retiring from Bethania, he served as interim pastor for various parishes and also as visitation pastor for Bethania.

Len was a leader in the broader community and regional church bodies. He often served as district dean for the synod and as president of the local ministerial association. He worked with parish and community leaders to establish two preschools (one at Our Saviour's in Orange and one at Bethania in Solvang). He founded the Farstrup-Mortensen Memorial Lectures. While President of the Santa Ynez Valley Rotary Club, he organized the creation of the children's playground at Sunny Fields Park. In 2005, he was honored by the state-wide California Association of Homes and Services for the Aging as Volunteer of the Year.

Despite his busy life as a pastor, Len was devoted to his family. Every summer, he and his family spent a month of vacation time together in national and state parks or in cross-country treks to visit relatives in Canada, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Even at the national and state parks, he spent his time reaching out to campers and inviting them to Sunday services, which he led. Always an adventuresome fellow, Len planned many trips. Besides going to every state in the U.S., he and his wife travelled to nearly all the continents, including countries in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia and New Zealand, and South America.

Len is survived by Anabelle, his wife of 65 years, whom he dearly loved; four of his seven siblings (Sam, David, Orval and Norman); his four children (Denise, Ben, Lana, and Janelle); one step-great-grand-daughter; and eleven grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his parents, three of his siblings (Dean, Elsie, and Allan), and his grandson, Patrick.

Although we grieve Len's passing, we are grateful for the time we had together, and we give thanks for his 90 years – a life well lived.

