



Bruce David Rudi

May 25, 1953 - December 24, 2023

Bruce David Rudi went to be with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ on Sunday, Dec. 24, 2023, at the age of 70. He was born May 25, 1953, in Newfoundland being the pride and joy of his parents, Waldemar and Maude Rudi. Bruce is survived by his loving wife, Carol Rudi, daughter Stephanie Rudi, sister Betty Rudi, sister-in-law Kathy Klingensmith (Mike), nephews Jeremy Rudi and Adam Klingensmith (Erin), as well as several cousins, extended family, and dear friends. He joins his parents and his daughter, Bethany Rudi, in Heaven.

Bruce met the love of his life at Concordia University, Chicago and married her in 1976. Bruce was a loving and dedicated “dad” to Bethany and Stephanie. He loved Christmas and loved to decorate, had a hearty laugh that was infectious, always volunteered to help where needed, and loved to travel which he and Carol were able to do extensively the last few years.

Bruce was a man of integrity who was passionate about his faith in Jesus and walked this out daily. He spent most of his life as a Lutheran educator and administrator serving schools in Detroit, Houston, San Antonio, and Arlington Heights, IL touching the lives of staff, students, families, and anyone he would meet. He was instrumental in nurturing and growing St. Peter Christian College in Mhluzi, Middelburg, Mpumalanga, South Africa from gr. R(kinder) through grade 12 where he visited yearly since 2009 until August of this year

often taking a mission team with him.

Bruce will be dearly missed by those who love him and those whose life he has touched. His family thanks everyone for their kindness and support.

Celebration of Life Services will be held:

Sat., Jan. 13 at St. Peter Lutheran Church 111 W. Olive St., Arlington Heights, IL at 1:00 with visitation beginning at 11:00

Sat., Jan 27 at Concordia Lutheran Church 16801 Huebner Rd, San Antonio, TX beginning at 10:00 followed by visitation and a luncheon.

Memorial gifts may be given to:

COFA (Christian Outreach for Africa) Bruce Rudi Memorial
St. Peter Lutheran Church
111 W. Olive St.
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Immanuel Rudi Endowment Fund (Which will benefit church worker students)
Concordia University Texas
11400 Concordia University Dr.
Austin, TX 78726

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JAN **13**. 1:00 PM (CT)

St. Peter Lutheran Church
111 W. Olive St.
Arlington Heights, IL 60004

Celebration of Life

JAN **27**. 10:00 AM (CT)

Concordia Lutheran Church
16801 Huebner Road
San Antonio, TX 78258

Tribute Wall



“ Iris and Heidi Haese purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Bruce David Rudi.



Iris and Heidi Haese - January 26, 2024 at 09:19 AM



“ The Rudi Rushing Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bruce David Rudi.

The Rudi Rushing Family - January 25, 2024 at 09:07 PM



“ The Rudi Rushing Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Bruce David Rudi.



The Rudi Rushing Family - January 25, 2024 at 09:07 PM

SO

“ Bruce Rudi was a wonderful mentor to our sons, a great supporter of the PTO, and the goals of that organization, a fair administrator and worked daily for the glory of God. Concordia Lutheran (and Texas) was all new to us when we moved here. Not only did we leave family and all we knew in the Midwest, Evan and Brad had a brand new school, new teachers, new everything! Bruce checked in on them regularly in the first several weeks. He was always there for any concerns we had.

I was involved in PTO and Dave very involved with Scouts. Bruce was supportive of all those important activities that were for the children beyond the classroom. He attended meetings and assisted well after his long work day, and we so appreciated that. We knew that Bruce valued all aspects of every Concordia students life: academic, spiritual, social, athletic, family, and leadership. We would be hard pressed to think of a man, outside of immediate family, who had such a positive impact on our sons!

Dave and Susan Ogden

Susan M Ogden - January 24, 2024 at 01:02 PM

AG

“ Mr. Rudi was mentor to me, almost my entire life it seems. I started Schindler pre-k and he was my principal through 8th grade. We had talks about life even after I met him at school. He encouraged me throughout my battles with health with encouraging words and prayers. We kept in contact mainly by FB messenger these past several years. A inspiration to all who met him, his hearty laugh was contagious ❤️. Sir, you will missed greatly but what a honor to be blessed with you being a part of my life.

Amy Gernak - January 09, 2024 at 12:02 PM

JC

“ Both of my boys attended Concordia while Mr. Rudi was a principal there. My husband and I started our family at a very young age and we had the best village of teachers, administrators and parents there to guide us and help us raise our boys. Mr. Rudi had a great, positive impact on both of my boys and he always made my family feel like we belonged there and that we were truly loved and cared for. I will add, both boys probably bonded with him during the many, many times they had to go to his office!

The best memory that stays with me is when my son Traye came back from their 8th grade Washington trip and Mr. Rudi was Traye's chaperone for his group. I asked him when he came back from his trip, how was it having Mr. Rudi as a chaperone, and I remember Traye saying "Mr. Rudi is his most favorite person" and his group had the best time because of Mr. Rudi being there with them! I will never forget that!

He was a caring, loving, and kind man and even an amazing disciplinarian, that helped shaped my boys into the men they are today. I'm glad we had the opportunity to spend time with him, learn from him and be part of his life during the time he was an administrator. Rest in Peace Mr. Rudi, you will never be forgotten!
Love always,

The Conway Family

Jeanette Conway - January 08, 2024 at 08:03 PM

AB

“ *Mr. Rudi is the perfect example of an educator and man. There are too many memories to mention in a message from flag day each Friday in Kindergarten to my 8th grade year when I forgot a change of clothes and it was my first time going to "the office", to which he noted himself and laughed. The most impactful memory I have is right after my father passed away middle of my senior year. We went to the viewing and at 17 years old I didn't know what to expect. At one point I looked over and there stood Mr. Rudi. I'll never forget that conversation or how it made me feel to see him. If you knew Mr. Rudi you wouldn't expect any less, but to a 17 year old boy who had just lost his father that meant more than anyone can know.*

Adolph Berchelmann - January 07, 2024 at 07:57 PM

CG

“ *Carri Wetherell, Sheri Toth & Julie Garland purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Bruce David Rudi.*



Carri Wetherell, Sheri Toth & Julie Garland - January 06, 2024 at 10:38 AM

MM

“ *It was an honor to work with Bruce. He was an honorable man, dedicated to serving the Lord. He loved his family wholly. He respected his staff members and we knew it. He had such a passion for helping children learn and feel special. He will most certainly be missed by so many people. He blessed us all.*

Margie Maroney - January 04, 2024 at 10:54 PM

JM

“ The first time I ever visited him was in kindergarten. Daniel Rooks, Sammy Gomez, Lloyd Noland and I all thought that calling Mr. Rudi Mr. Rooty Tooty Fresh & Fruity was genius. This was the height of our five year old humor and we were quite proud of ourselves. The name is actually from a dish at IHOP that is still there to this day. As fate would have it, Mrs. Gremmer overheard us and immediately pulled out an orange slip, filled it out, and sent us on our way. I would get to know these slips VERY well over the course of the next eight years. I had the unenviable task of explaining our joke to Mr. Rudi, which he did not find quite as funny as we did. To this day some twenty nine years later I still think of him when I drive by an IHOP.

Later that same year, I was sent back to his office for kicking rocks. Most children at that age do, and I was no exception. The problem is that I had just started playing soccer and had learned how to toss and object in the air in front of me and then kick it. This skill would come back to haunt me eight years later as well. As we were walking back to our classroom across the parking lot at the Basse campus, I picked up a rock and punted it. I have to admit for a five year old it was an impressive kick. The only issue with said punt is that the rock hit Mrs. Gremmer's car right in front of her. She rightfully sent me to the office immediately. Mr. Rudi was not pleased.

Eight years later I somehow managed to kick a volleyball THROUGH the metal ceiling in the gym that got lodged just below the roof and as fate would have it guess who was the substitute gym teacher that day? Mrs. Gremmer. She yelled at me to go to the office. God HAS to have a sense of humor. When I arrived in Mr. Rudi's office I tried to explain to him that the ball wasn't stuck in the rafters like he was imagining, but that it was IN the roof and had caused damage. He told me to sit down and left. Ten minutes later he stormed back in slamming the door and screamed asking if I realized how much that would cost to fix and more importantly, why had I kicked a volleyball in the first place. To this day I still don't

have an answer for that. For years after that on Sunday's before adult Bible study, my grandfather and I would be waiting in line for breakfast tacos and he would look up and loudly proclaim while pointing at the patch in the ceiling that his grandson did that.

I made many more trips to his office over the years and eventually got introduced to the paddle that he kept hidden off to the side of his desk. By the time eighth grade rolled around I had basically become a guide for first timers to Mr. Rudi's office. I would explain what to expect and more often than not be in the office with them when the first got the paddle themselves. I have to admit that it was entertaining to watch others experience swats for the first time.

I spent such a great deal of time in his office that we actually got to know each other on a much more personal level. Anyone who ever visited his office knew of his love for Diet Coke and M&M's. Those of us who he deemed needed a closer eye upon would do our homework at the desk in the room that connected to his office and eventually he would pop in to check on us to make sure we weren't daydreaming and quiz us on our assignments. If we had passed with what was acceptable for him he would hand us a few dollars and send us on our way to grab a soda and of course his Diet Coke.

On one such trip two gentlemen who I will not name decided that it was a great idea to take his car keys and move his car. I want to make clear that I had nothing to do with this and went to grab the soda as instructed. The next day upon arriving to his office all three of us were met with what can only be described as righteous fury. He was livid and rightfully so. The two gentlemen involved admitted to what they had done and told him that I had nothing to do with it. Mr. Rudi turned to me and asked if I had told them not to go through with their plan. I shamefully admitted that I didn't and the look he gave me communicated only one thing. Disappointment.

I learned over the years the principles that guided him. Honesty was huge. Making a mistake, no matter how big it may be, was never as bad as trying to talk your way out of it or lying about what you had

done. He was and remains to this day one of the most honorable men I have ever known. To lie to another's face was the ultimate form of disrespect in his eyes. If you were honest, he was always more than fair. Even more than that, he genuinely cared that you understood why what you had done was wrong and ALWAYS found a way to bring the Lord into the conversation. The foundation of his life was his faith.

He absolutely loved putting on the Christmas pageant every year. I asked him once why the older students had to be involved since in my thirteen year old eyes we had contributed plenty over the years. Plus, everyone knew the elementary kids stole the show. We could simply help get them in costume. That idea was shot down immediately. Christmas was and always will be about one thing. God's gift of Jesus to us and the salvation that came with Him. Mr. Rudi wanted to make sure that we never forgot that.

My favorite memory of Mr. Rudi was our 8th grade trip to Washington D.C. I saw firsthand just what went into the planning of that trip and how much effort he put into it along with the other faculty. The evening that all the students and the parents got together to go over the itinerary, we knew that we would find out room assignments. Rumor was that some select students would stay with Mr. Rudi. I had a sinking feeling that I would be one of those few chosen.

As you can guess my name was called and everyone, including my parents, were laughing. Two others joined me and our fate was sealed. Turns out being roomed with Mr. Rudi was the absolute best. He had his own room that was connected to ours. The three of us would play rock paper scissors to see who would get one of the beds to themselves and the other two would have to share. Mr. Rudi let us stay up late, gave us M&M's from his stash that he brought, and even watched NBA playoff games with us. He would wake us up every morning by smacking us in the face with a pillow. This was certainly not what we had been anticipating.

During a battlefield reenactment that we should have been paying attention to, a group of guys including myself had started throwing spear grass at one another. Sammy Gomez got hit in the eye and loudly screamed out, "I can't see I'm deaf!" He genuinely meant it. The rest of us quite literally were rolling in the grass howling with laughter. Of course Mr. Rudi clocked this and waited until later that evening to administer punishment. No one would be allowed to go to the pool due to the behavior of a select few. Those of us who had been involved knocked on his door and asked to speak with him. We profusely apologized and asked him to only punish us as it wasn't fair to the others. He said he appreciated our honesty and then replied by asking if we thought our behavior had been fair to the performers in the reenactment or the others around us. Every head in the room dropped with shame. He then said he accepted our proposal and that we would get swats in return for the pool time ban being lifted. Those who weren't staying in the room attached to his began to leave before he asked where they were going. "You owe me swats" he said to all of us. We were extremely confused. There was no way he packed the paddle and brought it with him was there? No that wasn't the case. Instead he took the Bible out of the side table and put it into a pillow case. The look of pure shock on all of our faces still makes me laugh to this day.

Mrs. Rudi and Stephanie, I hope that I haven't portrayed your husband and father as a mean principal who carried a large stick and ruled with fear. He was quite the opposite. I fondly remember a man who genuinely loved his students and cared about not only their education but their relationship with God. I still have the Bible that was given to every graduate that he signed with a personal note for each of us, along with the card and cross that he mailed to me before my high school graduation. I loved Mr. Rudi and have tried to take the lessons I learned under him and apply them in my life.

When the news came out that he would be leaving Concordia, I along with those students who spent a great deal of time in his office over the years were in complete shock. Each of us would run

through a brick wall for that man. He was strict but fair, and we knew he always had our backs. We have always felt the same towards him. He is in my opinion the most important figure in Concordia Lutheran School's long history.

It's been twenty one years since I last was in his office and I can still remember his deep laugh, his commanding voice, and the way he would put his arm on my shoulder to reassure me that I was going to be okay. Words can't describe just how much I'm going to miss him, and I pray that God gives you peace and comfort through this difficult time. Know that you are loved and that forty years of students are forever indebted to him for his selfless service.

With great appreciation,

*Jason Marquis
Class of 2003*

Jason Marquis - January 04, 2024 at 08:57 PM