

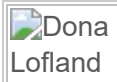


## Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing

June 25, 2014

Downing, The Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing Age 67, of Mpls and Costa Rica, returned to Jesus on June 25. Gary is survived by his wife of 43+ years, Katherine; daughter, Tanya (Peter) Larson; grandchildren, Luke, Ben and Teagan; son, Nathanael (Annie); grandson, Jack; son, Jonathan (Emily); grandson, Joshua; daughter, Rachael (Christopher) Jarman; granddaughters, Lucy, Charlotte and Rose, and brother, Fred R. Downing. He was preceded in death by his parents, Willard and Pearl and sister, Mary Downing. Memorial service 11 AM Saturday, June 28, 2014 at the Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls, 5212 41st Ave S., Mpls. Visitation 1 hour prior. "All this is done by God, who through Christ, changed us from enemies into His friends and gave us the task of making others His friends also." 2 Cor. 5:18 GNT [www.Washburn-McReavy.com](http://www.Washburn-McReavy.com) NokomisPark Chapel 612.721.1651

# Tribute Wall



Dona  
Lofland

“ *Dr. Gary nurtured my husband and me in Christ, and was best man in our wedding. He brought gentleness, laughter and joy into our lives!*

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**Dona Lofland** - August 29, 2016 at 08:35 AM

DC

“ Dear Kathy and family,  
I just found out about Gary's passing. I was a student of his through the Youth Leadership Program at Luther Seminary from 1978 to 1980. I have always held him in the highest regard, having learned so much from him. His passing brings a great sadness to me and I can only imagine the intense sadness you all feel. But, it was a greater joy to know Gary and I will remain blessed by our relationship. Please accept this original poem as a gesture of friendship and caring. It is entitled:

*Forever With Us*

"Dark,  
the days turn dark  
when loss looms large.  
'When?'  
'Where? How? ...Why?'  
Children challenge the charge.

*Life*  
with lots of laughs, well lived,  
compassionate and caring.  
Look,  
that knowing smile...  
The memories we'll be sharing.

*Laugh*  
at times gone by --  
what we remember well;  
Loves,  
all deep and strong;  
Forever with us dwell."  
...Webb

...from David Colwell, St. Paul, MN

David Colwell - July 29, 2014 at 11:38 AM

CH

“ Dear Kathy and family,  
We are saddened to hear of Gary's passing. He was such a wonderful pastor for us at Rochester Covenant Church! Plus, he was just such a great guy. May God bless you all at this difficult time.  
Roger and Celeste Hofer

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Celeste Hofer - June 29, 2014 at 06:31 PM

ES

“ Dear Kathy and family.

We are so sorry to hear of Gary's passing. During his years at Faith Covenant we shared many wonderful and challenging experiences; among them a love for our Lord, a love for our church, and a love for flying. Gary was a God loving and people loving person and we all benefited from that. Among other things he helped and encouraged Joan as she chaired Faith's council; he had Gene proof read his book "More than a Buddy"; he led a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and we benefited by his knowledge of the country and its people (Gary always knew lots of people). Above all he loved his Lord and encouraged others to love Him too. He was a kind and gentle but strong leader and will be greatly missed.

Happy landings, Gary!  
Joan & Gene Sommerfeld

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Eugene Sommerfeld - June 28, 2014 at 08:03 PM



“ Kathy,  
*I have always had a deep respect for Gary's practical approach to faith and life. He was the most authentic man I've ever met. It was a blessing to be at RCC and on the call team that God used to bring Gary and you into our church family. I loved drinking Caribou coffee with him and sharing together, even after I left MN he would make time to meet if I was passing through. I only hope I have a fraction of the impact on others that Gary has had...and that would be enormous. I weep with those that weep...and I smile just looking at his grin! We will see each other soon...and very soon.*  
Mark Uhlenberg  
St. Louis, MO.

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**Mark Uhlenberg** - June 28, 2014 at 02:35 PM



“ Dear Kathy,  
*So very saddened to hear that Gary has left this earth but what a party he is going to--one that will knock his socks off. You both liked to have fun times with God's people and gave so much to Rochester Covenant Church. Gary's ministry will not be forgotten as he reached so many for Christ. He truly will be missed here on earth---his caring smile and hearty hugs made just about everyone feel welcomed and loved at Rochester Covenant--but heaven will never be the same with all his enthusiasm! Hugs and prayers to you Kathy and family as you struggle with the loss of your loved one.*  
Gary and Judy Swenson

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**Judy Swenson** - June 27, 2014 at 10:32 PM



“ *Enjoyed serving on Cursillo Teams with Pastor Gary over the years. My prayers go out to family and friends of which there are many.*  
Larry Lawrence

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**Larry Lawrence** - June 27, 2014 at 07:55 PM

TT

“ Dear Kathy,  
*How sad we are to hear of Gary's death. We pray for the Lord's blanket of mercy over you and your family, and for His comfort that passes understanding.*

*Gary profoundly impacted my life, when I (Darlene) went through my Cursillo weekend in 1987 at Christ Pres. It was the weekend I surrendered my life to Christ. I'll never forget his gentle, kind, loving spirit. I know Gary is resting in the loving arms of Jesus..*

*Tenderly, tenderly Jesus is calling; calling to you and to me.. Come home, come home, ye who are weary come home..*

*With much Christian love, and many prayers,  
Darlene & Tom Tibbetts*

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**Tom and Darlene Tibbetts** - June 27, 2014 at 07:47 PM

MH

“ Gary and I were close friends at Mounds View, class of 1964. We shared many happy times and stayed in touch for several years after graduating. I am happy to see the outstanding tributes to Gary and to understand how he touched the lives of so many. His spirit lives on through all of his friends and family. My sympathy to Kathy and his children. I feel blessed to have such wonderful early memories of our teenage years. Mary Gebhard Harper

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**Mary Gebhard Harper** - June 27, 2014 at 07:03 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing.*



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June 27, 2014 at 01:53 PM



“ *My heart is saddened to hear our “Friend-Maker for God” has passed away. Gary and I were on Staff together at Faith Covenant Church, Burnsville Minnesota for several years. He was my mentor and friend. His quest for sharing God’s love was legendary...teaching, preaching and caring. He left no stone unturned for God.*

*Our prayers go out to his family asking God to surround them with angels giving comfort and strength as they walk through this difficult time.*

*Gail Banke*

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**Gail Banke** - June 27, 2014 at 11:16 AM



“ *Written in the Stars was purchased for the family of Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing.*



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June 27, 2014 at 10:11 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing.*



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June 27, 2014 at 09:48 AM



“ *TEAM RAILROAD SPECIALTIES purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing.*



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**TEAM RAILROAD SPECIALTIES** - June 27, 2014 at 09:09 AM



“ *Pastor Gary was a wonderful pastor and I am grateful for the time he and Kathy were at Rochester Covenant Church. He baptized all three of our children. Gary was a huger, and I loved that the most about him! Comforting hugs to Kathy and the family.- Angie Meister*

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**Angie Meister** - June 27, 2014 at 08:19 AM



“ *Andy Binger purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing.*



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**Andy Binger** - June 27, 2014 at 08:04 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing.



June 27, 2014 at 07:44 AM



“ Ken Burget - President TEAM Rochester purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing.



**Ken Burget - President TEAM Rochester** - June 27, 2014 at 07:41 AM



“ Rick & Kathy White purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Rev. Dr. Gary Willard Downing.



**Rick & Kathy White** - June 27, 2014 at 06:31 AM

LH

“ I was saddened to learn of Gary's passing. We were classmates and close friends at Mounds View High School where Gary sang in the choir and was a key member of our male quartet. While I lost touch with Gary since I moved out of the area after college, I remember him as a fun loving, thoughtful and very spiritual young man. You could always count on Gary to be there as a friend. He had a unique ability to see the best in people and maintain a positive attitude even in the midst of difficulty. It is good to read these tributes to Gary to get a sense of the inspiring and caring minister he became. We have lost a very special person, at least for now. With my sympathy to Gary's family,  
Leif Hartmark, Class of 1964

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**Leif Hartmark** - June 27, 2014 at 06:27 AM

NB

“ We were saddened to hear of Gary's illness and passing. We were so fond of the wonderful memories we shared with Gary and Kathy serving on Cursillo teams together years ago. We were always so happy to be in his midst as he was a true servant of God and made all of us better Christians as we continued to live the example Gary showed in his teachings and sharing. Our sincere sympathy to Kathy and family as you mourn the loss of your loved one.

*Blessings,*

*Norma Jean & Bill Barr  
Bloomington, MN*

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**Norma Jean Barr** - June 26, 2014 at 11:39 PM

DA

“ Our sincere condolences to the Downing family. Gary played a major role in my spiritual journey.

*Suzanne & David Hamann*

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**David** - June 26, 2014 at 09:09 PM

TG

“ My Sympathy to Kathy and her family on the loss of one of the most blessed disciples of Christ I have ever known. Todd Gabriel (Rochester)

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**Todd Gabriel** - June 26, 2014 at 02:44 PM

GI

“ My deepest condolences to Gary's family - I worked with him at RCC and I enjoyed the time I was able to help with his ministry. He will be missed by so many people that he touched.

*Ginger Schneider*

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**Ginger** - June 26, 2014 at 01:30 PM

DW

“ So sad to hear of Pastor Downing's passing. He retired from Rochester Covenant on the day we joined the congregation. That was a difficult day for us since we loved that man liked we had known him forever. I really miss his hugs upon entering church. He was special. May God bless his soul and I plan on seeing him again. With loving memories.....Jean and Don Wanek,

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**Don and Jean Wanek** - June 26, 2014 at 01:08 PM