



Lorna Ann Shoemaker

May 17, 1948 - February 18, 2020

Lorna Shoemaker died unexpectedly at home in St. Paul, MN, on Tuesday, Feb. 18. She was born in El Cerrito, CA to Dorothea (née Drew) and Paul Shoemaker. After graduating from the University of California at Davis with a dual major in English and Philosophy, she earned an M.Div. from San Francisco Theological Seminary in San Anselmo, CA. The first woman to receive the "Seminary Fellowship Award," she undertook non-degree post-graduate studies at Eberhardt-Karls University in Tübingen, Germany and the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches in Bossey, Switzerland.

Lorna was among the first wave of women ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. She served as associate pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Eureka, CA, then as an Associate for Women's Leadership Development for Presbyterian Women and the Women's Ministry Unit of the PCUSA. It was during this time that she met her beloved partner of 32 years, Holly Hearon. In 1991, they were joined together in Holy Union at Redwoods Presbyterian Church.

Lorna undertook graduate studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA where she received the "Outstanding Dissertation Proposal Award." Her area of focus was medieval Church history. Following doctoral studies, she became Director of the Library and assistant professor of Global History of Christianity at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, IN.

She was a dedicated member of the faculty and held in high regard by her students.

In 2014, Lorna and Holly relocated to St. Paul, MN, where Lorna enjoyed working in retirement at the Explore Store of the Science Museum of Minnesota.

Lorna lived a life of service. She cultivated the practices of welcoming strangers, interest in others, performing acts of kindness, and tackling with equanimity any problem that came to hand. She was treasured for her droll personality, humor, and wit, and held in awe for her amazing expanse of knowledge. Lorna read voraciously, loved to travel and spend time in nature, enjoyed music and theater, made a terrific scone, and took delight in cross-species communication. She was never happier than when reading a book in the company of felines.

Lorna is survived by her partner, Holly Hearon; sister-out-law, Leigh Hearon (Alan Iglitzin); brother, DC Shoemaker; and chosen family Jan, Ron, and Mark Turner and Jill Turner Wright.

Memorials preferred to Point Lobos Foundation, the Conservation Ecology Centre (Cape Otway, Australia), Natural Resources Defense Council, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, International Rescue Committee, Second Harvest Heartland, or charity of your choice.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Northminster Presbyterian Church in Indianapolis on March 13th at 2 p.m. A second celebration will be held at a later date in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Tribute Wall

JJ

“ Dear Holly,
I remember you and Lorna both from the years I was an active part of Redwoods Presbytery (Chaplaincy). Your spirited faithfulness and passions increased my admiration for both of you and your ministries/studies.
Lorna lived a seriously committed life. Her sudden, unexpected death during the pandemic seems devastating, even now, as I learn of it August 25, 2023. Lighting a candle in memory of her. Prayers rise up in thanksgiving. She remains a beloved member of the Great Cloud of Witnesses. In life and in death, we belong to God.
Salud,
Jana L. Johnsen
(Retired)



Jana L. Johnsen - August 25, 2023 at 12:00 AM

BW

“ So sorry I never got to meet my distant cousin across the pond in the USA. We were united through the wonders of Ancestry websites and Facebook and it was such a pleasure to be in contact. Just so sad you never managed to make it across to visit as I know you had hoped to do so with Holly. Think of you often and miss your comments on Facebook posts! God bless from your English cousin, Belinda



Belinda Wood - February 08, 2021 at 12:00 AM

AO

“ I recall professor Shoemakers smile and friendliness whether in the library or in the corridors of the seminary. A gracious spirit. Rest In Peace. It was a joy to have met you. Shalom



Adrian Odle - June 05, 2020 at 12:00 AM

AB

“ We were so sorry to hear of the loss of Lorna. We knew Lorna when she was at the Eureka Presbyterian Church. We helped her with the Youth Group which took us on many exciting adventures. The group had the opportunity to go backpacking, camping and a retreat to Camp Mattole. Lorna always had a beautiful smile. Lorna was taken from us way to soon. She will be greatly missed. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Al and Shirley Bird - April 01, 2020 at 12:00 AM

RN

“ Dear Dr. Hearon
I am so sorry about Prof. Shoemaker's passing away. Praying for comfort and strength.



Rahul Nirmal - March 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

DW

“ Seeing Holly and Lorna in our St. Paul neighborhood was always such a pleasure! Holly and Lorna's love for each other was clear when they came out for neighborhood events. I am very sorry, Holly.

Deborah Wells - March 09, 2020 at 12:00 AM

SR

“ I remember all the good times we shared together. I vision Lorna and Kentner sitting in Heaven discussing the fine points of theology. My love to you.

Sterling Rainey - March 07, 2020 at 12:00 AM

LT

“ Holly and family, you are in my thoughts and prayers!



Liz Throne - February 29, 2020 at 12:00 AM

BM

“ Dear Holly,
My condolences on the loss of your dear Lorna.
What a fine lady she was, always offering a smile, kind words and willing to share her knowledge.
I was unaware of all her accomplishments, but not at all surprised.
My heart goes out to you, Holly.
Take care and God bless.



Bonnie Milbrandt - February 29, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JG

“ Holly, I am wrapping you in consolation and endless hugs. It is the little things that take hold of me in this loss. When I was a guest in your home (oh so many years ago) I remember Lorna's smile about the risotto--cooked perfectly by Lorna! The meal was fabulous, the companionship part of Creation's goodness and her eternal gestures of welcome and practical embrace a fanciful form of extravagance. Know you are being carried in prayer and hope...J

jane grovijahn - February 29, 2020 at 12:00 AM

MB

“ I didn't know you long enough. I miss you...

Condolences to you all for the loss of your loved one.
I pray for everyone's peace and health. My love to all.

Marie Boelen
co-worker, friend Science Museum of MN



Marie Boelen - February 27, 2020 at 12:00 AM

LC

“ I'm so very sad that we have lost this amazing woman! My personal association with her was mainly through her cheerful service at the GTU Bookstore. My prayers are with Holly through this time.

Linda Clader - February 27, 2020 at 12:00 AM

BS

“ Dear Holly,
I work at the Science Museum. I enjoyed seeing and chatting with Lorna several mornings a week she sat at a table with a book and her breakfast awaiting the start of her work day.
I've enjoyed the Rose Ensemble through the years and she and I would often talk about music. Lorna will be missed by me and many hothers ere at the museum.
I'm sorry for your loss. I wish you and her family the very best.
Bette Schmit

Bette Schmit - February 27, 2020 at 12:00 AM

RP

“ In my few years at the science museum, Lorna always made the explore store a bright place when she was there. We often took the same bus home and had some interesting conversations at the stop. I am very sorry to hear of her untimely passing, but I am glad to have known her while I did. My condolences to the family. Lorna was a valued member of the community here.

Reuben Parker - February 27, 2020 at 12:00 AM

MP

“ Lorna, your smile will make heaven even brighter. I will miss you my friend.

Michael Porter - February 26, 2020 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ It was a blessing having Lorna as part of our First Presbyterian in SSP community. She will be missed.

Rex Boutelle - February 26, 2020 at 12:00 AM

GT

“ *Such fond memories of Lorna and Gandolf*

Gerry Tollefson - February 26, 2020 at 12:00 AM

DW

“ *Mary Susan and I mourn the death of Lorna, but are grateful that we had the blessed opportunity to know her. We pray that God will comfort her beloved partner Holly and flood her with precious memories that will bring smiles even in the midst of tears.*

Dr. Edward Wheeler - February 26, 2020 at 12:00 AM

KK

“ *I was so very sorry to hear about Lorna. Such a shock, and such a tragedy for everyone who loved her. I will always have a special place in my heart for you and Lorna, for your warm and loving friendship with my dad.*



Kathy Kahn - February 26, 2020 at 12:00 AM

CR

“ *Lorna was such an amazing woman. She was my favorite professor in seminary as she both challenged and supported her students. I worked for her in the library as well and I just can't begin to tell you how much Lorna is loved. My heart both breaks and rejoices.*

Charissa Ramey - February 25, 2020 at 12:00 AM

SC

“ Dear Holly - my heart is broken with this news. I will always, ALWAYS hold Lorna in the highest regard. She embodies light, love and absolute delight in educating everyone! I loved her updates on famous and infamous people. She made my life better in ways that I can't articulate. I send you much love and pray you will feel comfort and joy as you all celebrate the life and legacy of this wonderful woman. Much love.
steph



Stephanie Croom - February 25, 2020 at 12:00 AM

CS

“ Praying for comfort for the whole family. Bless you.



Callie Smith - February 25, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ I am shocked and saddened by the news of Lorna' death. I send my condolences to Lorna's whole family, and big virtual hugs and prayers for Holly as you grieve this huge loss. Lorna was a bright spirit, a scholar, a kind human being, and a role model for those of us women who followed her in ministry in the Presbyterian Church.

Joanne Whitt - February 25, 2020 at 12:00 AM

MS

“ I'm grateful for the ways that Lorna, in our chaotic world, radiates grace and hope. We are all blessed by her.



Mick Smith - February 25, 2020 at 12:00 AM

CO

“ Oh Holly, your grief must run so deep, and my heart bleeds.

Christopher Ocker - February 25, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JD

“ Holly, Holly, I am so sorry; prayers and thoughts are with you.
Joanna

Joanna Dewey - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

WB

“ Prayers to the family, friends, and loved ones. May you find peace and hope during this difficult time. Blessings to you all, Rev. William A. Bauzo, M.A., M.Div., LMFT

William Bauzo - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

CT

“ Holly, my thoughts rest on you and my prayers are that love and comfort surround you. Lorna was more than a beloved teacher, she was also a friend. My years at and memories of CTS are not complete with thinking of her. May peace be yours, Lorna, in the golden fields of Heaven.

Chris Tenpas - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

MG

“ Dear Holly, I'm so very sorry for your loss and for the loss that all of us feel who were priveleged to sit at her feet and learn. I personally began missing her when I no longer walked into her class each week. To so many of us she will always be our mentor and inspiration. She has returned to God. Praise God

Melissa Grishaw - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

AS

“ Holding you in prayer and sending love.

Annie Steinberg-Behrman - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ I was blessed to know Lorna as a student at CTS. Her knowledge of church history was obvious but what I admired most was her passion for teaching, her kindness, and the support she offered to students. I am thankful for her life. Holly, we are all holding you in love.

Sharon Baker - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

LM

“ Lorna was my boss at CTS library and a beloved friend there and on Facebook. I already miss her very much. {Holly}



Lisa McDavid - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JT

“ Thank you for a beautiful tribute, Holly. Even though we didn't see you and Lorna often, she was still a treasured part of our family and will be greatly missed.

Jan Turner - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

RM

“ Deep bows and blessings to you Holly as you mourn the loss of Lorna. She touched my life in many ways - deepening my critical thinking skills, inspiring my faith, and through her consistent prophetic, yet pragmatic stance. This world is less rich without her in it.

Rev. Dr. Melinda V. McLain - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ So grateful to have crossed paths with this wonderful woman while I was at CTS ~ a beloved presence in that community. I am sure the world darkened a bit, the day Lorna vacated earth. My her next journey be as engaging and full of love.

Chris Falley

PS ~ Hope to hear of the Bay Area date, as I would like to attend!

Chris Falley - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

RB

“ Very sad at the loss of a saint! Lorna created and encouraged my love of history. In the classes I had the privilege to take with Lorna I remember her teaching with a sense of complete control of her subject matter and a grace-full humanity laced with a wicked and understated sense of humor. I remember her talking about history as "Waves with an occasional riptide." And her gleeful statement introducing one period of Medieval Christian history saying, "My relics are more powerful than your relics." And Lorna's ability to call it like it is, "A tough call: Death by plague or burn at the stake." And this random snippet from Lorna in my class notes from 11/09/04: "The plunger for my scholastic load." Not sure of the setting for that one which might bring me a reprimand from Lorna, "Know the context!"

Rev. Eric Brotheridge - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

TI

“ Lorna was one of my favorite people during my time at CTS. I'm so sorry to hear about her passing.

Tod Iseminger - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

CF

“ Professor Shoemaker will always be remembered. She was very patient with me at CTS. My condolences to Professor Hearon.



Charito Fernandez - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

WJ

“ My fervent prayers are with the family and friends of Lorna, especially Holly. Lorna was truly a phenomenal person with a radiant personality. Her smile illuminated the classroom and was rivaled only by her erudition. She epitomized the expression "a lady and a scholar." A veritable angel, Lorna showed us how to live peacefully and lovingly on earth as heavenly angels. Her spirit now belongs to God's heavenly host, reserved for angels who dared to expose And express their angelic qualities while living as and amongst human beings. She taught us how to soar in life, how to love fiercely, and how to pursue our ambitions with unbridle vigor. We are forever changed by her example and saddened by her passing.

Willie J. Newton, Jr. - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JO

“ Sigh. She was so incredibly wonderful, funny, intelligent, and caring to all of us at CTS. We will all miss her terribly. Godspeed.

Jean O'Brien - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

LM

“ How did we never talk about Tübingen?



Linda Maloney - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JW

“ I have missed Lorna deeply in just these few days. I wish her rest and peace in the final recognition of HaShem who holds her dear. I pray for compassion for those who grieve. Words fail.



Jann Cather Weaver - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM

SL

“ I came to CTS as a student while working as a hospital chaplain. I was 55 years old and had no idea what a life-changing four years awaited me. I had classes with both Lorna and Holly and am indebted to them both for their positive impact on my life-not just in their teaching material but in the sharing of their lives.

Sally Lindskoog - February 24, 2020 at 12:00 AM