



Roger Paul Bjorklund

November 12, 1933 - July 14, 2025

Roger Paul Bjorklund, devoted Christian, beloved family patriarch, and revered music educator, passed away peacefully on July 14, 2025, in Apple Valley, Minnesota. Born in Minneapolis on November 12, 1933, to Paul and Elma Bjorklund, Roger's life was one of faith, dedication, and love, leaving behind an enduring legacy that will resonate for generations.

Roger met his wife, LaVerne (Bernie) Ostlund, while attending Minnehaha Academy in Minneapolis. They married in 1954 and modeled a loving relationship for the family for 70 years.

Roger earned a bachelor's degree from MacPhail College of Music in Minneapolis and a master's degree from the University of Minnesota. He began his vocation as a band and choir director at Clara City High School, while he also served his country in the Army and Army Reserve.

In 1961, Roger started the band program at the new St. Anthony Village High School with a modest ensemble of nine students. Under his baton, the program grew exponentially, mirroring his belief in a balanced program centered on concert music. His Concert Band performed at the State Music Convention and consistently earned unanimous superior ratings at contests. The Jazz Ensemble performed at both local and national events, including a feature on WCCO TV. His bands were recognized as a Program of Excellence

by the Department of Education.

Roger's leadership extended beyond the concert hall to marching band, where the St. Anthony Marching Band achieved unparalleled success. Garnering first place awards at local, national, and international competitions, including seven consecutive first place awards at Minneapolis Aquatennial Torchlight Parades, the band's excellence was a testament to Roger's commitment. They also claimed championship awards at Lions International Parades and Grand Champion titles in cities such as Calgary, Winnipeg, and Washington, D.C.

In 1988, Roger founded the Patriots, a 170-member parade band that became a source of pride for four suburban communities. He served as executive director until his retirement in 1991.

Roger was honored with the St. Anthony Outstanding Citizen Award, the A.B McAllister 'MAC' Award given by the Phi Mu Epsilon national fraternity to the outstanding bandmaster in each state, and the Excellence in Education Award. He served as president of the American School Band Directors Association, the Phi Beta Mu Band Fraternity. He contributed his expertise as a Minnesota Music Educators board member and an All-State judge. In 2001, his contributions were recognized with his induction into the Minnesota Music Educators Association Hall of Fame.

Roger's legacy includes the thousands of students he inspired through excellence and encouragement. His lessons went beyond music; they were about life, excellence, and the joy of creating something together.

One of his favorite ways to serve the church was as choir director, which he did at Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls and Redeemer Lutheran Church in Fridley, where he would produce annual cantatas with choir and

orchestra.

Roger had a lifelong interest in cars and owned several sports cars throughout his life. He and Bernie took their young family on many road trips throughout the United States and spent time at the Ostlund family cabin on Lake Sylvia. In later years, they enjoyed international travel, visiting Europe, China, and Hong Kong. Roger and Bernie also loved to support their grandchildren and attend their activities.

Roger was preceded in death by his loving wife, Laverne (Ostlund), and his siblings, Neoma (Bakke), Robert, and Raymond. He is survived by his daughters, Lori (Tedd) Gullickson and Beth (John) Bloomquist; his grandchildren, Daniel (Bre) Gullickson, Matthew (Lisa) Gullickson, Kari (Jason) Kubiadowicz, and Kelli (Benjamin) Strupp; and his nine great-grandchildren, Grace, Paul, Ruth, Alison, Lauren, Elise, Zoey, Lando, and Chloe.

A celebration of Roger's life will be held on Friday, July 25, at 11:00 a.m., at Salem Covenant Church, 2655 5th St. NW in New Brighton, with visitation one hour prior to the service and a luncheon to follow.

Memorials may be made to St. Anthony High School Bands.

www.Wasbhurn-McReavy.com

Werness Brothers 952-884-8145

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL **25**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Salem Covenant Church
2655 5th Street Northwest
New Brighton, MN 55112

Memorial Service

JUL **25**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Salem Covenant Church
2655 5th Street Northwest
New Brighton, MN 55112

Tribute Wall



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Roger Paul Bjorklund.*



July 22, 2025 at 03:23 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Roger Paul Bjorklund.*



July 21, 2025 at 08:54 PM



“ *The St. Anthony Village Class of 1981 purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Roger Paul Bjorklund.*



The St. Anthony Village Class of 1981 - July 21, 2025 at 08:18 AM



“ *The St. Anthony Village Class of 1981 planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Roger Paul Bjorklund.*

The St. Anthony Village Class of 1981 - July 21, 2025 at 08:18 AM



“ I was in the band when he first came to Clara City. He was the best. Soloist in 1959 could have been Carol Frikke or Barb Lange.

Joyce Harguth - July 20, 2025 at 10:15 PM



“ Thank you Mr. Bjorklund for the gift of music to my family. My son is now a professional musician and my daughter was a piano teacher. Former St Anthony resident, Cynthia Witzigman

Cynthia Witzigman - July 18, 2025 at 08:56 PM



“ A revered music educator, indeed! Mr. Bjorklund had an unforgettable and profound influence on me (and so many others). Here's a fond memory: the curtain is just about to rise on the first night of the Pop Concert, we've been working really hard, the tension is high, and we're all looking up to him to watch him give the signal to begin. And he's mumbling a bit, not sure what he's saying 😊, but we know he's telling us we're ready and it's time! What an experience! My condolences to the family as you mourn this great man.

Susan Carr - July 18, 2025 at 03:50 PM