



Sung Kyu Kim

January 12, 1939 - November 18, 2025

Sung Kyu Kim passed away on November 18, 2025 in Saint Paul, Minnesota, at the age of 86.

Born in South Korea on January 12, 1939, Sung Kyu was the eldest of six children. His childhood was marked by resilience, as he navigated the challenges of the Korean War era. In a rare and life-altering opportunity at the age of 15, he was granted permission to immigrate to the United States. He traveled alone, enduring a two-week journey by ship to San Francisco, followed by a four-day bus ride across the country. He would tell you he slept through Texas, but eventually made it to South Carolina, where he was welcomed into the home of Reverend Joe Beale, a dear friend his father met during seminary.

A determined student, Sung excelled academically, earning a full scholarship to Davidson College. He continued his education at Johns Hopkins and later Duke University, where he earned his Ph.D. in Physics.

After reading an article in Time Magazine about a small private College in St. Paul, he wrote a letter of interest that led him to Minnesota - and to a remarkable 51-year career at Macalester College. As a professor of Physics, Sung Kyu became an integral part of the Macalester community. Known for his dedication to his students, he hosted weekly lunch outings so he could get

to know each one personally, many of whom came from around the world to attend his retirement party. His love of God, the universe, and his students converged during his final lecture of each term as he famously led them through their story from the Big Bang to the present, declaring the meaning of it all - "You are special." His excellence was recognized nationally when he was named among the top 300 professors in the U.S. His over half-century of service made him the longest-tenured professor in the college's history, an achievement unlikely to be surpassed.

In 1968, Sung Kyu met the love of his life, Sherry, and they married three months later. Together, they built a strong and loving family, which brought him his greatest joy. Spending time with his family was his favorite activity, generously treating everyone to his famous "Grandpa hugs" and dinner at Orchid restaurant, where everybody knew his name and looked forward to his frequent visits. When he looked through the windows of his North Oaks home or out of the car during road trips, he always said, "Look at that beautiful scenery!"

Preceded in death by his parents Hyung Mo Kim and Ye Soon Chung, he is survived by his beloved wife Sherry; their children, Rob (Michelle), Jennifer (Joshua), Alicia (Bryan), and Alex; their eight grandchildren, Evan, Justin, Gabe, Nolan, Anika, Isla, Judah, Etta, and step grandchildren JuJu, Bella, and Mia; and his sisters Eujah Kwon (Dr. Myung Dal Kwon) and Choongja Yang (Dr. Yung-Yong Yang), and brothers Eun Kyu Kim (Mi Kyung Kim), Hye Kyu Kim (Mi Sook Kim), and Young Kyu Kim (Hye Young Kim).

A service to celebrate Sung Kyu's life will be held on Saturday, November 29th, 11 am at The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 3115 Victoria St. N, Roseville, MN 55113. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial contributions be made to the church.

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **29**. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
3115 Victoria Street North
Roseville, MN 55113

Celebration of Life

NOV **29**. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Lutheran Church of the Resurrection
3115 Victoria Street North
Roseville, MN 55113

Tribute Wall



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Sung Kyu Kim.* ”



November 24, 2025 at 04:23 PM