

Herbert Nygren's Obituary

Past Taylor professor lived a full life



Dr. E. Herbert Nygren

June 27, 1928 - April 18, 2020

Herb was born June 27, 1928 in the Bay Ridge neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York. His parents were immigrants from Norway and Sweden. Herb's father was a Norwegian sailor and his mother was a housekeeper when they met at the Bethelship Norwegian Methodist Church in Brooklyn, where his mother was a founding member. Herb came to a personal relationship with God in high school at a church youth meeting. He knew almost immediately that God was calling him into a life of ministry.

Herb left New York for the first time to attend college at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana, a place he would come to dearly love. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1951 in Psychology. It was at Taylor where he met the love of his life, Louise Whitton, and they were married shortly after graduation.

Herb and Louise returned to New York where Herb attended New York Theological Seminary. He received a Master of Divinity degree in 1954 and was ordained in the Methodist Church. Over the next several years, Herb and Louise moved several times on the east coast pastoring various Methodist churches. During this time, he also continued his education at New York University where he earned a Master of Arts degree and a Doctor of Philosophy degree.

In 1960 Herb was offered the Chair of the Philosophy Department at several prestigious East Coast universities and seminaries, including New York University and Harvard University. Instead he chose a position at Emory and Henry College in Emory, VA, which would allow him to move closer to Louise's North Carolina home. This sense of humility and always putting others first characterized his life. He chaired the Religion Department at Emory and Henry College for nine years.

In 1969 Herb received the offer of a lifetime for a position he couldn't refuse, as Chairman of the Religion and Philosophy Department at Taylor University in Upland, Indiana. Herb continued in this position for over twenty years, retiring in 1991 and named Professor Emeritus. During his time at Taylor and for many years after retirement, he continued not only with adjunct teaching but with his church ministry. Herb pastored many rural Methodist churches near Taylor, sometimes preaching at two churches each Sunday. He taught and ministered to thousands of students during his tenure at Taylor using his unique teaching style. His legacy continues to live on through the Taylor family and many rural churches and congregants he served in his lifetime.

In 2012 Herb and Louise moved to Windsor Park in Carol Stream, IL, to be closer to family. He is survived by two sons: Herb, Jr. (Annie) of Tyler, TX, and Steven

(Katherine) of Wheaton, IL.; four grandchildren: Erik (Kaitlin), Zachary (Elaine), Jenna and Maxwell; and three great-grandchildren: Anders, Quincy and Britta.

Herb was preceded in death by his parents Ginny (Walas) and Erik Helge Nygren, and by his wife of 65 years, Louise (Whitton) Nygren. Memorial gifts can be made to the Taylor University "Dr. Nygren Scholarship Fund" in his memory.

<https://www.taylor.edu/give-online>

Please select "Named Scholarships" then "All Other Named Scholarships (Put Name in Memo Line)" and please put Dr. Herb Nygren in the memo line. Checks may also be mailed to Taylor University with same information on your check.

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