



Rev. Mark Stephen Allen

April 7, 1957 - July 4, 2022

The Rev. Steve Allen, pastor of Centennial Christian Church in McCoy, Virginia went home to be with God on July 4, 2022. Mark Stephen (always called Steve) Allen was born on April 7, 1957, at Camp Zama, Japan, where his father was stationed in the army. His parents were James William (Jay) and Marjorie Jane Allen. His parents divorced when he was very young, and he lived primarily with his mother in Cincinnati until he was 16 and then Baltimore until he graduated from high school. He knew from a young age that he was destined to be a pastor and committed himself to that goal. He graduated from Lynchburg College in 1979 and from Brite Divinity School in 1983.

In addition to churches served during his time in seminary, Steve faithfully served churches in Illinois, Virginia, Iowa, Colorado, Missouri, Kansas, and Kentucky. When Steve came to the little town of Ursa, Illinois to serve as their pastor, he met and married Rita Grimes, who became his partner in marriage and in ministry on August 30, 1986. Steve and Rita were blessed with three children: Brian (Moe), David, and Laura. He was active in local activities and regional church committees in the various states in which he served churches. He encouraged Rita to attend seminary and join him in a more formal manner in ministry with him. She graduated from Phillips Theological Seminary in Tulsa, OK in 2009—a happy memory for the whole family.

Steve loved learning; hence, he loved books and owned thousands. He was curious about many topics and tried to instill that sense of wonder in his

children. He loved to travel, so there were many camping trips as a family, road trips to nearly every state in the country, and always many trips back to Illinois to spend time with Rita's family. He wanted his children to have the chance to see many of the sites that he never had a chance to see as a child—The Grand Canyon, the Rocky Mountains, the Atlantic Ocean, and many others. He wanted them to experience history as part of the travel—even tracing the Lewis and Clark Trail all the way to Fort Clatsop in Oregon. When the kids were in high school, he enjoyed participating in school activities with them, often volunteering as a chaperone so that he could be with them during their various pursuits. He dearly loved to play bridge and other card games and continued playing bridge on the internet during his later years.

Steve loved music of all types—sacred, jazz, rock, classical, pop; he loved them all. He and his princess Laura would dance around the house to “Dancing Queen” by Abba. He enjoyed singing from an early age and sang with the Cincinnati Boy's Choir. He also sang in community choral groups as an adult. He and Rita often sang duets together and enjoyed singing in the car while traveling.

The family knew that his devotional time was sacred and that he treasured that time with God. As his health declined, he turned to God even more closely for his source of comfort and peace. He is no longer suffering. He has fought the good fight, and heaven is his reward.

He is survived by his wife Rita of McCoy, VA, sons Brian of Lawrence, KS and David of Kansas City, MO, and daughter Laura (Kit) Romero of Snyder, TX, a brother Michael (Stephanie) Allen of Albuquerque, New Mexico, and a sister Kathy Wicklund of Bakersfield, CA, sister-in-law Bev (Wayne) Dedert of Quincy, IL, brother-in-law Kent (Susan) Grimes of Speedway, IN, sister-in-law Judy Allen of Escondido, CA, and numerous nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents, his in-laws (Maurice and Jean Grimes, whom he loved like parents) and a brother Bill.

A memorial service is planned for 3 pm Friday, July 8, at Centennial Christian Church, McCoy, Virginia, with a meal following. There will be a burial/funeral

service in Ursa, Illinois at a later date.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUL 8. 3:00 PM (ET)

Centennial Christian Church
6266 Centennial Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060

Tribute Wall



“ I played Internet bridge nightly on the same bridge site as Steve. We usually had short conversations prior to the start of games. We hit it off as friends tho never saw ea other in person. I would nudge him a little on Sat evenings, asking what the subject of his Sun sermon would be. He always replied he was ready for Sun services w/little preparation because he knew his religious subjects. I found Steve to be a great person and feel privileged to have known him the last year of his life. Lt. Col. Richard Ingram, USAF, living in The Villages, FL. (ReRun0007 bridge name)

Richard Ingram - July 11, 2022 at 09:23 PM

TM

“ Rita and kids-I am so sorry for your loss of Steve. He has and will always have a special place in our hearts-the poem he wrote for our Baby Addison when we lost her in 2005 is very special to us and hangs in our homes!!!
Coach Mac

Terre McDorman - July 09, 2022 at 04:23 PM

JE

“ I am so sorry for your loss, Rita & Children. You are all in my thoughts. I love you, dear friend.

Jean - July 09, 2022 at 09:57 AM

IN

“ I, too, am saddened to learn of Steve's passing. I am a Bridge Base Online friend and will miss him. I have many health issues and Steve prayed for me and with me. I am thankful that I met him. My sincere sympathy reaches out to his entire family. Inetha

Inetha - July 08, 2022 at 10:21 PM

TG

“ So saddened and sorry to hear this! Please let us know when the memorial in Ursa will happen. Hang on to those good memories!!
With love, Sue & Terry Grimes

Terry D Grimes - July 08, 2022 at 01:27 PM



“ Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rev. Mark Stephen Allen.



July 07, 2022 at 09:33 AM

SP

“ So sorry to hear the news on Steve. Met him at Lynchburg College many years ago. I hung around his dorm. Following graduation I lost touch with him until the invention of the internet. I think e mail was invented for Steve. For decades we discussed issues, jobs and college memories. He had amazing recall of past events. A few years ago I was able to eat out with him and Rita on occasions after he moved back to Virginia. Never thought I would reconnect with him. I could go on and on. I will miss him. Hi to the family.

Stuart Porter - July 06, 2022 at 10:37 PM

NA

“ Steve and I shared many memories when we lived in Clayton, Illinois, serving on the Area ministerial and Board. We worked the church camps and lead a few worship services but we were also friends over the years. I always valued his delayed reactions to my jokes and how he looked over his glasses when I said something outrageous. I will miss seeing him at the General Assemblies.



Neil Allen - July 06, 2022 at 07:30 PM

BG

“ I am so sorry for his passing. I will always remember Steve when he served in Kansas. A wonderful man of God in all he did.
Pastor Bob Gleason

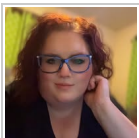
Bob Gleason - July 06, 2022 at 01:40 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rev. Mark Stephen Allen.



July 06, 2022 at 01:36 PM



“ Rita, Moe, David, Laura, Kit & family -- my heart breaks for you & I'm always praying for you. Our family loved your family. What an amazing man. May God be with you & wrap His arms around you.
Love you!!

Stephanie Napp - July 06, 2022 at 01:13 PM

JJ

“Joyce and James Jordan purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Rev. Mark Stephen Allen.



Joyce and James Jordan - July 06, 2022 at 12:34 PM

LL

“I am sorry I did not know Rev Allen. I do have the pleasure of knowing his son, Brian (Moe). Moe's group at Maximus in Lawrence Kansas wants the family and Moe to know our thoughts are with them. Lee Lydick & Heather Booth.

Lee Lydick - July 06, 2022 at 12:20 PM

PH

Steve Allen was my first cousin once removed. His mother, Jane was my first cousin. However, Steve and his brother, Bill were closer in age to me, than his mother, Jane, and I were. In my mind I still see Steve as he was then, a very smart, sweet trusting child with no guile. That is and what Steve was throughout his life. Even though we were not close, it makes me very very sad that he is still not here on earth, but knowing that he still lives on in spirit gives not just me, but, I hope, everyone who knew him a measure of comfort.

Rita, I am so sorry for your loss and for your children's loss.

Petra S. Hackler - July 07, 2022 at 07:24 PM

DC

So sorry to learn of the passing of Steve. He was an all around good guy and fun to hang out with when I knew him at Lynchburg College.

Dale Langley Castaneda - December 15, 2022 at 06:43 AM