

The Funeral of  
Roger Yarbrough  
Grace Lutheran Church  
Champaign, Illinois

*January 25, 2025*

## Welcome!

We are glad that you have joined us as we gather in the presence of God, to be encountered by God in Jesus Christ through Word and Sacrament as we commend Roger Yarbrough into God's eternal care.

We believe that God is truly at work here today in this worship service to both create and sustain our faith in God's promises of life for Jesus' sake, so that we may be comforted in our sorrow and empowered to be agents of God's grace in the world around us.

This stands at the center of all we do as a community of faith.

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### Key to the order of service:

Regular type: spoken by a leader

**Bold type: spoken by the people**

*Small Italics: liturgical directions*

✝ indicates that the sign of the cross may be made

ELW: Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Red Hymnal)

# Gathering

## Prelude

## Welcome

*The ministers process to the font with the urn.*

*The presiding minister welcomes the assembly.*

Welcome in the name of Jesus, the Savior of the world.

We are gathered to worship, to proclaim Christ crucified and risen,

to remember before God our brother Roger.

to give thanks for his life, to commend him to our merciful redeemer,

and to comfort one another in our grief.

## Thanksgiving for Baptism

*As a sign of being clothed with Christ in baptism,*

*a pall is placed on the urn as the following is said:*

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

*The presiding minister sprinkles the casket with water from the font following each acclamation.*

Eternal God, maker of heaven and earth, who formed us from the dust of the earth, who by your breath gave us life, we glorify you.

**We glorify you.**

Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, who suffered death for all humanity,

who rose from the grave to open the way to eternal life, we praise you.

**We praise you.**

Holy Spirit, author and giver of life, the comforter of all who sorrow,

our sure confidence and everlasting hope, we worship you.

**We worship you.**

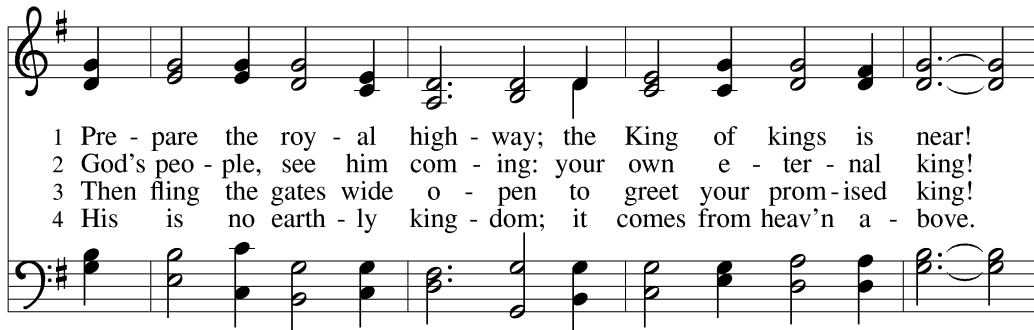
To you, O blessed Trinity, be glory and honor, forever and ever.

**Amen.**

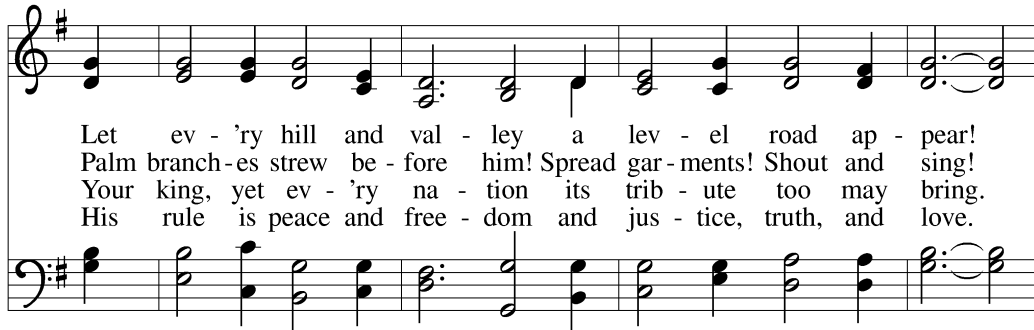
The ministers process with the urn to the front of the nave as the hymn is played

# Hymn *Prepare the Royal Highway*

ELW 264



1 Pre - pare the roy - al high - way; the King of kings is near!  
2 God's peo - ple, see him com - ing: your own e - ter - nal king!  
3 Then fling the gates wide o - pen to greet your prom - ised king!  
4 His is no earth - ly king - dom; it comes from heav'n a - bove.



Let ev - 'ry hill and val - ley a lev - el road ap - pear!  
Palm branch - es strew be - fore him! Spread gar - ments! Shout and sing!  
Your king, yet ev - 'ry na - tion its trib - ute too may bring.  
His rule is peace and free - dom and jus - tice, truth, and love.



Then greet the King of glo - ry, fore - told in sa - cred sto - ry:  
God's prom - ise will not fail you! No more shall doubt as - sail you!  
All lands will bow be - fore him; their voic - es join your sing - ing:  
So let your praise be sound - ing for kind - ness so a - bound - ing:

*Refrain*

Ho - san - na to the Lord, for he ful - fills God's word!

The image shows a musical score for a refrain. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff on top and a bass clef staff on the bottom. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The melody is written in the treble staff, and the accompaniment is in the bass staff. The lyrics are written below the treble staff. The music is in a simple, hymn-like style with a clear melody and supporting bass line.

## Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today our brother Roger. We thank you for giving him to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may live in confidence and hope until, by your call, we are gathered to our heavenly home in the company of all your saints; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

## Eulogy

Pastor Roger Digges

## Special Music

“O fond du temple saint”  
from the opera “Les pêcheurs de perles” by G. Bizet  
Sung by Evan Raymond and Zihao Liu  
Julie Gunn, accompanist

# Word

## First Reading

Isaiah 40:1-5

A reading from Isaiah.

<sup>1</sup> Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

<sup>2</sup> Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her  
that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

<sup>3</sup> A voice cries out:

“In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

<sup>4</sup> Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;  
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.

<sup>5</sup> Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalmody

Psalm 23

<sup>1</sup>The Lord is my shepherd;  
I shall not be in want.

<sup>2</sup>**The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.**

<sup>3</sup>You restore my soul, O Lord,  
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>**Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

<sup>6</sup>**Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.**

## Second Reading

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39

A reading from Romans.

<sup>31</sup> What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? <sup>33</sup> Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. <sup>35</sup> Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, <sup>39</sup> nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel Reading

Matthew 11:28-30

A reading from the Gospel according to Matthew.

[Jesus said] <sup>28</sup> "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Word of God, word of life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## Sermon

Pastor Chris Repp



1 A might - y for - tress is our God, a sword and shield vic -  
 2 No strength of ours can match his might! We would be lost, re -  
 3 Though hordes of dev - ils fill the land all threat - 'ning to de -  
 4 God's Word for - ev - er shall a - bide, no thanks to foes, who



to - rious; he breaks the cruel op - pres - sor's rod and  
 ject - ed. But now a cham - pion comes to fight, whom  
 your us, we trem - ble not, un - moved we stand; they  
 fear it; for God him - self fights by our side with



wins sal - va - tion glo - rious. The old sa - tan - ic foe  
 God him - self e - lect - ed. You ask who this may be?  
 can - not o - ver - pow'r us. Let this world's ty - rant rage;  
 weap - ons of the Spir - it. Were they to take our house,





has sworn to work us woe!      With craft and dread - ful might  
 The Lord of hosts is he!      Christ Je - sus, might - y Lord,  
 in bat - tle we'll en - gage!      His might is doomed to fail;  
 goods, hon - or, child, or spouse,      though life be wrenched a - way,

he arms him - self to fight.      On earth he has no e - qual.  
 God's on - ly Son, a - dored.      He holds the field vic - to - rious.  
 God's judg - ment must pre - vail!      One lit - tle word sub - dues him.  
 they can - not win the day.      The king - dom's ours for - ev - er!



*The assembly stands.*

## Apostles' Creed

Let us confess the faith of the whole church, the faith in which we are baptized.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died, and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
he ascended into heaven,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the ✝ resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## Prayers of Intercession

*The assisting minister leads the prayers. Each petition concludes:*

... God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

*The prayers conclude:*

God of all grace, ... now and forever.  
**Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

# Sending

## Commendation

*The presiding minister leads the commendation.*

Let us commend Roger to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer.

*Silence is kept.*

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Roger.  
Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold,  
a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming.  
Receive him into the arms of your mercy,  
into the blessed rest of everlasting peace,  
and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

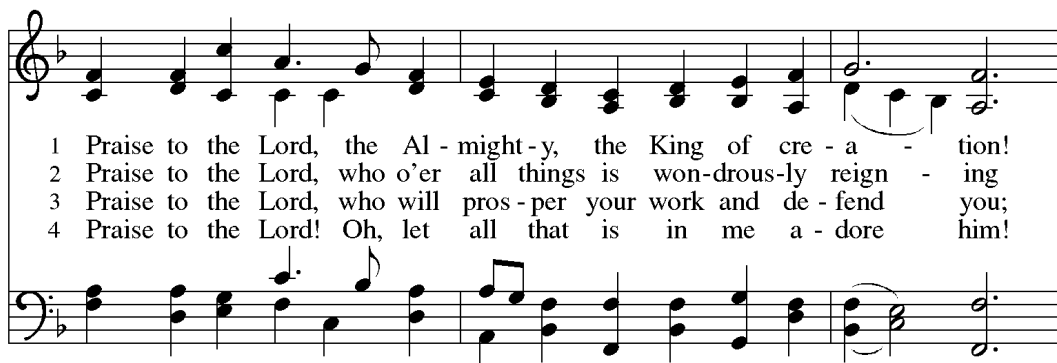
**Amen.**

Let us go forth in peace,  
**in the name of Christ. Amen.**

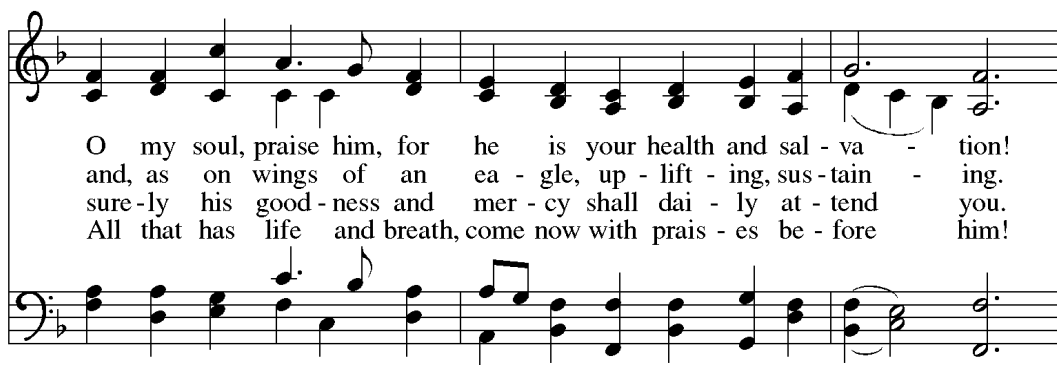
*The ministers lead a procession out of the sanctuary followed by the urn and the family as the final hymn is sung.*

# Hymn *Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*

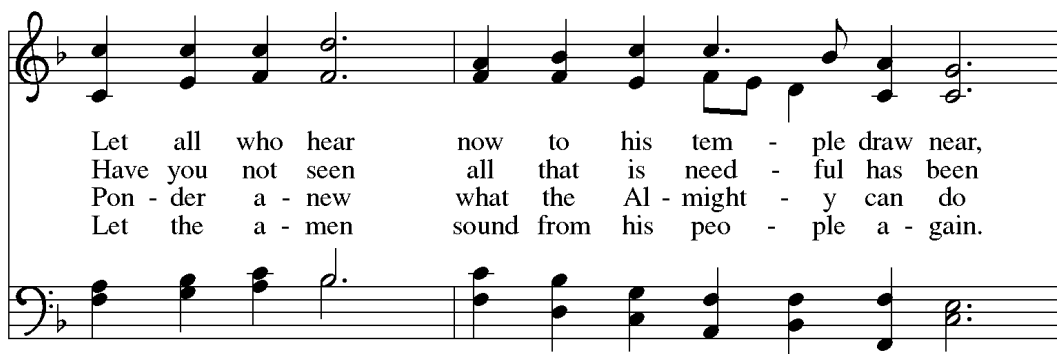
ELW 858



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre - a - tion!  
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly reign - ing  
3 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de - fend you;  
4 Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me a - dore him!



O my soul, praise him, for he is your health and sal - va - tion!  
and, as on wings of an ea - gle, up - lift - ing, sus - tain - ing.  
sure - ly his good - ness and mer - cy shall dai - ly at - tend you.  
All that has life and breath, come now with prais - es be - fore him!



Let all who hear now to his tem - ple draw near,  
Have you not seen all that is need - ful has been  
Pon - der a - new what the Al - might - y can do  
Let the a - men sound from his peo - ple a - gain.

join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!  
 sent by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?  
 if with his love he be - friend you.  
 Glad - ly for - ev - er a - dore him!

## Postlude

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## Worship Support

*The ministry of the church is carried out by all of its people, and Christian worship is a communal activity of the whole assembly. We give thanks to the following for their worship leadership and support today.*

Presiding Minister

Assisting Minister

Ushers

Organist:

Sound Technician:

Live-streaming Technician:

Office Assistant:

**Pastor Chris Repp**

**Claire Vail**

**Dave and Carol Larson**

**Dana Robinson**

**Kevin Vail**

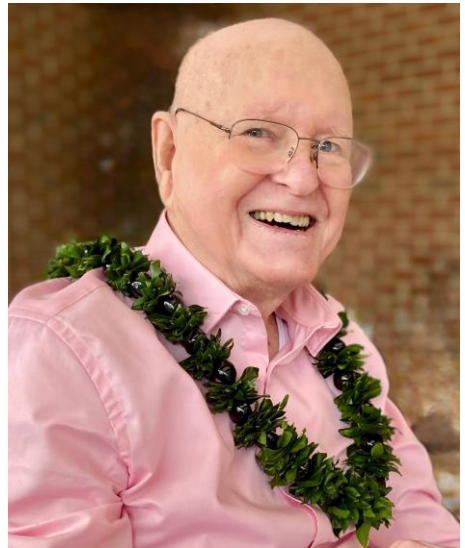
**Kevin Vail**

**Karen Maher**

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# Roger Yarbrough

Roger Loy Yarbrough passed away at age 95 on December 27, 2024, after an extended illness and hospitalization following COVID. He was born in Ponca City, Oklahoma, on January 24, 1929, to Lee Allen Yarbrough and Zeta Geneva Yarbrough and was reared in nearby small oil towns such as Wilson, Marlowe, Shawnee, and Uncas, Oklahoma, where his Grandparents lived on the land they had claimed during the Oklahoma Land Rush. In 1939, his father was transferred from Oklahoma to the newly opened oil fields in Southern Illinois as a gauger and they settled in Vandalia, IL. Roger graduated from Vandalia Junior High and High School where he played the French Horn in the school band. He attended the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana in the ROTC program, graduating with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in 1950. He met his future bride Dolores Graham, of Hillsboro, IL, in the summer between his Junior and Senior years, and they married in 1951. During their life together, they lived in Colorado Springs, CO, Arlington, VA, Vandalia, IL, and Mount Vernon, IL, settling finally in Champaign, IL in 1962. Roger and Dolores celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on June 1, 2021, before Dolores' passing on May 30, 2022.



Roger was an astute businessman and civic cornerstone in the Champaign-Urbana community. Roger found his niche in the asphalt paving industry after returning home from his service as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers during the Korean War, where he worked with heavy machinery and road construction. Roger developed Tuberculosis post-discharge and spent several years recuperating in a TB Sanatorium and at home in Vandalia, IL where he eventually worked as the Fayette County Road Engineer. In 1962, he took a job with Parro Construction as their chief engineer in Urbana, IL. Roger worked for Parro Construction until the owner was killed in a small plane crash in April 1966, and subsequently, along with his partners, was able to buy Parro Construction from Parro's widow. The new company was called University Asphalt, which became very successful, with Roger as its President and General Manager, and built many of the interstates, roads, and parking lots in Central Illinois. To vertically integrate this paving company, Roger created related, innovative subsidiaries to support University Asphalt's operations: Mid-America Sand and Gravel Company, Emulsicoat, Inc., and T&C Trucking Company. Along the way, University Asphalt acquired Danville Asphalt and merged the organizations into APCON Corporation, which then ran horizontally integrated divisions

known as University Construction Company and Danville Construction Company. Roger was President of APCON, University Construction, Danville Construction, and its subsidiaries, and he maintained these positions until he sold his financial interests in the corporations and retired in late 1997.

One of the things that made Roger successful was his desire to understand how things worked and how to make them better, a trait he maintained until his last days. This desire for innovation led him to join national trade organizations, including the National Asphalt Pavement Association (NAPA) where he served as Chairman of the Board in 1984 and from 1994 – 1996 was Chairman of the NAPA Research and Education Foundation which created the National Center for Asphalt Technology at Auburn University. Roger was named NAPA's Man of the Year in 1997, was thereafter inducted into the NAPA's Hall of Fame, and became a NAPA lifetime member. Roger was also an active member in the Illinois Asphalt Pavement Association, the Associated General Contractors (AGC) of Illinois, and the Strategic Highway Research Program (SHRP) which was part of the National Research Council for the U.S. Department of Transportation. Roger served on the Executive Committee and the Expert Task Group of SHRP for many years until his retirement. As part of these groups, Roger helped to revolutionize pavement standards in the United States. Roger was involved in researching and writing white papers that were used internationally, including speaking before Congressional committees to help secure funding for innovation in asphalt paving. He did not just talk about innovation – he also invented new techniques in paving that are still used today. Roger created new methods for recycling used pavement from construction repaving projects, so that it could be crushed and used as a component in new roads. He developed methods for collecting and recycling used oil materials for use in road construction projects. Roger began using sulphur as the binder in industrial concrete which made it acid resistant and then developed a method of installing that sulphur concrete material into horizontal and vertical surfaces, creating a new way for factories dealing with acidic materials to prolong their infrastructure. For this, Roger was issued a U.S. Patent on May 21, 1986, and created a new company called Sulcon, Inc., to market this product and methodology across the U.S.

Many charitable organizations were recipients of Roger and Dolores' generosity during their lives. They were supporters of the performing arts, including serving as Co-Chairs of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts Advisory Board, and both were active in Illinois Opera Enthusiasts, The Chicago Lyric Opera, and the Metropolitan Opera. They supported local schools and were supporters and fans of the Fighting Illini, holding season tickets for Football and Basketball. Roger and Dolores joined St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Urbana in the 1960's and were active in building the current church on Philo Road. In later years, both were active in and attended Grace Lutheran Church in Champaign. The Roger and Dolores Yarbrough Foundation supported the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Boys and Girls Club of Champaign-Urbana,

Empty Tomb Ministries, Kogodus Ministries, Phi Beta Chi Sorority, and countless others over many years. Whenever anyone had a need, Roger and Dolores were willing to help with their time and resources.

One of Roger's favorite past-times was traveling, especially with his family. In the early years, the family spent many happy days camping and boating with friends. Later in life, Roger and Dolores traveled on the QE2, went on safari in Eastern Africa, played golf in Scotland, and explored Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, and Antarctica on cruise ships, trains, and airplanes. Roger was an excellent golfer, shooting two hole-in-ones in his lifetime, almost 50 years apart. Roger and Dolores were members of the Vandalia Country Club in the 1950s -1960s and they joined the Champaign Country Club in the mid-1960s where Roger served as a President of the Club and was a member for over 50 years, playing countless rounds of golf. Roger enjoyed friends from all over the world, including business colleagues from the paving business worldwide, University of Illinois Engineering School professors and foreign exchange students from Pakistan, Austria, and China, friends of his children, friends from church, and lots of people he just happened to meet along the way.

In January 2023, following Dolores' death, Roger (along with his cat, Graham) moved to Assisted Living in Carmel, Indiana. This truly gave him a "new lease on life", and Roger got to enjoy being a Grandpa -- after having spent most of the prior 16 years caring for Dolores following her stroke -- and was able to spend lots of quality time with his grandchildren and attend their activities. Roger gained many new friends -- who all loved to hear him tell stories about his life during meals, physical therapy, and social/musical activities at the assisted living facilities. When asked about his goals Roger would say that he wanted to "go for broke" and live to be "one hundred".

Roger leaves behind three children: Michelle Yarbrough (Jackie) of White Heath, IL, Lee Yarbrough (Robin Yamashiro) of Honolulu, HI, and Amy Cuomo (Mario) of Carmel, IN, as well as Amy's 15-year-old triplets Elena Cuomo, Caterina Cuomo, and Mario Cuomo III.



**Grace Lutheran Church**  
Champaign, Illinois