



Almore Kenneth Mathsen

September 24, 1928 - February 18, 2014

Almore Kenneth Mathsen, 85, known to all his friends as “Matt”, of Spring Grove, Minnesota, died peacefully at the Tweeten Lutheran Healthcare in Spring Grove, on Feb. 18, 2014.

Matt was born on September 24, 1928, to Albin and Hilda (Hendrickson) Mathsen on the family farm outside Alvarado, Minnesota, in the agriculturally rich Red River Valley, the fourth of five children. He was baptized on October 21, 1928, at Kongsvinger Lutheran Church. He grew up during the difficult times of The Great Depression and the Second World War and graduated from Alvarado High School in 1946.

Matt’s boyhood dream was to be a singer. He sang solos in church as a young boy. In high school he organized and sang in a male quartet. After graduation he went to Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, where he studied voice and choral music. He sang in the Concordia concert choir under the direction of Paul. J. Christiansen. This was to be a decisive experience in determining Matt’s life-long vocation as a music teacher and choral director. He traveled with the choir on their first concert tour of Norway in 1949. He graduated from Concordia in 1950 with a Bachelor of Music degree

Matt’s first teaching position was in Havre, Montana. He taught general music and was the director of junior and senior high choral music from 1950 to 1958.

He was also involved in the life of First Lutheran Church, where he directed the choir and taught confirmation. It was during this time that he met his future wife, Vivien Knudsvig, who was a former voice student of Matt's. They were married at First Lutheran Church on June 6, 1954.

After struggling with the call to the ordained ministry, Matt decided that his vocation was in choral music. In 1958 he moved with his wife, Vivien, two little children and a third one on the way to Spring Grove, Minnesota. Matt taught general music and voice and directed the junior and senior high choirs in the Spring Grove public school system from 1958 to his retirement in 1993. He was also a release time religious instructor, lay assistant minister and choirmaster at Trinity Lutheran Church in Spring Grove from 1958 to 2008, at which time he was recognized for fifty years of faithful service to the church.

Matt loved the church. He loved his wife and family. He loved choral conducting. He loved teaching. He loved his students. He taught generations of students the joy of music and singing. He was also concerned that young people be instructed and formed in the Christian faith and was committed to the ministry of Christian education.

Matt got what he wanted out of his students and choirs. He could be a tough task master. He enjoyed a lively argument and was also known for his mischievous sense of humor. He spent much of his free time working on his hobby farm. He enjoyed time spent with his children and grandchildren. He considered himself richly blessed by God and lived his life with a deep sense of gratitude.

Matt is survived by his beloved wife of 59 years, Vivien Mathsen, of Spring Grove; five children, Rev. Eric (Rita) Mathsen of White Plains, New York, Kari Harrisville of Richfield, Minnesota, Rev. Luther (Roberta) Mathsen of Kenyon, Minnesota, Paul (Sandy) Mathsen of San Antonio, Texas, and Peter (Jeanelle)

Mathsen of St. Paul, Minnesota; 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchildren, and one sibling, Opal (Charles) Fisher of Annandale, Minnesota.

He is preceded in death by two sisters, Helen Raymer and Evelyn Hass and a brother, Benneth Mathsen.

Vivien Mathsen and family wish to express their sincerest gratitude to the pastors and members of Trinity Lutheran Church, to all our friends in the Spring Grove community and to the staff of Tweeten Lutheran Healthcare Center for the support, love and compassion shown to Matt and the family during his last years.

Cemetery Details

Trinity Lutheran Cemetery

Hwy 44
Spring Grove, MN 55974

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **24.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Trinity Lutheran Church
203 E. Main St.
Spring Grove, MN 55974
trinity@springgrove.coop

Service

FEB **25.** 11:00 AM (CT)

Trinity Lutheran Church
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Spring Grove, MN 55974