



Larkin Andrew Yandell

December 13, 1927 - January 7, 2021

Larkin A. Yandell left his earthly body on the morning of January 7, 2021 and entered into the long-awaited presence of his redeemer and friend, Jesus Christ.

Born on December 13, 1927, in Latimer County of southeastern Oklahoma, he was the twelfth and final child of his parents, Joseph Elza ("Elzie") and Effie Yandell.

While serving in the Navy in the late 1940s, Larkin, known by many as L.A., was faced with a decision that would determine the course of the rest of his life. He could choose to fit in with the other sailors or devote himself to following the teachings of Jesus. Larkin chose to devote his life to the King of Heaven and Earth.

After his service in the Navy ended, Larkin was ordained as a minister of the good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. He would go on to pastor three churches in Oklahoma and three more churches in California, serving and impacting the lives of countless others for nearly 70 years. He never led a mega-church of thousands. He never wrote a bestseller and never hosted a highly rated television show. Like most small church pastors, he wore a lot of different hats: janitor, groundskeeper, secretary, construction worker/supervisor, bus driver, and many more. In all of it, he faithfully sought

to know and do what is in the best interests of others, often at his own expense.

Larkin married the love of his life, Wilmatine, and over 49 years of marriage they nurtured and promoted an environment where being a part of their family was not reserved for the seven children who belonged by birth or marriage, or the 13 grandchildren and 19 great-grandchildren. Belonging to the family was extended to many who adopted Larkin and Wilmatine as their spiritual parents or grandparents. Larkin's love and generosity seemed boundless.

Before macular degeneration took much of his vision, Larkin loved to fish, garden, play dominoes, and swap stories. In a room of people, he was usually the one with the biggest smile.

He lived the life of a humble man who aspired to walk with the limitless, all-powerful God one day at a time. Valiant-for-Truth's message to his friends in John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress would have been Larkin's message to all:

"I am going to my Father's. Even though I arrived here with great difficulty, I don't regret any of the trouble I had to live through to get here. I give my sword to the one who follows me in my pilgrimage, and my courage and skill to the one who can get it. My marks and scars I carry with me as a witness that I have fought His battles and now He will be my rewarder. Death, where is your sting? Grave, where is your victory?"

A service to honor the life of Larkin will be announced and held later in 2021.

Previous Events

Memorial

MAR 6. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (PT)

Demaree Free Will Baptist Chuech
3011 N. Demaree Street
Visalia, CA 93291

Tribute Wall



“ *Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel created a Tribute Video in memory of Larkin Andrew Yandell*



Salser & Dillard Funeral Chapel - January 25, 2021 at 05:12 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Larkin Andrew Yandell.*



March 05, 2021 at 10:47 AM

SD

“ I just found out that Pastor Yandell had passed back in January. I grew up at Pastor Yandell and Winnie's church. I'm 43 now and still have several early memories of being at Demaree Free Will Baptist Church. Sitting in the pew, next to my grandma, digging through her purse, hopeful I'd find a starlight mint in the very bottom if I looked hard enough. Pastor Yandell's sermon, in full swing, all the kids fidgeting with restlessness but those gripped by his emotion-filled words, always looking up at him, matching the tears in his eyes with their own, a smile on their face and nodding slowly in agreement with him.

As a kid, I always said that I wanted to be a teacher. Pastor knew that and he'd talk to me about it; telling me that anything was possible and would tell me that he could feel that I would be a great teacher. Years and years later, I had moved on with my life, moved away and didn't return for some time. I needed to return home for an emergency surgery for my mom that her doctors and surgeon had expected she wouldn't survive. I walked in to the area where family had gathered to say their potential last goodbyes to mom and out of nowhere, I hear a familiar voice saying "Hey Teach". I still don't know how he remembered me, let alone my childhood's 'dream job'. It had been about 10 years since I'd last seen him. But my heart instantly melted all the same.

Our family had a rough go with life. All of us kids, suffered at the decisions of our parents. Pastor Yandell would often go out of his way to come and council our mom, he would bring groceries and (not sure exactly how to say it) be a witness with my mom. He had been there multiple times, early in the morning and/or late into the wee hours past midnight...there he would sit with my mom as she cried and they would pray together, holding hands and asking for help for my mom to free herself from the troubles that cause her so much pain and sorrow. When our parents were 'unable' to get us to church...pastor would drive well out of his way to come pick us up so at least us kids could go to church.

There are so many memories that my elders would describe to me that range from my walking down the aisle in nothing but a diaper on my butt, a bottle in my mouth and a blankie in my hand...all the way to my being an older teen and then an adult, that Pastor Yandell was a part of. I will truly miss knowing he's always there if/when we need him. I'm grateful to have known and been loved by him. Rest in peace Pastor. I'll always love you.

*-Spring Dyer
springdyer@msn.com
Residing now, in Hillsboro Oregon*

Spring Dyer - February 19, 2021 at 01:36 PM

WY

“ I will miss cousin L.A....even though he was my husband's cuz, we all enjoyed each other's company over 50 years when we got to be together. The time we got to share with them in Calif. was precious...then on visits to our home on his way to visit his near kindred. His infectious laugh when he and my husb. were together is a memory in itself. They could always find that happiness. I know he is resting in God's everlasting arms today...meeting kindred and all those he's worked with and helped along his life's journey is making him joyous. Love and miss you, L.A. Praying for those left behind to mourn his passing. Love all of you.

Winnie Yandell - January 22, 2021 at 10:20 AM

KC

“ Arlie & I loved our Pastor Yandell. Arlie first met Pastor after a break in at the Church .Arlie was a salesman for Matson Alarm. Pastor called the owners who just happened to be his nephews. Arlie was sent out to set up an Alarm system in the Church. He did not do the install, just the plans. Arlie fell in love with Pastor & the Church. We moved away for 5 yrs.& when we came back to Visalia, of course we came right back to our Demaree Free Will Baptist. Church. We loved Pastor & Sister Winnie. They are wonderful people. Winnie was the perfect Pastor's wife. Always there to help her husband in their service for the Lord. Our beloved Pastor will be greatly missed.
Kathy Clift

Kathy Clift - January 22, 2021 at 03:12 AM

BW

“ I've been blessed to call Larkin (L.A.) my friend & brother in Christ for about 50 yrs. We've shared many a service together from local services to area revivals to State FWB meetings. There may have been times when we didn't quite see eye to eye, but that's just how families are. I'm sure he's rejoicing round the throne with those friends & family gone on before. Until that Glad Reunion Day he will be missed. Prayers for all the family during these difficult days of adjustment. Love in Christ.

Betty Lois Watson - January 19, 2021 at 11:08 PM

LM

“ Linda Martinez lit a candle in memory of Larkin Andrew Yandell



Linda Martinez - January 19, 2021 at 01:21 PM

LM

“ *I Love You Forevermore has Pastor held my hand to his Heart. Tears fell down our cheek's. No more words were spoken, I kissed his forehead s I had so many many times before. Knowing in my Heart that he would be going to Heaven and One of the Greatest Men I was honor to have in my life. I would not year his words again ! I love u my Girl. My love and prayers of Comfort to his Lovely Wife! And to his entire family! I thank each of you for letting me be a part of your family. You all our Blessing to so many.*

Linda Martinez - January 19, 2021 at 01:20 PM