

J. Fred Kauffman, a pastor and community builder, unexpectedly passed away from a heart attack on Tuesday, December 10, 2019. He was 71 years old. His son, Timothy, was with him at the time. Fred is survived by his wife, Minh; his brother, Don; his sons, Timothy and Tony; and daughter-in-law Nadia. He is predeceased by his brother Dennis.

Fred was born in Nebraska on March 16, 1948 to Earnest and Lois Kauffman. He grew up on a 20-acre farm in rural Beemer, NE, and attended Beemer Mennonite Church where his father was a preaching deacon. In 1973, he graduated from Goshen College in Goshen, Indiana and served with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Puerto Rico where he discovered a deep love for languages and cross-cultural work.

In 1976, he and Minh went to work with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Guatemala in a post-earthquake housing program for two years, in India in post-cyclone village reconstruction (1978-81), in Cambodia in the aftermath of the Khmer Rouge revolution (1981-85), and in Thailand serving post-war Vietnam (1989-94).

Fred and his family moved to Philadelphia in 1994 where he served as pastor at West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship for 11 years. He enjoyed learning about the context, languages, and cultures of the Bible and participating in the broad-based organizing group Philadelphia Interfaith Action. Perhaps his favorite pastoral duty was building relationships through one-on-one meetings with a wide range of people, both in and outside of the church.

Fred resigned from the pastorate in 2005 and began to serve as Philadelphia Program Coordinator for MCC East Coast. He also gave much time to the *Kingdom Builders Anabaptist Network of Greater Philadelphia* and *Heeding God's Call*, a faith-based movement to prevent gun violence. In 2014, he became interim pastor of Methacton Mennonite Church in Norristown, PA for two years. After retirement Fred was a vital part of Crossroads Community Center where he served on the board.

Fred found joy in woodworking, baking bread, and watching his beloved Phillies (win or lose).

His faith was the driving force in his life, connecting him to people from every corner of the globe. In Fred's words:

The Bible is life-giving, surprising, always revealing deeper mysteries about God, life, and meaning. The context and culture in which Scriptures were written are vastly different than ours, but the human nature of people in the stories is the same as ours. We can learn so much from their very human struggles to make sense of God's call to them, including their wrong turns and mistakes. And as we do, we learn about God's grace and God's kingdom.

Services will be held on Tuesday, December 17, 2019

White Rock Baptist Church
5240 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19139

Viewing - 2:45pm

Memorial Service - 3:45pm

Reverend Leonard Dow will officiate.

Fellowship meal will immediately follow at the church.

Street parking is limited, please plan according.

The Kauffman family requests that any memorial donations be made in Fred's honor to
Crossroads Community Center, 2916 North 6th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19133
Please indicate "Kauffman Memorial Fund" in the memo line.