



James Robert Ensign

March 22, 1928 - February 3, 2018

If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea;
Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Psalm
139: 9-10

February 3, 2018 at the age of 89, James Robert Ensign rose on the wings of the morning to dwell at the right hand of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As an ordained Lutheran minister, Bob's Christian faith was the bedrock of his life, and he centered all he did on his belief in God's promises of grace and forgiveness, redemption and everlasting life.

He is survived by Mary, his loving wife of 68 years; daughters Elizabeth (Barry) Latoszewski of Vermontville, Mary Copping of Whitehall, Sarah (Tom) Gruber of Rockford, Laura (Brad) Beyer of Onsted; and his son Paul (Terry) Ensign of Blanco Texas; along with many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews. He is also survived by his older brother Earl (Katherine) Ensign of Toledo, and brother-in-law Carl (Joyce) Satre of Syracuse Indiana. Bob was born March 22, 1928 in Toledo, Ohio, the son of Earl Scott Ensign and Grace Borgelt Ensign. He graduated from DeVilbiss High School in 1946, attended the University of Toledo, and enlisted in the United States Air Force. He and his dear "Marybelle" were married by her father, the Rev. W. Carl Satre on April 14, 1950 at Augsburg Lutheran Church in Toledo. He worked as a journeyman pattern maker for his father at the Ensign Foundry in Toledo for several years. They moved to Springfield Ohio where he enrolled at Wittenberg University, and the Hamma School of Divinity. In May 1961 he was

ordained as a Lutheran minister (ULCA/LCA). He served as pastor of Bethel Lutheran Church, Springfield, Ohio; All Saints Lutheran Church, Worthington, Ohio; and Christ Lutheran Church, Monroe, MI. A talented photographer, he later joined the La-Z-Boy Chair Company in Monroe as head of commercial photography and cinematography.

In 1988 Bob and Mary moved to Cedarville, Michigan and became faithful members of Bethel Lutheran Church. A man of boundless curiosity, Bob used retirement to pursue his many interests as a licensed pilot with an instructor rating, a HAM radio enthusiast, photographer, sailor, and serious amateur astronomer. A skilled woodworker, he crafted numerous wooden boats including a 24-ft twin masted "Sharpie" sailboat, which he christened "Wings of Morning". In 2002, at 74, he sailed this boat solo on Lake Huron in a roundtrip east from Cedarville to circumnavigate Drummond Island.

The Ensigns moved to Charlotte, Michigan in 2004 to be closer to their children and found a welcoming family at First Lutheran Church in Charlotte. Bob continued his studies in astronomy and enjoyed many nights of stargazing from his backyard. Bob and Mary became residents of Cambrian Assisted Living, Tecumseh, MI in 2015 with a church home at Grace Lutheran. They returned to Charlotte in 2017 as residents of the Eaton County Health and Rehabilitation Services. The family wishes to thank the staff at ECHRS and Sparrow Hospital for their compassionate care. We rejoice in Bob's triumph over death, and say with the Apostle Paul: "Thanks Be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ who gives us the victory!"

Funeral services will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 8, 2018 at First Lutheran Church of Charlotte with Rev. Timothy Olson officiating.

Visitation will be from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. at the church, just prior to the service.

Interment will take place in Kalamo Hillside Cemetery. Memorial contributions may be made to First Lutheran Church of Charlotte. Friends and family are encouraged to share memories of Bob on his Tribute Page at www.PrayFuneral.com. The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte.

Cemetery Details

Kalamo Township Cemetery

Ionia Road
Vermontville, MI 49096

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 8. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

First Lutheran Church
550 E. Shepherd St.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Funeral Ceremony

FEB 8. 2:00 PM (ET)

First Lutheran Church
550 E. Shepherd St.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Tribute Wall

MK

“ I have many happy memories of Pastor Ensign and Mary when they were at Christ Lutheran in Monroe. I send my love and prayers.
Marilyn Kaiser

Marilyn Kaiser - February 09, 2018 at 11:48 PM

KP

“ Many thoughts and prayers to Pastor Ensigns passing. He helped our family during many difficult times, that just seemed to make it all easier. He always had the right thing to say at the right time. He always would make you feel better and at ease. I do remember the LAMP program and if I remember correctly we had coin collection boxes in Sunday School to help the program. He also asked me to make a map of Michigan for one of his films and I felt so honored to do it for him. Yes I did see it in the film. Please know that many are thinking of you and share in your grief. He certainly had a profound impact on myself and family.
*Most sincerely,
Kathy Pearch*

Kathleen Pearch - February 08, 2018 at 07:45 PM

YL

“ Your Friends at Grace Lutheran purchased the Sapphire Skies Bouquet for the family of James Robert Ensign.



Your Friends at Grace Lutheran - February 08, 2018 at 09:09 AM

DB

“ Although I never had the opportunity to meet Pastor Ensign, as one of the pastors who followed him at Christ Lutheran in Monroe, I heard many stories and memories that clearly showed that he was a minister of the gospel both professionally and personally, and a dear friend to many. His ministry laid a foundation that the rest of us benefited from. My prayers are with the family during this time of grief. Light perpetual shines on Pastor Ensign.

Pastor Dennis Bux

Dennis Bux - February 08, 2018 at 06:56 AM

MM

“ My most heartfelt sympathies to all of you at the loss of father and husband. I will always recall his kindness to my mother when she learned of her mother's passing after church, even offering to fly to Ludington to do the service. Other memories that linger are my first year of confirmation classes with him, and going up in the LAMP airplane with him at the controls. He is truly an unforgettable person. Well done, good and faithful servant.

*With much love,
Marjorie Monhollen*

Marjorie Monhollen - February 08, 2018 at 02:55 AM

JO

“ We were so sorry to hear of the passing of Pastor Ensign, he was a very special person to us. He married us 43 years ago and has been in our thoughts and prayers through the years.

Jere and Andrea Oetjens

Jere Oetjens - February 07, 2018 at 06:40 PM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of James Robert Ensign.*



February 07, 2018 at 06:19 PM



“ *I'm sure it was a day of joy when Pastor Ensign arrived on God's doorstep. What a wonderful man. I had the honor of visiting with him last summer. I had the chance to say thank you to a man that helped mold me at a very young age into the man I am today, spiritually and professionally. To the Ensign family, thank you for sharing this wonderful man. I will keep all of you in my prayers.*
David Humbarger

David Humbarger - February 07, 2018 at 01:44 PM



“ *He was a faithful servant to God and to his congregation at Christ Lutheran Church in Monroe.....I enjoyed every sermon he ever gave and enjoyed watching his family grow from small children into adulthood. May he rest in peace.*

Beth Ann Peltier Choate

Beth Ann Peltier Choate - February 07, 2018 at 11:36 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of James Robert Ensign.*



February 07, 2018 at 07:56 AM



“ *Denny & Carol Kennedy purchased the America the Beautiful for the family of James Robert Ensign.*



Denny & Carol Kennedy - February 06, 2018 at 04:09 PM



“ *He was everything a kid could want in a Grandpa! He spent so much quality time with us. Playing cards and going on boat rides are my favorite memories with him. Thanks Grandpa for everything you did for us!*

Carly Glanzman - February 06, 2018 at 07:15 AM



“ *Liz, We are thinking of you, your sisters, brother, and especially your mom, Mary, as you savor the memory of the full and special life of your father. I cherish my last visit with him in January. All our best. Love always, Dick and Sharon*

Richard Bruner - February 05, 2018 at 02:38 PM

FK

“ Liz, you and your entire family are in our thoughts and prayers as you celebrate the wonderful life of your father. Peace and Love always. Fred and Karen

Fred Kayne - February 05, 2018 at 11:10 AM

IG

A very dear man. He will be missed. Love and prayers to the family. Iris

Iris Gage - February 06, 2018 at 10:48 AM

GO

From the entire Oetjens family, our thoughts and prayers are with all of you. I think the fondest memory is when Christ Lutheran donated the plane to LAMP. Pastor, along with Dad, Todd and Helen Kelso went to Canada to present the plane. Dad and Todd often talked about the experience. It had a major impact on Todd's life. Again, may God bless all of you....Geof Oetjens

Geof Oetjens - February 07, 2018 at 06:58 AM



My thoughts and prayers are with you all. He was an important part of my faith journey growing up and I learned a lot during my confirmation years with him. He was a comfort and support to my family during the time my young brother was losing his battle with cancer. Christ Lutheran was blessed to have such a wonderful pastor.

Barbara Mushung Wood

Barbara Wood - February 07, 2018 at 11:45 AM

Loyd Cords

“ Loyd Cords lit a candle in memory of James Robert Ensign



Loyd Cords - February 05, 2018 at 07:33 AM