



Raymond Larry Shelton

January 10, 1942 - January 22, 2020

Raymond "Larry" Shelton, 78, passed away peacefully on January 22, 2020. Larry was a beloved son, husband, father, proud grandfather, friend, and scholar. In 1995, he was blessed with the gift of a new heart which gave him nearly 25 more years of life. Our family will be forever grateful to the young donor and his family.

Larry was born to Reverend Raymond Samuel Shelton & Viola Hoots Shelton in Hooper's Creek, North Carolina on January 10, 1942. His father was a preacher in the Pilgrim Holiness Tradition and his mother was a teacher and an ordained deaconess in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Larry grew up immersed in the church and later became an ordained elder in the Free Methodist Church. He always felt a strong calling to serve and minister to others.

From an early age, Larry was a scholar, graduating as valedictorian from Pfeiffer College in 1964 with a Bachelor of Arts in English. He then continued his studies at Asbury Seminary, completing his Master of Divinity (M. Div.) in 1967 and his Master of Theology (Th.M.) in 1968. Finally, in 1974, he earned his Doctor of Theology (Th.D.) from Fuller Theological Seminary.

Larry served for 45 years in undergraduate and graduate education at several Christian colleges and universities. He was honored to have taught at Azusa

Pacific University, John Wesley College, Seattle Pacific University, and Fuller Theological Seminary (Seattle Extension). In 2013, Larry retired as the Richard B. Parker Professor of Wesleyan Theology at George Fox Evangelical Seminary (now Portland Seminary) and was honored with emeritus professor status.

Upon retirement, Larry kept very active in his church community. He served as Pastor of Ministry and Leadership Development at Kessid Church. Larry's time at Kessid was very meaningful and rewarding. He loved watching the church grow and prosper while supporting its pastors, staff, and the congregation.

Larry was blessed with a loving family. He married his lifetime partner Evangeline (Vangie) Deal, on August 25, 1967 in Glendora, California. Over the course of their marriage, they had the unique opportunity to work in ministry together. Larry would often tell stories of working alongside Vangie as a youth pastor in the late 1960s and how those were some of the best times of their lives.

Larry and Vangie's two daughters, Annalisa and Alison, have many fond memories of camping and fishing adventures with their dad. He was a dedicated 4-H dad who spent countless hours with them in the barn and on trail rides.

As an avid outdoorsman, Larry instilled a love of nature in his grandchildren. He and his grandson, Kolya, spent many afternoons hiking and whittling with their pocketknives. Larry also enjoyed attending the grandchildren's sporting events. From gymnastics and wrestling meets to dance recitals and regattas, Larry loved cheering from the sidelines.

During his life Larry made an impact on many through his professorship and ministry. He loved Jesus deeply and was a true servant leader. His life was

incredibly rich and full, and his insight and wisdom were gifts to many. Larry will be missed greatly by friends and family who will continue to carry on his legacy.

We would like to acknowledge and express our sincere gratitude to Larry's amazing medical teams whose care added decades to his life. He was blessed to receive care from Dr. Vilhauer at The Vancouver Clinic, PeaceHealth Hospice, and the transplant teams at the University of Washington, OHSU, and Providence.

He is survived by Vangie, his wife of 52 years, his daughters Annalisa and Alison, his sons-in-law Martin and Dima, and his grandchildren Kolya, Sasha, Kaia, and Caden.

A private family interment was held at Evergreen Memorial Gardens Cemetery on January 31, 2020. Larry's memorial service will be held at 2:00 PM on February 29, 2020 at East Vancouver Community Church (12415 SE 7th St., Vancouver, WA 98683). All are welcome as we celebrate Larry and his incredible life.

Tribute Wall



“ 0 file added to the tribute wall

Evergreen Memorial Gardens - July 03, 2025 at 05:11 PM

SB

“ *Larry and I met when we were 18 years old. I just today (7/4/20) learned of his passing. He and my husband had been friends since they were kids. I always thought it was amazing that we all ended up at George Fox University/Seminary. I always respected his spiritual dedication and scholarship. My condolences to Vangie and the children and grandchildren. You have memories of a very special man.*

Shari Bowman - July 04, 2020 at 12:00 AM

SB

“ *Peace, Prayers and Blessings. What a lovely way to remember Larry.*

Shari Bowman - July 04, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JS

“ *Down to earth and brilliant...What a combination. Larry was a man of God who deeply loved his family and his friends. His legacy will reach to next generations. I was privileged to be a small part of his world.*

Joyce A Smith - April 25, 2020 at 12:00 AM

AL

“ *Raymond Larry Shelton*

Alison - April 23, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JM

“ Larry and his wife Vangie, became good friends of mine, when I attended First Free Methodist in Seattle. Washington, many years ago! I saw Larry as a good person, and truly a man of God. He helped me with several things along life's way! He shared true Christianity with me and others. My condolences to his family at this time of loss. Jean Marchand

Jean Marchand - March 20, 2020 at 12:00 AM

DG

“ Larry was one of my first deep introductions to Wesleyan Theology and even Free Methodist Polity while he was at George Fox. We connected as we chatted about Leonard Ravenhill (one of my spiritual dads) and chatted through some of Larry's writings. He is an amazing man of God. One who will be missed on this side of eternity. A man who truly spoke the truth in love. No doubt he is in the presence of the LORD :)

Dan Goddard - February 21, 2020 at 12:00 AM

ML

“ Larry was my youth pastor at First Wesleyan Church in High Point, NC in the 70's. My memories of he and Vangie are some of the best of my teen life. They invested so much in us - time-wise and spiritually. They both set a firm foundation for my faith that has carried me through life. Like John, I think it was Larry that baptized me at High Rock Lake.

Michelle Ledbetter - February 13, 2020 at 12:00 AM

JV

“ Larry was one of the most influential people in my life. He was my youth pastor in High Point, NC in the 1970's. He helped me understand most clearly what it meant to authentically follow Christ. I placed my faith in Christ during the days he served as my youth pastor, while we were having a youth retreat at Victory Mountain Camp. He baptized me on a cold autumn day in a very cold High Rock Lake in NC. Larry accompanied our youth music group on our first mission trip to the islands of Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago in the summer of 1976. I will forever cherish those days and forever be grateful for the influence of Larry Shelton on my life! God bless his memory.

John Vernon - February 12, 2020 at 12:00 AM