



Rev. Henry Victor Friesen

September 3, 1935 - September 11, 2020

With profound sadness our family announces the death of Henry Victor Friesen, on September 11th, 2020 in the High River Hospital. With family members present he was surrounded by love.

Henry was born September 3, 1935 in a log cabin in Fitzmaurice, SK under the watchful eye of Mrs. Martens, the local midwife. He was the fourth of seven children born to Gerhard and Suzie (Stobbe) Friesen. He was a child of the prairies who loved the land, the smell of hay and the feel of the prairie wind. As a child he would run for hours over the prairie landscape, snapping the reins of a make-belief team of horses. It was from these humble beginnings that Henry grew into the person we all knew and valued. Henry's children remember delightful stories from his childhood. He loved to tell the tale of his horse Major who would startle himself awake and take off galloping. Another is a rebellious, high stakes escape from the one-room school during a winter blizzard after being told by the teacher to hunker down and wait it out. Henry slipped out to the barn and hitched up the team. He'd instructed his two younger sisters to slip into their coats and await his signal. They made their getaway across the driving wind & snow-covered fields, all the way back home. Their trusty horses knew the way by memory. When his mother was asked to describe in one word, Henry as a child, she replied with a twinkle in her eye, "mischievous".

Henry was a lifelong learner. He attended RJC (Rosthern SK), CMBC (Winnipeg MB), Bethel College (Newton KS), Anabaptist Mennonite Seminary (Elkhart IN) and the Lutheran Seminary at the U of Saskatchewan where he got his Master of Divinity. Dad also studied Clinical Pastoral Care at Prairie View Mental Health Centre (Newton) and later Foothills Hospital (Calgary).

It was at CMBC Henry met Louise (Peters) and they married in 1961. Together they raised four rambunctious and curious children who were born at various stops in Dad's education and early ministry journey. Henry began his career as a pastor at the Altona Mennonite church in Manitoba where he was ordained as a minister on June 20th, 1965.

In the late '80's Henry's marriage ended, and his life took a new direction. He moved to Calgary for the second part of his Clinical Pastoral Care training and then accepted a position in Halifax at the Izaak Walton Killam (IWK) Children's Hospital. His experience there was profound, working with the children and their families. He said at the time, the children had taught him much about life. During this time, his thoughts repeatedly returned to a caring nurse he had met in Calgary. Sarah Milligan and Dad married in 1991 and she joined him in Halifax where they created a decade of incredible memories.

Henry and Sarah moved from Halifax to High River in 2001 where he accepted a position as Hospital Chaplain and made this lovely town their home. He remained there for three years.

There was one sojourn away from High River for a 3-year term at the United Church in Kimberley, BC. It was during this time that he completed the admission steps for entering clergy in affiliation with the United Church (2007). During those years, they hosted different family groupings on ski trips. Those are precious memories for the grandkids.

The Clinical Pastoral Care training and their decade in the Maritimes led Henry to find a new calling in grief counselling. Caring for those in the deepest throes of despair and supporting patients, family and staff alike was what he loved to do. Because of this experience, he and Vi Sharpe saw a need to form the High River Solace Grief Group which has continued to this day.

Henry made an effort to retire three separate times. After returning to High River a second time, Henry “semi-retired” took on a series of part-time commissions at nearby churches. He ministered to congregations in Strathmore, Arrowwood, Blackie, Cayley, Claresholm, Cochrane, Ft. Macleod, Gladys Ridge, Granum, Nanton, Stavey, Turner Valley & Vulcan.

Henry was a man of God but also a man of the people. He served at many weddings, funerals, baptisms and as a grief counsellor. He gave sermons, spiritual guidance and truly helped humankind as a peacemaker, believing in nonviolence and conflict resolution.

Henry kept a large library and read voraciously. He loved new ideas and saw them as refreshing and challenging, which often produced very interesting discussions.

He had a quick, easy and sometimes wicked sense of humour and a gift to turn a phrase. Henry loved to tell and listen to a good story. He was always ready to listen and talk with a neighbor, family member, friend or congregational member in need, often doing this over a cup of coffee.

The meaning of his life’s work was revealed through the connection and support we recently received from Chaplain Darrin and Reverend David Robertson. We are truly grateful for their guidance, care and willingness to laugh through the tears and just be there for us.

Henry is survived by his wife Sarah, his children Tim (Jackie); Kirsten (Jean-Francois); Roy; Dirk (Dennis) and their mother Louise; Grandchildren Simon, Brodie, Gabrielle, Sydney (Carter), Taylor, Kassia and Ruby. In addition, Henry had just become a great-grandfather to London in May. He never met her but was delighted with photos and videos. He is also survived by step-sons Blair and Jim.

In addition, Henry is survived by his brother Art (Hilda); sister Erna (Pete) and sister Louise. There are also dozens of nieces and nephews and other extended family who loved Uncle Henry and are grieving with us.

Henry was predeceased by his parents Gerhard and Suzie (Stobbe), brothers Victor and Rudy and sister Erica and brothers-in-law John and Jim.

Thanks to the wonderful team of health professionals at the High River Hospital and the Spiritual Care Team that helped all of us through this journey.

In lieu of flowers, donations in honour of Henry's life can be made to the Solace Grief Support Society of High River (www.solacegriefsupport.com) or The Food Grains Bank (www.foodgrainsbank.ca).

Caring for the family is Lyle Reeves Funerals of High River (Craig Snodgrass)
403.652.4242

Tribute Wall

GD

“ I think of "Hatch" often. Sitting just behind and to the right of me in Dr. Lorey's Grade 11 basement classroom at RJC, or next to me as the best man at our wedding a few years later in Gretna. He was fun to be with, but also serious, as at the time when we together were doing some weeding. I think it was at the First Mennonite Church in Saskatoon that he remarked as we uprooted the numerous purslane plants. "Wherever there are Mennonites, there is 'Fatte Hahn.'" It was an observation about how, amid all our blessings, we also have our tribulations to deal with.

George Dyck, North Newton, Kansas -- October 26, 2021

George Dyck - October 26, 2021 at 08:02 AM

KM

“ Kate Mahon lit a candle in memory of Rev. Henry Victor Friesen



Kate Mahon - October 21, 2021 at 09:24 PM

MM

“ Mark and I so enjoyed Henry's sense of humour and teasing! One could feel the spiritual calmness surrounding him. We will miss his presence. Our deepest condolences to you Sarah and the family. May you find strength and comfort through God, your memories, family and friends. Hugs, Mark & Marlene Podwysocki

Marlene Mark - September 29, 2020 at 11:20 AM

LL

“ *Deepest condolences from our family to yours
Leah & Ryan Lee*



Leah Lee - September 24, 2020 at 12:38 AM

LL

“ *One of the happiest memories of our lives and Henry was there with us through it all. We even had him come to the rehearsal dinner ... He was a special and heartfelt man & will be missed dearly 💕 our deepest condolences.*



Leah Lee - September 24, 2020 at 12:37 AM

FG

“ *We are so sad to hear of Henry's passing. I always enjoyed having a little visit with Henry at coffee after service. We always talked about our bond as we were the only people from Eyebrow. His stories of home were wonderful and you could just hear the love of his family and home in his voice. We are thinking of you Sarah and of all the family at this time.
Frank and Myrna Gallagher*

Frank & Myrna Gallagher - September 23, 2020 at 10:25 PM

DH

“ It doesn't surprise me at all that there are so many great memories and stories about Henry. He was such a character! I'm glad we got to share some waffles and laughs during those June visits. My condolences.

Denise Hill - September 22, 2020 at 05:09 PM

CR

“ Henry was a good friend during CMBC days and for a period time after that. Then we lost connections during the various directions our lives took. The obit depicts so well the HV we knew. Now we wish that we could have one more extended visit with him. Peace and comfort to the family.

Cornel & Martha Rempel - September 22, 2020 at 10:55 AM

MG

“ My heart is with your heart at this sad time in your life Sarah. Fond memories of IWK days.

Marie Gallant - September 22, 2020 at 09:12 AM

BB

“ To Henry's family - like me, I know there will be so many people that knew Henry but did not know his family. I got to know Henry over the years that he was at our dental office and then again when my Dad came to live on the second floor at the High River Hospital. Henry was so good with my Dad and an encouragement to me always. Such a great sense of humour and such great faith. A wonderful combination! We hope you appreciate what a gift he was to so many. We will all miss him, but your family will miss him more. May your memories give you a smile and may God's comfort, peace and strength guide you through the coming days and weeks. Betty Bridgett

Betty Bridgett - September 21, 2020 at 02:39 PM

JG

“ So shocked to hear of Henry’s passing , Sarah. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this most difficult time. We so enjoyed Henry when he was our minister at Gladys United. We especially enjoyed the Sunday’s when you came along too Sarah ! Deepest sympathy also to your entire family. George and Judy

Judy Groeneveld - September 20, 2020 at 09:59 PM

JC

“ My condolences to you Sarah.I know that Henry was a wonderful husband, father and grandfather.His ministry did so much to make the world a better place. My thoughts and prayers are with you and family. Sincerely Jean Church (friend of L and K Wallace)

Jean Church - September 19, 2020 at 06:02 PM

AS

“ We have very fond memories of Henry. We met him at a time when we needed a compassionate, gentle caring person to help us through a grief process. He remained a dear and constant friend. We will certainly miss our phone chats and his great sense of humor. You have so many beautiful memories of Henry to help you through this, Sarah. Heaven has gained a very precious angel. Sending our love to you, Sarah and to your family.

Alvin and Dorothy Stark

Alvin Stark - September 18, 2020 at 08:23 PM

JS

“ Henry and I became very good friends when he was the Pastor at the IWK and remained good friends ever since. I will miss his quirky sense of humour. I will now have a Angel on my shoulder. My love to Sarah and all his family.

Jean Sherren

Jean Sherren - September 17, 2020 at 08:34 PM

JB

We have many memories of good times shared with the Friesen clan back in the 70's. Our sincere sympathies to Tim, Kirsten, Roy, Dirk and their extended families.

Jake & Betty Banman

Jake & Betty Banman - September 20, 2020 at 07:47 PM

MB

“ I have so many fond memories of when the Friesen family lived in Saskatoon on Trotter Crescent, and H.V. was the minister at Mount Royal Mennonite. He always had a smile and a joke for us kids when we were over. He will be greatly missed.

Michelle Banman - September 17, 2020 at 07:56 PM

KG

He loved engaging with the children and the youth at Mount Royal. Those were such great years at Mount Royal and it is where many of my dearest friends come from. Thanks for your kind words Michelle!

Kirsten Godbout - September 18, 2020 at 10:06 AM

KS

Michelle, ditto. HV was important as a mentor in my early faith. He was always fun to tease and be teased by. I am glad to have known him.

Kim (Braun) Schunn - September 22, 2020 at 12:55 AM

JE

“ Hi there,

I am so sorry to learn of Henry's passing.

I wanted to share that I have always thought of him through my years of marriage. He was so kind and helpful, and just wanted to support us for our wedding day and most importantly our marriage.

He visited with my husband and myself prior to our ceremony and I will never forget the kind words and the guidance he gave us for our life. I think of him often, especially when I feel frustrated with my husband:) His words often come back to me. He was a gift for us.

I am truly sorry and I wish you, his family ease in the next chapter of your life.

jessie - September 17, 2020 at 05:01 PM

TK

“ Sarah

Our deepest sympathy to you. We are so sorry to hear about Henry's passing. We first met Henry when we attended the United Church in High River. Henry was such a gentle, kind, friendly man. Seems like every time we were out and about in High River so was Henry. We so enjoyed running into him as he always had a witty remark. He will be missed.

Jake and Theresa Klassen

Theresa Klassen - September 17, 2020 at 04:50 PM

DR

“ Dear Sarah and family, I was so sorry to learn of Henry's death from Jean. What a beautiful picture of Henry, he looks just like I remember him when he was here in Halifax. My memories of Henry are how wonderful he was with parents and children when they were going through a very stressful time. His kindness and great sense of humor was really appreciated by many of us who worked with him at the I W K. My thoughts and prayers are with you as you cope with your loss, each in your own way. I hope, Sarah the memories you shared with Henry will give you some comfort in these difficult days.

*With Caring Thoughts
Donna Richards*

Donna Richards - September 17, 2020 at 03:31 PM

CC

“ To Sarah & Family, What kind, professional and witty man Henry was. I so enjoyed working with him at the Hospital and always knew that we would share a laugh when he popped his head in the Foundation office when he was passing by. Sending my deepest condolences and wishing you comfort and strength. Cathy

Cathy Couey - September 17, 2020 at 01:58 PM

CM

“ So very sorry to hear this news. I met Henry about five years through his work with people going through grief. He was a gentle, thoughtful and compassionate man. This is truly a great loss to many communities within our community and beyond. Reading the comments left here has shown how much he contributed to so many. He was a fine man.

*My condolences to his family.
Carole Malmberg*

Carole Malmberg - September 17, 2020 at 01:22 PM

TS

“ To Henry's Children - (I went to Rosthern Junior College with Kirsten and Dirk), please accept my sympathy on the loss of your father. It is very hard to lose a parent. Hold on to your memories of your dad.

I remember getting to know your dad at RJC and through Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon. I have wonderful memories of Henry!

*Trevor Siemens
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan*

Trevor Siemens - September 16, 2020 at 10:48 PM

KG

Thank you for your kind words Trevor.

Kirsten Godbout - September 17, 2020 at 03:50 PM

KC

Our deepest condolences . Henry was a dedicated and caring professional during his time at the High River Hospital. We thought of him often from the time he was involved in dad's (Bill Little) memorial service 17 years ago. And when Mom became ill and passed away recently, he was our first thought.

Our thoughts are with you .

Kathy Cuthbertson

Kathy Cuthbertson - September 17, 2020 at 06:17 PM

RB

“ Dear Sarah and Family of our beloved Henry, our sympathy is extended at this time of address Henry was the Director of Pastoral Care at the IWK Health Centre, he was a trail blazer, , always searching for better ways to deliver pastoral care to patients , staff, and volunteers. His wit, charm , professionalism, , energy and strong faith were hallmarks Of an outstanding person.
Henry was loved by so many , Doctors, Nurses,, Parents, Children, Volunteers, and staff from all areas of the IWK Health Centre, . All were treated with love and respect by Henry

Ruby Blois former VP Clinical Programs at the IWK Health Centre (I was privileged to hire Henry and work directly with him for several years, Henry enriched my life in many ways)

Ruby Blois - September 16, 2020 at 07:43 PM

KG

I think Dad would enjoy being called a trail blazer. Thank you for you thoughtful and loving tribute Ruby!

Kirsten Godbout - September 17, 2020 at 03:55 PM

MM

“ Heartbroken to hear of Henry's death. I worked with Henry for a few years and he would come down to have coffee and interesting conversations. Will miss his voice and sense of humor on his phone calls. He was a good human being and friend.
Our condolences to Sarah and family.
Mike and Martha Merrimen
Hubbards, NS.

Mike Merrimen - September 16, 2020 at 05:57 PM

NS

“ *Norma Gates / Gordon Shaw lit a candle in memory of Rev. Henry Victor Friesen*



Norma Gates / Gordon Shaw - September 16, 2020 at 05:05 PM

JG

“ *We were greatly saddened to learn of Henry's passing. Our memories include the months he drove from High River to Strathmore, regardless of the weather to provide a service to the congregation of Strathmore United.
Rest in Peace*

*John & Anne Godsman
Strathmore, AB*

John & Anne Godsman - September 16, 2020 at 04:26 PM

MT

“ *Sarah and Family: It is with deep sorrow that we have learned of Henry's passing. He will be missed immensely. We hope the kind wishes of your friends will be of some comfort to all of you.*

Mervyn and Deanna Taillefer - September 16, 2020 at 03:55 PM

 Ray
Wahl

“ *Sorry to hear of Henry's death. Remember him from Altona and Saskatoon. He was a supportive person to me and fun to be with. Wishing you God's comfort as you remember and reflect upon Henry.*

Ray Wahl - September 16, 2020 at 03:17 PM

KG

“ Go in Peace Dad, you have served many so well and have earned your rest! I will miss your phone calls, your quick wit, your quirky manners and our shared love of books.
Love Kirsten (your only and favourite daughter)

Kirsten Godbout - September 16, 2020 at 03:10 PM

BM

“ Sarah, We offer our deepest condolences. Henry was a good man, a wise man, a man of deep faith and a friend to many. I will cherish memories of our always meaningful conversations, along with his heart and his humour. Henry had a way of cutting through the chaff and getting right to the core of any problem or issue. He was a man of few words, but they were always good words. We will miss him.

*Karen and Bruce Masterman
High River, Alberta*

Bruce Masterman - September 16, 2020 at 12:58 PM

LE

“ I really enjoyed working with Henry. He was a true friend to both Ruth and I.

*Blair & Ruth Lewis
Northern New Brunswick*

Lewis - September 16, 2020 at 12:31 PM

BW

“ Sarah and Family. We are so saddened at Henry,s passing. He was a shining Example of all that is good in life and gave so much of himself to others. We will miss him and treasure the memories of time and laughs we shared. Know we are with you in thought and prayer

barry warnica - September 16, 2020 at 10:27 AM

MF

“ Dear Sarah Ray and I always treasured Henry's opinions and introspective explanations of human nature. He was such a kind man who was cherished by all who knew him. We first met Henry when we moved to High River in 2003. A humorous man of great moral integrity and a good friend, May he rest in Peace.

MARG & RAY FENTON - September 15, 2020 at 08:47 PM

WB

“ Walterna Braun lit a candle in memory of Rev. Henry Victor Friesen



Walterna Braun - September 15, 2020 at 05:53 PM

KG

Thank you Walt and Erna. Our family appreciates your gesture of kindness. Regards, Kirsten & kin

Kirsten Godbout - September 16, 2020 at 03:06 PM

GL

“ Sara and family,
May your memories give you strength at this
time and know you are in my thoughts and
prayers. We had some good times working
together at the HR Hospital....he will be
missed by all who had the privilege to know him. Grace



Grace Ledoux - September 15, 2020 at 09:50 AM

PL

Hi Sara and family
While you won't remember us. I am Patsy Lubeck. Henry was a great
blessing to us. He helped me with my dad Ken Frank. We appreciated
so much and dad looked forward to Henry's visits. Henry helped dad
ease and to work through the loss of two forever partners. Henry
inspired dad to not drink his troubles away but to move on with life and
enjoy life. While dementia has forced dad to live in a home he still
remembers Henry and has great respect for him. Henry will be missed.
I will tell dad that Henry moved on to his reward and that one day we
can all meet again.

Patsy Lubeck - September 15, 2020 at 12:22 PM

MA

“ Marcia Ayrey lit a candle in memory of Rev.
Henry Victor Friesen



Marcia Ayrey - September 15, 2020 at 08:30 AM

DP

“ Dear Sarah & family, Our hearts are broken. Henry brought joy to
our lives. I'm so sorry for your loss. sincerely, Bill and Dorothy
Peters

Dorothy Peters - September 14, 2020 at 09:11 PM

JH

“ Dear Sarah & family, My sincere condolences to you with Henry's passing. He was a wonderful minister and man and will be missed by many people. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Sincerely,
Janice Howie

Janice Howie - September 14, 2020 at 09:02 PM

CJ

“ To Sarah and all family members. I thoroughly enjoyed any conversations with Henry, and want you all to you I am holding you gently in my heart and prayers. Blessings to each of you.

Connie L. Jewell - September 14, 2020 at 09:00 PM

MH

“ Sincere sympathy to the family from Marlene Herriman,,

Marlene Herriman - September 14, 2020 at 08:32 PM

NP

“ Norma & Vic Poirier lit a candle in memory of
Rev. Henry Victor Friesen



Norma & Vic Poirier - September 14, 2020 at 07:20 PM

VB

“ Condolences to family and those who benefited from Henry's ministry and friendship. Met him during my sojourn as Hospital Chaplain, knowing he had pioneered the role at High River Hospital. May he find his rest in the Lord he served for so long! ~ Chaplain
Virginia Battiste

Virginia Battiste - September 14, 2020 at 06:47 PM

CM

“ So sorry to hear this sad news. Will always remember Henry’s generosity in sharing his ministry books with this then-seminarian. He was a wise man, kind and always a pleasure to talk with. My condolences to Henry’s family. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Chelsea Masterman - September 14, 2020 at 02:22 PM

TS

“ My sincere condolences to Henry's family. He was a wonderful man, very compassionate and listened well. Many people benefited from his wise counsel.

Terry Storch - September 14, 2020 at 01:21 PM

WL

“ Sorry to hear his passing a kind wonderful man that I respected

Wayne lee - September 14, 2020 at 01:08 PM

BB

“ Betty Berthelette lit a candle in memory of Rev. Henry Victor Friesen



Betty Berthelette - September 14, 2020 at 11:28 AM

BB

I am so sorry for your loss.

Betty Berthelette - September 14, 2020 at 11:29 AM

FR

“ *What a wonderful caring man! Met Henry through various meetings at H.R.H. in regards to Palliative care, and Long term care. Was so impressed with his gentleness. Condolences to family and loved ones. Frieda Rogers.*

Frieda Rogers - September 14, 2020 at 11:18 AM

BH

Henry "V" as he was often called, made an indelible impression on many lives. I was fortunate to be one of them. His sense of God's mercy and grace was unlimited. His humour was hard to surpass. I am glad to hear that his grief ministry will continue. Very Best Wishes to the whole family at this time.

Bernie Wiebe - Sept. 22

Bernie Wiebe, personal friend to Henry - September 22, 2020 at 04:34 PM

DS

Henry was our pastor in Altona in the mid 60's. Many fond memories of him, his strong faith in the Lord Jesus and also his concern for others, along with a great sense of humour. Blessings to his family.

Dennis Siemens

dennis siemens - September 22, 2020 at 07:51 PM

AG

I cannot remember when or how Henry and I met in High River. Only that he and I would run into each other throughout the town and when we did, he always had time to talk and listen and then perhaps to give me a little direction that would often give me answers and comfort. We always parted ways with the understanding that we would meet again. I look forward to this meeting Henry.

Alan Golby

Alan K Golby - February 21, 2021 at 03:07 PM