

Gordon Merriam Swedberg

October 1, 1918 - June 29, 2004

Funeral services for Gordon Merriam Swedberg, 85, were conducted at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, July 6 at Wheatland Bible Church in Wheatland, with Pastor Delbert Dick and Pastor Denzil G. Mauk officiating and John Thalken Sr. as Eulogist. Interment will be in the Wheatland Cemetery at Wheatland.

Mr. Swedberg died Tuesday, June 29 at Platte County Memorial Hospital in Wheatland.

Gordon Merriam Swedberg was born October 1, 1918, at Battle Lake, Minn. He was the son of David Richard and Mathilda (Grunden) Swedberg, who farmed the 60 acre portion of the 160 acre farm which Grandfather Ole Swedberg purchased after arriving from Sweden. His father was also a partner in the Swedberg Brothers Nursery in Battle Lake. Gordon attended the country grade school known as District 71. Upon graduation, he was unable to go on to high school; but, in 1935, he went to Minneapolis and began his education at Northwestern Bible and Missionary Training School (now Northwestern College). The summer of 1939, Gordon was chosen by the choral director, and the president of the college, Dr. W.B. Riley, to sing at the Medicine Lake Conference with a select group of the choral club. It was at this conference that Gordon first met Dr. Vance Havner, one of the speakers, and, a lifelong inspiration to Gordon. For two years, he worked his way through school by working at Miller's Cafeteria on 20 South Seventh Street. Gordon met his future wife at Northwestern where they attended classes together and best of all, sang in the choral and glee clubs. Gordon married Sylvia Louise "Betty" Brooks on May 30, 1941, at the First Baptist Church of Rhinelander, Wis.

After the wedding on May 30, they joined the First Baptist Church in Rhinelander and left that same afternoon for Chelsea, Wis. where he preached that evening, and began his work with the Wisconsin Rural Missions. They were responsible for all of Taylor County with preaching stations, Vacation Bible Schools, summer youth camp, and traveling with the director raising funds for the Mission. In June of 1944, they were called to the First Baptist Church of Hillsdale, Wis. They then went on to serve churches in Rush City, Minn.; Wisconsin churches in Phelps, La Crosse, Bangor, and Clinton;

Iowa Falls, Iowa; and Wheatland, Wyo. After serving Wheatland Bible Church for 14 years, Pastor Gordon retired from full-time church work. He continued to preside at weddings and funerals whenever requested; filled the pulpit at several rural churches; and worked for Platte Funeral Chapel in Wheatland. Several times in his career Gordon was able to continue his education and in 1962 he returned to Northern Baptist Seminary and received a bachelor's degree in Theology. His interest in



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Youth Camp began with the Mission and he spent several weeks in the summers either directing, teaching, or serving as Camp Pastor. He loved fishing, hunting, and shared his camping expertise with his family. Vacation times were special as he planned new ventures and areas to travel when possible. When his wife of over 53 years died, he married Mary (Ringenberg) Swedberg on January 1, 1996, in Cokato, Minn. He learned much from working with businessmen and applying those business principles to the finances of the churches he served. Most rewarding to Gordon was that through the years, missionaries

went to their fields and young men were encouraged to go on to the pastorate. He said he learned much from his father, but the most important was to love people.

Gordon is survived by his wife, Mary of Wheatland; two daughters, Karen Louise and husband, Alvin Cox of Greeley, Colo., and Paulette Marie Weber of Berlin, Wisconsin; a sister, Mavis and husband, Jerald Stenoien of Maple Plain, Minnesota; 13 grandchildren; 14 great grandchildren and twins expected very soon.

He was preceded in death by his parents; wife, Betty on January 30, 1995; two sons, David Arthur Swedberg on March 18, 2000 and Gale Gordon Swedberg on May 31, 1986; a brother, Stanford Joel Swedberg; and a sister, Dorothy Slettede.

Serving as pallbearers will be Ron Shoults, Dale Hytrek, Jay Collins, Chuck Thorne, Chuck Brown, Dwight Bratt, Alan Weber, and Randy King.

Memorials to Wheatland Bible Church, P. O. Box 685, Wheatland, WY 82201-0685 or a charity of the donor's choice would be appreciated by the family.

Gorman Funeral Homes - Platte Chapel of Wheatland is in charge of the arrangements.