



## Rev. Dick Merle Stravers

November 7, 1927 - January 12, 2026

Rev. Dick M. Stravers, born November 7, 1927, died on January 12, 2026, at the Warm Friend retirement facility in downtown Holland, Michigan.

He was preceded in death by his parents, John and Sarah (Vos) Stravers, and by four older brothers: Gilbert, Tony, Joe, and Jerry.

He is survived by his loving wife of 74 years, Ruth (Ver Meer) Stravers, and by his sister Janiece (Stravers) Monsma. He is also survived by his children: Rick, Mary, Joy, and Amy, and their spouses; plus 12 grandchildren, 19 great grandchildren, 2 great great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews, scattered throughout the United States and Canada.

Dick loved growing up on a farm 12 miles north of Pella, Iowa, walking a mile every day for 9 years to a one-room country school. After graduating from the 8th grade, he attended Pella Public High School and graduated in 1946. That summer, he and 10 classmates joined America's occupation army and he served for a year in a peacekeeping mission in Italy. The G.I. bill made it possible for him to attend college,

after which he taught Latin at Grand Rapids Christian High School. Then he felt called to enter seminary, becoming ordained as a pastor at the age of 36. He served churches in Cleveland, Ohio; and in Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids, Michigan, retiring in 1992. His retirement years were a wonderful gift from God. He continued to preach and visit the sick and elderly in a number of churches in the Holland area, especially Pillar and Holland Heights Christian Reformed until age 85.

He loved camping with his family. During his final years, his favorite activity was reading: the Bible, autobiographies, memoirs, and books dealing with the stormy political situation in the United States. He loved having the freedom to spend precious time conversing with his children, grandchildren, friends, and strangers. Many of those conversations occurred on the bench in front of their home on 8th street, where he delighted in the stories people shared with him.

The family thanks the loving people at Faith Hospice, Warm Friend, Pillar Church, and the community of Holland for the wonderful joy and care they brought to his days. His response to all this was, "I feel the love."

Visitation with the family is 10:00-10:45 am on Monday, January 19, 2026, at

Pillar Church, 57 East 10th St. Holland, MI 49423.

Memorial services will be at 11:00 am on Monday at Pillar Church.

A private family burial to take place in Pilgrim Home Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourages memorial gifts in Dick's honor be given to Community Action House at [www.communityactionhouse.org/hzfc](http://www.communityactionhouse.org/hzfc) or by mail to

739 Paw Paw Dr, Holland, MI, 49423.

[www.langelandsterenberg.com](http://www.langelandsterenberg.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Pilgrim Home Cemetery

370 E. 16th St.  
Holland, MI 49423

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 19. 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM (ET)

Pillar Church  
57 E 10th St.  
Holland, MI 49423

## Memorial Service

JAN 19. 11:00 AM (ET)

Pillar Church  
57 E 10th St.  
Holland, MI 49423

# Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Watch Memorial Service in memory of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers*

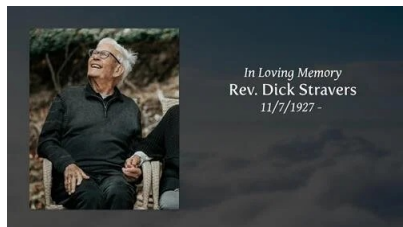


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**Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes** - January 19 at 01:48 PM



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers*



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**Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes** - January 17 at 12:41 PM

SW

“ Dick was our first pastor at Southern Heights Church in Kalamazoo. He and Ruth were always so kind and hospitable. I still marvel at how they hosted the entire congregation in small groups in their home on Sunday nights after a full two-service Sunday and while caring for four young children. We so enjoyed seeing them again occasionally after they moved to Holland. Their energy level was inspiring to all of us as we aged.

We were unable to attend the service for Dick but watched it online as well as the video of his life. Such a gift! It was so good to see and hear Rick. He was one of my high school students when I taught in Kalamazoo in the 60's. So many fond memories of those years! We extend our deepest sympathy to you, Ruth, and to the whole family. Dick will live on in our hearts and memories. The world needs more of what he shared--kindness, empathy, and hope.

*Ron and Sherrie Wolthuis*

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**Sherrie Wolthuis** - January 20 at 08:45 PM

SP

*Rev Stravers was our visiting pastor at HHCRRC. He was such a genuinely kind & compassionate man. A life well lived! Sympathy to Ruth & the family.*

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**sandra Poll** - January 21 at 12:35 PM

MF

“ Michael & Miami Fountain and Family purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers.



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**Michael & Miami Fountain and Family** - January 18 at 09:32 PM

CV

“ Ruth,  
Our sympathy to you and your family in the passing of Dick. He was such a good pastor and friend to us during his time at Woodlawn CRC. Dick and you were such a blessing to us and our church. Blessings to you. Best Regards.  
Carl and Shirley Verspoor

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**Carl and Shirley Verspoor** - January 18 at 06:53 AM

JF

“ A much loved pastor and friend to the Elmer Fransen family of the West Park Cleveland CRC. A wonderful Stravers family! Condolences to Ruth and the entire family. John Fransen and family.

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**John Fransen** - January 17 at 04:41 PM

TC

“ Tom DeVries family from West Park CRC planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers.

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**Tom DeVries family from West Park CRC** - January 16 at 10:02 AM

TC

“ Tom DeVries family from West Park CRC purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers.



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**Tom DeVries family from West Park CRC** - January 16 at 10:02 AM

KK

“ *What memories we have of Dick Stravers. He helped Pillar through tough times in so many caring and helpful ways. Through everything, he and Ruth kept their balance with a great sense of humor and heart for others. I hope I honor him by describing his preaching with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other. I trust that this is the way he lived as well.*

*Ken and Alida Kuipers, with the greatest of respect and sympathy for dear Ruth and family.*

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**Ken and Alida Kuipers** - January 16 at 08:36 AM

CB

“ *Dear Ruth and family, I extended to you sincere sympathy in the loss of Dick. I am a daughter of Ade and Jean Geenen; that is an important note because it was through my parents that I came to know their friends, the Stravers. I recall with great fondness peels of laughter rising to the rooftops when the couples visited in our home in Kalamazoo. Years later, my heart was warmed when my own young family returned for visits to Pillar Church — Dick and Ruth were sure to greet us with warm hugs, beautiful smiles and, with that twinkle in his eye, Dick would demonstrate that he knew exactly which one of the five sisters he was greeting when he asked, “How is life in Minneapolis?” When Dad passed away fourteen years ago, our extended family was blessed beyond measure as Dick ministered to him and to us. And, even in these last years, we’ve enjoyed the occasional greeting at Warm Friend ... one of which as he was sitting on the front bench. 😊 A long life lived well and filled with love! Thanks be to God!! May you be comforted in your great loss with the assurance of greater Hope.*

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**Carol Buteyn** - January 16 at 12:15 AM

DP

“ Whenever I think of Dick and Ruth Stravers a warm glow comes over me. What delightful people! I served a RCA congregation while they were at West Park CRC. The fruit of the Spirit certainly was evident in Dick's life. May you celebrate a life well lived and may you grieve with confident hope!

*Don Poest*

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**Don Poest** - January 15 at 11:38 AM

RS

*So good to hear from you. I have not forgotten you. And thank you.  
Ruth*

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**Ruth Stravers** - January 15 at 07:51 PM

NB

“ NECC Staff and Board planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers.

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**NECC Staff and Board** - January 15 at 01:42 AM



“ Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers.



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January 15 at 01:42 AM

DC

“ Dick was a man with whom you wanted to spend time. His gentle demeanour and love of people was not to be mistaken for meekness. His passion for justice and desire for a better world were forefront in his beliefs—and often delivered with a twinkle in his eye. Dick’s life was centered around his love of family and his faith and he will be missed by so many—but no one more than his life-partner, Ruth. His family and friends should find comfort in knowing that they had the fortune to having Dick as a guide and inspiration in their lives.

Dale Clark - January 14 at 11:16 PM

RS

Was so good to hear from you, Dale. I’m so thankful to be surrounded by my big family. Dick and I have felt lots of love and care. Love, Ruth

Ruth Stravers - January 15 at 07:52 PM

EO

“ A lot of beautiful memories. He married Jim and me, baptized our 4 children. Many wonderful talks and a few dinners. Our prayers and thoughts are with the family. Jim and Eileen (Exoo) Oprisek

Eileen Oprisek - January 14 at 05:43 PM

RS

So glad to hear from you! Thank you for your kind message. Love, Ruth

Ruth Stravers - January 15 at 07:53 PM

JM

“ Joe, Jon, Jay and MaryJo planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers.

Joe, Jon, Jay and MaryJo - January 14 at 05:40 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Rev. Dick Merle Stravers.



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January 14 at 05:40 PM



“ The Elwood Baker Family sure remember with fondness the good times we had in West Park, Ohio! What a fine Christian man and family! Our sympathy to the whole Stravers family. Such fond memories of Duck in our hearts . Love to all of you 🌸🌸

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**Kathy Baker Braunlich** - January 13 at 08:37 PM



*Phyllis and Elwood Baker were so good to us! Thank you for your message. I remember very clearly the love and our wonderful trips to beaver island. Thanks again for chocolate cake recipe I still love so much, it's always been our favorite. Love, Ruth*

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**Ruth Stravers** - January 15 at 07:56 PM