



## Dr. Hubert (Herb) Weller

February 27, 1934 - June 29, 2023

Herb's memorial service can be viewed at <https://vimeo.com/848220484/6153b2a71e?share=copy>

Hubert P. (Herb) Weller passed away June 29, 2023 after sustaining injuries in an accident. He was born in Holland, MI, February 27, 1934, and graduated from Holland High School, where he started studying Spanish and fell in love with the language. He went on to earn degrees in Spanish at the University of Michigan (BA) and Indiana University (MA; PhD). Much to his surprise (his three older brothers had all left Holland), he returned to his hometown to teach Spanish at Hope College (1962-96), including two terms as department chair. In the 1970s, he saw the computer's potential for educational use and developed the groundbreaking SPANCOM program for instruction in Spanish. He had lived in Chile and Peru and traveled extensively throughout the Spanish-speaking world. Upon retirement, Herb used the language daily as a translator, interpreter, and private instructor.

Herb served for 13 years on Holland's International Relations Commission and was deeply involved in the Sister City program with Querétaro, Mexico. In 2022, he received a lifetime achievement award from Holland's Human Relations Commission for "dedicating his life to building a culture of learning and connection between the City of Holland and the wider world."

Diversity, inclusion, and equity were core values. He was a founder and database manager of the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony and an active member of First United Methodist Church, especially its Justice for Our Neighbors program. He was involved in the Hope Academy of Senior Professionals (HASP) and several Hispanic organizations.

Herb was an avid fly-fisherman and a sailor and was especially proud to earn a private pilot's license at age 67. He was an excellent cook, studied classical guitar, liked to travel, enjoyed word and math puzzles, and raised three dachshunds. He was a kind, gentle, and

generous man.

Above all, Herb cherished his extended and blended family and his friends. He was preceded in death by his mother, Huberdina, when he was six; his father, Peter Sr., when he was in college, his stepmother Trudy in 1965, and his brothers Peter Jr., John, and Tony and their wives. He is survived by his loving wife, Ann, whom he married in 1995; his son and daughter-in-law, Christopher (Becca) and their daughters Gretel Weller Geiger (Zach) and Bridget Weller; his stepchildren Stephen Underwood (Salmy) and Susan Goff (Gerald); step-grandchildren and great-grands, including Rachel, Casey, David, Jonathan, Zana, Ian, Khloe, and David; sister-in-law Lynn Emerick; and beloved nieces, nephews, and cousins and their families.

A memorial service will be held at First United Methodist Church, 57 West 10th St., Holland at 11 a.m., Thursday, July 27, preceded by an hour of visitation. The service also will be livestreamed. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to Hospice of Holland or to the Alliance for Cultural and Ethnic Harmony Scholarship Fund.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JUL 27. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church  
57 West 10th St.  
Holland, MI 49423

## Memorial Service

JUL 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

First United Methodist Church  
57 West 10th St.  
Holland, MI 49423

# Tribute Wall

JB

“ *Herb was a good friend and neighbor of my parents Trudy and Gordon Berkel. Whenever I talked with my mom she would share Herb stories - Ann and Christopher, the dogs, flying, sailing, Spanish. He was a great person. Janet Berkel.*

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**Janet Berkel** - April 29, 2024 at 12:17 PM



“ *I'm absolutely heartbroken by Dr. Herb Weller passing. I met Herb years ago, he was my flying buddy and score mentor. I got several opportunities to fly in the sky with him. He loved flying and helping people. He will be greatly missed. He was an advocate of Justice and stood with my family during our challenges with Racism. He was Humanitarian in my book. My family sends their deepest condolences and sympathy to Ann and family. You are forever in our memories.*

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**Kim Harris** - December 05, 2023 at 07:20 PM

NJ

“ Sincerest sympathy to Dr Weller's family. I remember Christopher (perhaps only 9 or 10 years old then) coming into our Spanish classes back in 1979-80 when I had Dr Weller for Intensive Spanish I. I thought immediately of Christopher today when I read the obituary notice in News from Hope College; it is hard to lose a father.

I also well remember the language lab and Spancom, and being an AT for Spanish my sophomore and junior years when the Dartmouth method was Hope's language teaching method of choice. Because of these things, I learned Spanish very well, and majored in it. I am fortunate enough to continue to speak it on a regular basis, and native speakers are always surprised by how good my Spanish is. I tell them that I learned it in college a thousand years ago -- and learned it well because of Herb Weller. Truly, I owe a deep debt of gratitude to him for what he gave me, and have never forgotten what an important role he has played in my own story.

When Judy Motiff (my French professor) passed away, she and I had been in contact in the months and weeks preceding her death. When I had not heard from her in reply, it was Herb Weller who emailed me to tell me of her passing. He had known that she and I were emailing each other. I had the opportunity then to tell him how much he meant to me, and how grateful I was for having been his student. It's very much because of him that I studied what I did.

I am so sorry to read of his untimely passing and extend heartfelt condolences to his son Christopher (and his family), and to Dr Weller's wife (and extended family). He opened the world of languages to me, which broadened my life immeasurably. May his memory be a blessing.

Nancy Johnson

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**Nancy Johnson** - August 25, 2023 at 10:45 PM

JH

“ I am saddened by the recent passing of Dr Weller. A friend of long ago, I studied Spanish at Hope College with Herb, and was not surprised by his many accomplishments. ACEH is indeed a large part of his legacy. Rest in peace old friend. Jan Haringsma

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**Janice Haringsma** - August 08, 2023 at 04:55 AM

MI

“ We are so sorry to hear about the loss of Herb. He was a dear friend to our family and he was the confirmation mentor to our son, David. He was wise, gentle, and kind. For example, he encouraged our youth to stretch themselves (e.g., reaching out to youth in Mexico to start a warm conversation). You will be missed, Herb. Godspeed and thank you for your friendship and wisdom.

Mary and Tony Inman - July 23, 2023 at 06:36 PM

EF

“ I met Herb when he was a commissioner of the International Relations Commission. Very quickly, early in my employment at City Hall, Herb and Ann became friends. When there was one the other was nearby. Herb had a love for Queretaro, Mexico, and the friendship of the Queretaro community. He possessed a quiet strength that was comforting. He was a man who spoke volumes of wisdom with few words. I will miss that sense of comfort when Herb was nearby. My deepest condolences to Ann and the family.

Esther Fifelski - July 12, 2023 at 08:57 AM



“ So sorry Ann for your loss and for the great loss to our community as well. Herb was a true partner with Jeannette in building "beloved communities". They will be missed...

Jonathan Brownson - July 10, 2023 at 09:44 AM

AP

“ Herb was a very kind and helpful man. He would professionally translate documents for the City Clerks Office in my years there. He taught my brother Victor fly fishing. May the two of them enjoy this hobby again. My prayers are with Ann and the family.

Anna Perales

Anna Perales - July 06, 2023 at 09:59 AM

DT

“ He was always Dr. Weller to me even though he told me to call him Herb. I was a Spanish major at Hope College and he taught most of my classes. He was kind and very knowledgeable. We looked forward to living together in The Farmstead. Our condolences. Sally Steketee Tapley.

David and Sally Tapley - July 05, 2023 at 09:05 AM

PW

“ I will always remember Herb as a dedicated, kind, and gracious friend to Nancy and Brooks. My sympathies to Ann and family. A great man has gone Home. pat whitaker

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pat whitaker - July 04, 2023 at 06:01 PM

MA

“ I didn't get to see him enough, but my adopted uncle was a sweet, kind man. A light has gone out.

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Marre - July 04, 2023 at 11:42 AM

RF

“ We first met Herb and Ann at a concert at his brother, Tony's home. All four of us were the hosts for the concert. We also spent time together at Holland Hospital when Tony was hospitalized there. Herb was a very kind man and was a wonderful brother to Tony and I assume his other brothers too. I am glad that my husband and I got to meet both Herb and Ann. - Rita Falk

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Rita Falk - July 03, 2023 at 06:07 PM