



Ernest Jay Korterling

December 9, 1933 - August 24, 2025

Ernest J. Korterling, age 91, of Zeeland, passed away on Sunday morning, August 24, 2025.

Born in Fillmore Township, Ernest served in the US Army with the rank of Corporal from 1953 to 1955. Although this was during the Korean War, he served in Germany where he witnessed refugees fleeing the Iron Curtain and where he had his first teaching experience helping German civilians learn the English language.

Following his military service, Ernest obtained his teaching certificate from Allegan County Normal. He then went on to earn both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Western Michigan University. Ernest taught sixth grade for over 35 years for the Zeeland Public Schools. Known as "Mr. Korterling" or "Mr. K" by many former students, Ernest was presented with a Michigan Educator's Association Region 9 Citation in 1971 for his significant classroom contributions and was selected as an Outstanding Elementary Teacher of America in 1972. After retirement, Ernest went on to work for Hope College as a College Coordinator for student teachers.

Ernest was a charter member of Community Reformed Church of Zeeland where he served on the first building committee and consistory multiple times.

Surviving are his children: Randy and Sue Kortering, Larry and Pat Kortering, Lisa and Jeff Gabier, and Richelle and Jon Hofman; as well as grandchildren: Stephanie and Carl Bussema, Matt and Christina Kortering, Katie and Adam Hukkala, Taylor Hofman, Brianna Hofman, and great-granddaughter Esther Kortering.

Ernest was preceded in death by his wife, Joyce, grandson Alexander (Alec) Gabier, as well as by his parents, Elsie and Herman Kortering, brother and sister-in-law, Laverne and Leona Kortering, sister in-law, Christal Broekhuis, sister-in-law and brother-in-law Grada and Henry Voetberg.

A funeral service in Ernest's honor will be held at 11:00 am, on Friday, August 29, at Community Reformed Church, 10376 Felch Street, Zeeland, MI 49464. Visitation will be from 5:00 pm - 7:30 pm, on Thursday, August 28 at Yntema Funeral Home, 251 South State Street, Zeeland, MI, 49464.

Memorial contributions may be given to READ Ottawa, 430 E 8th St #140, Holland, MI 49423 or to Rivers of Mercy Children's Home, Bridge the Gap International, P.O. Box 702558, Tulsa OK 74170-2558.

www.yntemafh.com

Previous Events

Visitation

AUG **28**. 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM (ET)

Yntema Funeral Home
251 South State Street
Zeeland, MI 49464

Funeral Service

AUG **29**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Community Reformed Church
10376 Felch Street
Zeeland, MI 49464

Tribute Wall

CN

“ I am so grateful to have known Ernie while he lived at Royal Park Place and Royal Atrium Inn where I served as chaplain. I was on a retirement trip to the Canadian Rockies when I learned he had passed away. I visited him just prior to leaving on the trip and he was telling me stories about his years as a teacher. He was always positive and engaging, I enjoyed visiting him and praying with him. My deepest sympathies to Ernie's loved ones. Sincerely, Cindy Nyhoff

Cindy Nyhoff - September 04, 2025 at 11:45 AM

KW

He was my favorite teacher, so kind so nice, He will be missed, RIP Mr K 🙏

Kemma walsh - September 06, 2025 at 12:32 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Ernest Jay Kortering.

August 26, 2025 at 10:09 AM



“ Sweet Liberty was purchased for the family of Ernest Jay Kortering.



August 26, 2025 at 10:09 AM

LK

“ Thanks for being an awesome role model and dad

larry kortering - August 26, 2025 at 05:58 AM

AP

“ *Andrea Pfeiffer lit a candle in memory of Ernest Jay Kortering*



Andrea Pfeiffer - August 25, 2025 at 04:57 PM