



Randall S. Smit

August 14, 1968 - December 2, 2022

Randall, "Randy," Scott Smit went home to his Savior Saturday, December 2, 2022 at the age of 54.

To view the livestream of the service, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k0z7nmKqo2o>

He was preceded in death by his paternal grandparents, James and Anna Smit, maternal grandparents, Elmer and Marie Kadera, father-in-law, Roger Westrate, and his beloved service dog, Delta Air. He is survived by his loving wife of 31 years, Jill (Westrate) Smit, his parents, Richard and Judith Smit, his brother and sister-in-law, Bradley and Angela Smit and their children, Gabriel James and Hannah Marie, his brother and sister-in-law, Christopher Smit and Lisa VanArragon and their son, Moses Kadera, his mother-in-law, Bonnie Westrate, sisters- and brothers-in-law, Jacquelyn and Bruce Lownds, Doug and Lori Westrate, and Deryl and Jennifer Westrate, nephews and nieces Bonny K (Randy), Schuyler (Catherine), Daniel (Alyssa), Luke (Samantha), Jamie, Jillian (Travis), Samantha (Ryan), Erin (Andrew) and fourteen great-nephews and nieces.

Randy's life reflects his diverse thinking, adventurous spirit, and deep Christian faith. He grew up in Hinsdale, Illinois, spending summers on Goshorn Lake in Saugatuck, Michigan. He attended Calvin College in Grand

Rapids, Michigan in 1986, where he met the love of his life, Jill Westrate. He graduated with a B.A. in Political Science in 1990, joined AmeriCorps, and taught at the Literacy Council of Chicago. He and Jill married in 1991 and moved to Washington D.C. so that Randy could attend Catholic University. He graduated with an M.A. in Political Theory in 1993. The couple returned to Chicago where he taught Political Science, Ethics and Philosophy at the College of DuPage, Joliet Junior College and Wheaton College.

Randy was a gifted writer and public speaker. He became part of the ministry team at Downers Grove Community Church as a lay pastor. In 2002 he and Jill moved to Holland, Michigan where he attended Western Seminary. Randy was ordained by the Reformed Church of America (RCA) in 2005 and served as pastor for The Gathering at Douglas Community Church. He also worked for Western Seminary as a student mentor. He trained in Nonviolent Communication practices and formed the organization Compassionate Connection to guide and nurture wholeness in our relationships with God, self, and others.

Randy's family and friends will remember him as a true Renaissance man, who loved to debate sports (go Cubs!) as much as theology and politics, was a champion for justice, enjoyed good Bohemian food, and found peace in the outdoors. He was a great storyteller, both funny and thoughtful. He responded to God and the world around him as a poet and painter. He cherished his friends, particularly "The Saugatuck Gang," a group from his summers on Goshorn Lake, and the lifelong friends he and Jill met at Calvin. Above all, he loved his family, his close-knit extended family stretching from Chicago to Florida, the family he gained in Michigan, and the times they all spent together at the lake, on campouts, at picnics and around the table.

"But cheer up my good friends, chin up and be glad for though he no longer writes, know this—for a certainty he lives. That is, after all, all that he has ever

wanted to do. And can I tell you, despite knowing that you will never be able to read much about it anywhere, ever ... well, this author can tell you he's doing it well, very well indeed and he always will.

Who am I to make such a claim and what qualifies me to tell you this? I am, in a word, Love.”

Randy Smit, “The Writer Who Did not Write,” Touch of Summer, 2012.

A Celebration of Life service will be held at noon on Friday, December 16, with visitation from 10:30 am to 11:45 am, at Hope Church, 77 West 11th Street, Holland, Michigan 49423. The service will be followed by a time of lunch and fellowship where Randy's friends and family can share memories and stories together.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Randy's honor to Hope Church, for its Social Justice Initiatives Fund. Envelopes will be available or online donations can be made at <https://portal.icheckgateway.com/HopeChurch/> , with the memo line: Randy Smit Memorial

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 16. 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM (ET)

Hope Church
77 West 11th Street
Holland, MI 49423

Celebration of Life

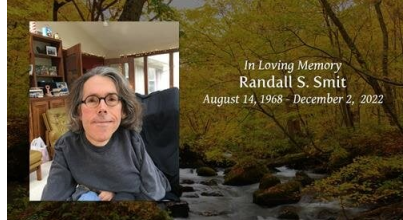
DEC 16. 12:00 PM (ET)

Hope Church
77 West 11th Street
Holland, MI 49423

Tribute Wall



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Randall S. Smit*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - December 15, 2022 at 09:27 AM

RK

“ *Our sympathy goes to all the Smit family. Randy lived his life to the fullest and now he is in the arms of his savior. Praying for all of you that you will find comfort in knowing Randy is no longer confined to his wheelchair. Love from Ruth & Pete Klein*

Ruth Klein - January 04, 2023 at 08:51 AM

RT

“ *Dear Jill, Tanya and I are sad to hear of Randy's passing. We have so many fond memories of time with you both. Lord have mercy.*

Rick and Tany - December 17, 2022 at 10:23 PM

DH

“ Randy played a very important role in my life during my younger adult days. Being a pastor at Community Church of Douglas he baptized my mom, sister, and I, and I am so grateful to have had the privilege of knowing him. He and Jill showed me what love and marriage could look like, and left an impact on me that I carry to this day. My thoughts and prayers are with Jill and Randy’s family as you all go through these next days missing his presence.

Dalena Hanegraaff - December 17, 2022 at 02:32 PM

LR

“ Randy, I enjoyed our time as colleagues at Disability Network Lakeshore. Thank you for the great conversations and insights. You were a one of a kind person.

Lucia Rios - December 16, 2022 at 12:02 AM

SS

“ Very fond memories of summers in Saugatuck, including a delightful day a pack of us kids headed, jaunting along roadside, into town. Apparently we thought we were wealthy enough to afford lunch at a restaurant.. until the bill came, and our parents were called to cover the tab and get us back to camp.
Much love to you, Smit family. We grieve with you. I hope it's not too bold to believe that my smiling mother was in the huge, heavenly crowd, giving out laughter and hugs to welcome Randy home.

Sherri Naber Slomp - December 15, 2022 at 08:27 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Randall S. Smit.*



December 15, 2022 at 02:10 PM



“ *I met Randy when I taught him in Junior High. Our first meeting took place with Bozo who accompanied him bc he was the MDA ambassador. He was engaging, smart and funny. A student I'll always cherish. I wish him peace in his new home . God bless his family that are still here who will have to live with his memory. What a wonderful family he grew up in.*

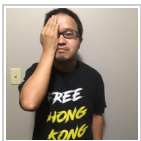
Rosie Wolf - December 15, 2022 at 09:36 AM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Randall S. Smit.*



December 14, 2022 at 09:44 PM



“ *Randy brought much joy to my family when I was a ThM student at Western Theological Seminary (Holland, Michigan). We have had many meaningful and happy conversations. And he is so impressive for his firm commitment to social justice and his ability to appreciate other cultures, especially our Chinese culture.*
Rayman Chan

Rayman Chan - December 14, 2022 at 06:52 PM

DN

“ I have adored this "kid" and his family ever since meeting them in 1978. Yes, I still call this 54-year-old one of "my kids," being 70+ myself. I learned quickly that Randy's wit, wisdom, and articulate intelligence made the man. Favorite personal recollection: In Washington, DC, I visited and stayed in Randy's and Jill's apartment. We shopped for dinner -- fresh scallops -- at the waterfront market. Come bedtime, I hadn't packed anything to sleep in, so Jill lent me hospital scrubs! Blessings to all of Randy's and Jill's families.
Don Newsom

Donald Newsom - December 14, 2022 at 06:03 PM

AL

“ I met Randy at Western Seminary. He was a such a kind and thoughtful person, always making you think! Praying for his family. -
Alex Lysdahl

Alex Lysdahl - December 14, 2022 at 05:16 PM

KP

“ The world lost a wonderful spirit, fierce advocate, mighty disciple and wickedly funny man. I treasure the time I had with Randy and wish I'd seen him more recently, to revel in his wise words and impish humor.
Our heartfelt condolences to Jill and his whole family.
Love,
Kathleen and John Piggins

Kathleen Piggins - December 13, 2022 at 10:02 AM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Randall S. Smit.*



December 12, 2022 at 09:12 PM



“ *Randy was a bright light in a world filled with shadow. His joy, curiosity, wit, intelligence and kindness will be greatly missed. We feel lucky to have known him. Please know that all of you are in our thoughts and we will pray for peace as you move through this difficult time.*

*With love and in sympathy,
Melissa Schutte and Eric Lundell*

Melissa Schutte - December 09, 2022 at 07:18 PM



“ *Our most heart felt sympathy to the family.*

Dave Mouser and Mike Larson SRVR#34

Dave Mouser and Mike Larson - December 06, 2022 at 02:40 PM



“ *Michael and Shelley Brye*

Our hearts and prayers go out to you. May Randall rest in peace.

Michael Brye - December 06, 2022 at 11:39 AM

RL

“ *May You Rest In Peace Dear Friend*

Ron and Denise Loeffl - December 06, 2022 at 08:40 AM

MW

“ *Melissa Williams sent a virtual gift in memory of Randall S. Smit*



Melissa Williams - December 06, 2022 at 08:35 AM

MC

Randy i watched you and Chris grow up to be amazing men with many accomplishments such an honor to know you . Rest in peace buddy .

Michael Crowley - December 14, 2022 at 06:47 PM

SG

I knew Randy at the end of 2016. At that time, I wanted to practice my English listening and speaking, so I volunteered to take care of him. Every time, we talk a lot. I found him to be very passionate about life, deep thinking, and humorous. He talked to me about faith, social justice, political issues, philosophy, and so on. He likes art, loves to write poems, and often generates ideas and improvises during our conversations. I was surprised to find that such a critically ill patient who cannot take care of himself can live such a wonderful life. Believe that he is now in the kingdom of heaven and had freed from his sick body.

Shan Gao - December 15, 2022 at 04:26 PM

EH

I'm so sorry to hear of Randy's passing. My family has been friends with the Smit family since the mid-1970s. Randy was the life of MDA Summer Camp. My thoughts and prayers are with his family.

Earl Higgins - December 17, 2022 at 05:56 PM