



Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk

April 21, 1943 - October 25, 2025

Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk, 82, beloved husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, born in Lincoln, Nebraska, and a resident of Holland, Michigan, finished his race on earth and peacefully entered his heavenly home on Oct. 25, 2025.

Watch the Celebration of Life Service: <https://faithzeeland.org/watch-listen/>

His greatest passions were his family, his faith, and sharing the Gospel with everyone he met. He lived out I Corinthians 9:22-23 "To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings". A graduate of Holland High School, Hope College, Western Theological Seminary and Fuller Seminary, he was an athlete and loved all things sports. His love for cycling led to a serious accident in 2017 confining him to a wheelchair but not confining his gratitude and joy in life.

Vern was preceded in death by his daughter, Michele Schoon; brothers-in-law, Jim Botsford, Phil Miles, and Roger Kamminga.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Carla 'Vande Bunte' Sterk, who together were partners in life and mission to the Tzotzil indigenous tribe in

Chiapas, Mexico, for 41 years; son, Rev. Shane and Wendy Sterk; son-in-law, J.R. and Jilanne Schoon; grandchildren, Jacob and Jasmine Schoon (Joelle, Junah), Zachary Schoon, Caleb Schoon, Ellie and Cornell Canada, Micah and Abby Sterk, Emma and Jackson Sietsma, Elijah Sterk, Noah Sterk; sisters, Carolyn Botsford, Doris and Michael Pajak; brother-in-law, Gene and Judy Vande Bunte; sister-in-law, Linda Kamminga; and many nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Visitation with the family is 3:00-6:00 pm on Friday, November 14, 2025, at Faith Reformed Church, 220 West Central Ave. Zeeland, MI 49464.

A Celebration of Life is planned for 11:00 am on Saturday, November 15, 2025, also at Faith Reformed Church with Rev. Jonathan Elgersma officiating.

Burial to take place in Forest Grove Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Vern's honor may be given to Faith Reformed Church Mission Fund at www.faithzeeland.org or by mail to 220 Central Ave. Zeeland, MI 49464 or The Vern and Carla Mission Scholarship at Western Theological Seminary at www.westernsem.edu/give or by mail to 101 E. 13th St. Holland, MI 49423.

www.langelandsterenberg.com

Cemetery Details

Forest Grove Cemetery

3501 Gordon Street
Hudsonville, MI 49426

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **14**. 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Faith Reformed Church
220 West Central Avenue
Zeeland

Celebration of Life

NOV **15**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Faith Reformed Church
220 West Central Avenue
Zeeland

Tribute Wall



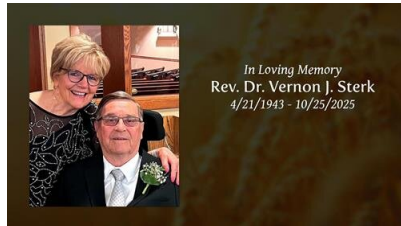
“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Watch Celebration of Life in memory of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk*

In Loving Memory
Rev. Dr. Vernon J. Sterk
4/21/1943 - 10/25/2025

Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - November 15, 2025 at 08:33 AM



“ *Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes created a Tribute Video in memory of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk*



Langeland-Sterenberg Yntema Funeral Homes - November 13, 2025 at 11:50 AM

PB

“ *Paradise Bound Staff and Board planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk.*

Paradise Bound Staff and Board - November 04, 2025 at 03:08 PM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk.*



November 04, 2025 at 03:08 PM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk.*



November 02, 2025 at 07:53 PM



“ *Borrs, Vissers, Lades, & Helder Cousins planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk.*

Borrs, Vissers, Lades, & Helder Cousins - November 02, 2025 at 07:53 PM



“ *Thoughts and prayers are with all of you during this difficult time.*

Pam Ramaker

Pam Ramaker - November 02, 2025 at 02:49 PM

DK

“ I was an out-law, but I thought the world of Vern and Carla. Vern was a role model of what and how every Christian should be. I am deeply saddened by his passing, but now he will be in a perfect body again--free of his wheelchair.

Diane Kats - November 01, 2025 at 06:37 PM

JH

“ I loved Vern and Carla's classes at the seminary. I'll never forget when Vern and Carla put their arms around me and prayed for me. Vern was a loving, very wise and very Christ-filled man.

Janet Herrick - October 30, 2025 at 01:20 PM

AR

“ Antonette Renteria lit a candle in memory of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk



Antonette Renteria - October 29, 2025 at 07:43 PM

LB

“ Oh, Carla, I'm giving you huge hugs right now. Vern touched so many lives with you at his side. You two shared an amazing life and testimony..he will be remembered and greatly missed.

Linda Borgman Beaver - October 29, 2025 at 11:28 AM



“ We love Vern and Carla and send our deepest condolences. We were at a coloquio this evening in San Cristobal remembering his work fighting for peace and translating the bible so that Tsotsils could read and reflect. Vaya con Dios, Vern. from Diane and Jan

Diane Rus - October 28, 2025 at 11:01 PM

SF

“ Sending our love~ the Wirebaugh family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk.



Sending our love~ the Wirebaugh family - October 28, 2025 at 04:49 PM

LN

“ Pastor Shane, Wendy, and family: My deepest sympathy on the passing of your father/grandfather. May God give you strength when yours is gone, may His grace and mercy carry you on, may the unending love that He has for you revive your heart and see you through. Linda Norder

Linda Norder - October 28, 2025 at 03:20 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Rev. Dr. Vernon Jay Sterk.



October 28, 2025 at 11:23 AM

TW

“ I want to say I am so sorry for your loss Carla your husband was a great man

from thomas wever grandson of Sonja wever

thomas wever - October 28, 2025 at 11:02 AM

BI

“ Vern was a significant supporter of the church planting and campus ministries of the Great Lakes Regional Synod. Gentle, thoughtful, reliable, visionary. I thank God for Vern. May he rest in peace and rise in glory. Ben Ingebretson

Ben Ingebretson - October 28, 2025 at 09:30 AM

MD

“ I will always cherish my memories with Dr. Vernon in college! You both gave me such a gift of your friendship, care, and love during those hard college years as a missionary kid. You opened up your homes, and hearts. I am so sad to hear of his passing. He touched so many lives.

Mikella Van Dyke - October 28, 2025 at 09:27 AM

DG

“ Dr Sterk had missionary mind who knew well how to deal with other's culture. His respect to other's culture, treating international students like me, well, and showing the directions to new culture to make other's feel in the host culture was speechless. We the 2008 WTS MTH graduates are going to miss him. But, we are happy that he joining his LORD whom he has served for many many years faithfully! May your soul rest in peace Dr Sterk!

Dereje Geche - October 28, 2025 at 08:01 AM

BV

“ *Dennis and I will forever treasure the times we have had with you in Chiapas and in Holland. We are grateful for the incredible impact you both have had in the world as servants of Jesus Christ. May your family be surrounded by the love you have shared with so many people in so many situations. Grace and peace in Christ.* ”

Betty Voskuil - October 27, 2025 at 09:53 PM



“ *carla shane and family we have great memories that no one can take away what a awesome man vern was and so blessed to call him a special friend love and prayers we love you so much jerry and Donna Driesenga* ”

Donna Driesenga - October 27, 2025 at 07:25 PM

DD

“ *Adios por ahora, mi querido amigo. El cielo tiene suerte de tenerte. Te retare a jugar “cerdito” la proxima vez que nos veamos.* ”

Dirk DeWitt - October 27, 2025 at 05:03 PM