

*I Am Always With You*

*When I am gone, release me, let me go.*

*I have so many things to see and do.*

*You mustn't tie yourself to me with too many tears,*

*But be thankful we had so many good years.*

*I gave you my love, and you can only guess  
how much you've given me in happiness.*

*I thank you for the love that you have shown,  
but now it is time I traveled on alone.*

*So grieve for me a while, if grieve you must,  
then let your grief be comforted by trust  
that it is only for a while that we must part,  
so treasure the memories within your heart.*

*I won't be far away, for life goes on,  
and if you need me, call and I will come.*

*Though you can't see or touch me, I will be near  
and if you listen with your heart,  
you'll hear all my love around you soft and clear.*

*And then, when you come this way alone,  
I'll greet you with a smile and a "Welcome Home".*

In my  
Father's  
house  
are many  
mansions

West Anaheim United Methodist Church  
2045 W. Ball Rd., Anaheim, CA 92804-5415  
José Orlando Rivera, Tom Tran, Officiating Pastors

**Francis “Russ” Rusbult**  
**Born – September 29, 1922**  
**Passed Away – November 19, 2013**

PRELUDE Medley of Hymns – Laura Bell, Organist  
SPECIAL MUSIC "Beyond The Sunset"

GREETING Pastor Orlando  
Friends, we have gathered here to praise God and to witness to our faith as we celebrate the life of  
**Russ Rusbult**  
We come together in grief, acknowledging our human loss. May God grant us grace, that in pain we may find comfort, in sorrow hope, and in death resurrection.

DUET "How Great Thou Art" No. 77  
by Charity Johnson and Colleen Laughlin

GATHERING PRAYER Pastor Tom Tran  
God of us all, your love never ends. When all else fails, you still are God. We pray to you for one another in our need, especially for Mary, Connie and Craig, and for all, anywhere, who mourn with us this day. We know that **Russ** is with you in glory, because that is your promise for God's children, as he was. And, O Lord, we ask that for those who doubt, you give light, to those who are weak, strength, to all who have sinned, mercy; and to all who sorrow, your peace.

THE WORD OF GRACE Pastor Tom Tran  
Jesus said, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. There are many dwelling places in my Father's house. I go to prepare a place for you. ... I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. ... Because I live, you shall live also."

SCRIPTURE READINGS  
John 3:16, 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm, 121<sup>st</sup> Psalm

MEDITATION Pastor Orlando

SOLO "It Is No Secret" by Laura Bell

\*MUSIC "I Believe" (see insert) Congregation

TRIBUTE BY FAMILY AND FRIENDS  
( Family and friends of **Russ**, and members of the congregation, may briefly voice their thankfulness to God for the grace they have received in the life of **Russ** and their Christian faith and joy. )

SPECIAL MUSIC "I'll Walk Alone"

COMMENDATION Pastor Orlando  
O God, all that You have given us is Yours. As first You gave **Russ** to us, so now we give him back to You. Receive **Russ** into the arms of Your mercy. Raise him with all your people. Receive us also, and raise us into a new life. Help us so to love and serve You in this world that we may enter into Your joy in the world to come. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER Pastor Orlando

\*HYMN "God Be With You Till We Meet Again" No. 672

\*DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING Pastor Tom Tran

\*POSTLUDE When We All Get To Heaven – Laura Bell

*Reception in the church's lounge will follow the Memorial Service. All are invited.*

\*Indicates standing. Please do so as you are able.

Francis "Russ" Rusbult, 91, passed away peacefully in his home, November 19, 2013. He was born in Iowa to Audie & Henry Rusbult on September 29, 1922.

He graduated from Parsons College, where he met his future bride, Mary Laughlin. Here is the story of our beginnings.

We had been casual friends until one cold December afternoon when I got off the bus after spending a weekend at home. Russ saw me and offered to carry my suitcase back to campus, one mile away. While walking and talking, we enjoyed being together, and both of us knew that we had started a very special relationship.

Russ had enlisted in the Army Air Force, and was called to active duty in his last semester of college. While we were apart, good old-fashioned letter writing kept our relationship close. During the year when Russ was in training to become a pilot, we met once when I traveled to California and he asked me to be his mate for life. Soon he received his "wings" and officer commission, came home to Iowa on leave, and we were married in March 1944. Five months later Russ went overseas to serve his country as a B-24 pilot stationed in Italy, flying missions over Germany. After ten months the war ended in Europe, and he came home safely to me and his five month old daughter, Connie.

In the fall of 1945 while finishing his last semester at Parsons, Russ was offered a part-time teaching position in a nearby town, which started his 41 year career in education. During the next 5 years he taught full time, and in summers he took graduate courses at the University of Iowa where he earned a masters degree in Educational Administration.

For the next 8 years he was superintendent of schools in two towns, and then 4 years as superintendent of a newly reorganized school district for three towns. There was high tension in this new district, due to old rivalries between two of the towns, plus new concerns in one town that didn't want their high school to close. Russ worked hard trying to be a diplomatic peacemaker with the goal of improving education for the whole district. This wasn't easy. After 3 years of turmoil, the Assistant State Superintendent told Russ that he had one of the most challenging jobs in the whole state. After 4 years of dealing with these headaches he decided to leave administration, and we moved to California where he returned to the classroom – his first love in education.

Throughout his long career, he was highly respected by students, teachers, and community members.

Russ enjoyed flying, teaching, fishing, sports, and many other activities with friends and family.

He loved gardening, and every year we had a good crop of tomatoes to share. He was very active, always having some new project going in the yard or house.

On the lighter side, as a young boy Russ learned to wiggle his ears. Little kids loved to see him do this trick. And later, after he lost his vocal chords, they were fascinated by his "robot" voice.

Throughout the years, Russ and I had many good times with our family: Connie, Craig, and Caryl. Here are a few examples.

Russ was very creative helping us color Easter eggs, and then hiding them, along with candy eggs, so the kids could search for them in egg hunts.

When we lived in Iowa, many summers we drove north to Minnesota for fishing, swimming, sightseeing and, of course, fighting mosquitoes. We also made vacation trips to Wisconsin Dells, Colorado, and Chicago.

After retirement, Russ and I traveled more widely in a van we outfitted so it became a home on wheels, used for camping and visiting all over the country, to every continental state except one. Other shared travel adventures were ocean cruises and trips to Hawaii, Alaska, and several to Europe, including Amsterdam where our daughter Caryl and her husband David were college professors.

In 1986, Russ was diagnosed with throat cancer. Initially, radiation therapy appeared to be successful although, sadly, he did have to retire from teaching. Then in 1989 the cancer returned, and in surgery he lost his vocal chords.

When facing the new challenge of living without a voice, Russ had so much courage. He was determined to overcome this disability, and joined a "Lost Chord" cancer support group. He began to learn esophageal speech, which is a technique for speaking naturally without vocal chords. This is not easy to master, but Russ was persistent and was willing to invest the long hours of practice it required. Together, in our home and during long walks, he and I worked to achieve his goal of learning to speak in a new way.

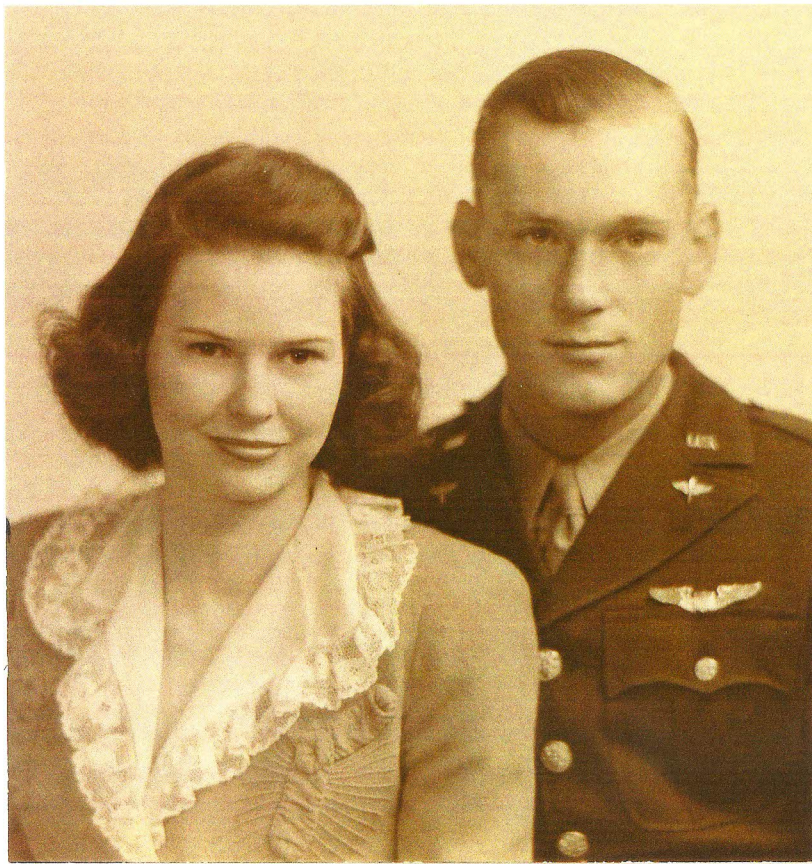
Then he and Art (another member of Lost Chord) talked in schools, showing what can happen to smokers. They were in high demand, many students heard their message, and they felt the satisfaction of helping young students decide to avoid smoking. This was one of the many situations where, as a teacher and in everyday life, he touched the lives of others in beneficial ways.

Russ had worked at Angel Stadium for two decades, after school and on weekends. He considered this his "fun job". He submitted his resignation to Chuck (his boss) who never turned it in. Instead, he later convinced Russ to return to work. This acceptance by his boss and then his fellow employees, even though he couldn't speak in the normal way, made Russ very happy.

After retirement, we continued traveling and doing many other activities with friends and family, including a big celebration of our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 1994. Russ was active to the end, walking into the hospital in late October, but three weeks later God took him home.

Russ was my best friend. We were fortunate to have 70 loving years together, with many exciting experiences and wonderful memories. He was a gentle man, loved and respected by family, friends, and colleagues, by all who knew him well. He lives on in our memories.

Russ was preceded in death by his parents, Rex (brother), and Caryl (daughter). He is survived by Mary (wife), Connie (daughter), Craig (son), Kimberly and Nikki (grand-daughters), Brianna, Dylan, and Robert (great-grandchildren), and Charles (brother).



**In Loving Memory of  
FRANCIS EDWIN "RUSS" RUSBULT  
( September 29, 1922 – November 19, 2013 )**



**To My Russ,**

When I look at our wedding picture, I wonder how such a young girl had the wisdom to choose such a really wonderful man to be her life's partner. You have been everything a woman could wish for in a husband. For seventy years you have been the love of my life.

You have been a great father for our three children, who always loved and respected you.

We've had a full life of happiness. And yes, some sorrows, but you were always the strong part of our team, and helped me through them.

You always had strong faith in God, believing he was in "full charge" of your life. He brought you home from the war, through several serious surgeries, and the heartbreak of our beloved Caryl's death. You knew He was going to take you home to Him.

I don't know how I'm going to manage without you to guide me, but I'll be talking to you, and someday you'll be welcoming me to our final home for eternity.

Until then I'll carry in my heart the last words you wrote to me in the hospital, "You are the love of my life."

**Your Mary**

