



Dr. JOHN ALLEN HELGELAND

October 22, 1940

May 8, 2023

Dr. John Helgeland, Emeritus Professor of Religious Studies, 82, died in Hospice Care at Monument Health Sturgis Care Center in Sturgis, SD on Monday May 8, 2023. His death occurred after a long and valiant battle with Alzheimer's disease.

John was born on October 22, 1940 and the only child of beloved parents, Sander and Annette Helgeland. He spent most of his growing up years in Charles City and Decorah, IA. He graduated Decorah High School in 1958 and moved on to Luther College in Decorah for his undergraduate studies and earned a B.A. in 1962 with a major in Greek and minors in Latin and Philosophy. He attended Luther Theological Seminary in St. Paul MN and earned a Masters in Divinity in 1966. He attended the University of Chicago in Chicago Ill and earned a M.A. in The History of Christianity in 1969 and a Ph.D. in Early Christian History in 1973.

John taught at Luther College in 1972 and worked as an Exchange Professor at St. John's University and Divinity School, Collegeville MN from 1972 to 1977. He was at North Dakota State University (NDSU) in Fargo ND as Director of the School of Religion with a joint appointment in Religion and History from 1977 until his retirement in 2015. During his tenure he helped found the Northern Plains Ethics Institute (NPEI). He was also instrumental in the formation of NDSU's Group Decision Center (GDC) in 1998. John was an active member of Olivet Lutheran Church, Fargo, loved varmint and deer hunting and spent many hours reloading ammunition both for him and for friends. He also loved playing the bass trombone in high school and college marching and concert bands. He helped to form and played in the Agassiz Concert Band and later in his life enjoyed participating in the Golden Notes Band.

Among his several honors and awards are Blue Key Honor Society, NDSU Distinguished Educator, 1982; Remele Fellowship, ND Humanities Council, 1995; Outstanding Service Award, College of Humanities & Social Sciences, 1998; Robert Feder Humanitarian Award Temple Beth Ell, 1999; Luther College Distinguished Service Award, 2017.

John is survived by his wife of 33 years Susan, daughters Dr. Annalyssa Gypsy Murphy (Helgeland) of Massachusetts and Elena Helgeland of Minnesota as well as grandchildren Jordan Helgeland and Reoin, Molly, and Emerson Murphy. A Celebration of Life event will take place at Olivet Lutheran Church in Fargo ND at 3 pm on Friday August 11, 2023. All are welcome to attend. In lieu of flowers you are encouraged to support the John Helgeland Lecture Fund. Follow the link or copy into browser:

<https://www.ndsufoundation.com/john-helgeland-lectureship-fund>