



Olyn Howser
June 9, 1921 – August 9, 2009

**Giving Thanks for Olyn:
A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends**

Giving Thanks for Olyn: A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends

From Gail Blythe – Presented at Olyn's Memorial Service

Olyn Howser was born June 9th, 1921 in Ardmore, OK. Olyn was received into the kingdom of God on August 9th, 2009 at the age of 88 years + 2 months. He is survived by an uncle, who is 6 months younger than Olyn, and resides in Ardmore, OK, 5 cousins and numerous brothers and sisters in Christ.

Olyn was an only child and the only grandchild on his father's side and one of 6 grandchildren on his mother's side. Olyn admitted with a rather mischievous grin that he was pretty spoiled as a child - especially on his father's side of the family.

He graduated from Ardmore High School in 1939 and attended Murray College in Tismango, OK for 2 years. Olyn served our country in the US Air Force for 3 years. While serving in the military, he was stationed in Lubbock, Amarillo and Manila.

Olyn worked for American Airlines for 41 years before retiring in 1987. During his tenure, he held various positions in various places which included working in the Control Tower and weather observing in Ardmore. In Tulsa, he worked in the Purchasing, Reservations, and Public Relations Departments and also spent some time as an Industrial Photographer. He mentioned that he had a wonderful boss in Tulsa, who let him speak to his mother on company time while she battled cancer. He must have thought a lot of Olyn because although Olyn was laid off 5 times during his career, his boss saved Olyn's severance check each time because he knew Olyn well enough to know that if he gave him that check, Olyn would spend it. Employees that had been laid off had to pay the severance money back before they could return to work. By saving his check, his boss made sure that Olyn would not have to worry about paying back any money before he could come back to work for American Airlines.

Olyn finished his career in Fort Worth, where he worked in Reservations, Public Relations and the Customer Relations Departments.

When we met to plan his memorial service, Olyn told me a couple of interesting and rather amusing stories from his past so that I could share them with you ...

While living in Tulsa, Olyn and several of his buddies enjoyed going to see the Tulsa Oilers, which was the farm club for the St Louis Cardinals. The only problem was that there was so much traffic at the end of the game that it was hard to get out of the parking lot. Olyn had to start working early in the morning, and this traffic problem kept him up too late. So, Olyn came up with the perfect solution to get him and his friends out of that parking lot in a jiffy! He bought a couple of big flashlights and his buddies would take turns directing the traffic until they could get out of the parking lot. This worked great - until officials figured out what was going on. They were told to never do that again! What a perfect example of Olyn's creative but mischievous side!

While he worked in the Customer Relations Dept, an upset male customer had called in and was cursing at one of the ladies that he worked with. Olyn did not think his co-worker should be subjected to that kind of abuse so he told her to transfer the call to him. Of course, the customer continued to curse at Olyn. Olyn warned the man several times that if he did not stop cursing he was going to hang up on him. The man continued cursing, so Olyn eventually hung up on him.

Giving Thanks for Olyn: A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends

Apparently Olyn's boss heard what was going on and he asked Olyn to step into his office after the call ended. This made Olyn a little nervous, so he took his time going to his office. But to Olyn's surprise, rather than scolding him, his boss commended him for hanging up on the man! Apparently the customer also began to regret his actions, because a few days later, a 10-pound box of Whitman's chocolates arrived for Olyn. And from that point on, the customer would only talk with Olyn! Olyn always had a way of winning people over!

Another time, a really good customer needed to have some tickets immediately for an extremely important but totally unexpected business trip the next day. Due to an extremely heavy schedule, the customer was not going to be able to pick up the tickets. He begged Olyn to deliver the tickets to him. Olyn explained that he could not do that because it was strictly against company policy. As Olyn listened carefully to the man, he realized that this man was really in a bind through no fault of his own and he desperately needed Olyn's help. Well... you know Olyn. He just had to come up with a plan to help this man out! And, of course he did. He explained that he could deliver the tickets early the next morning before he went to work. However the customer would have to pay for the tickets in cash so that Olyn could put the cash in the till as soon as he got to work. The customer agreed to do so. Olyn delivered the tickets as planned and put the money in the till as soon as he got to work. The plan seemed to have worked without a hitch.

The customer was so impressed with Olyn's outstanding customer service that he wrote a letter to Olyn's boss giving a glowing account of how Olyn had gone out of his way to assist him when he was in a really big jam. Unfortunately, Olyn's boss did not see it the same way. He suspended Olyn from work for 2 days without pay for violating company policy.

The next time Olyn spoke to this customer, he said, "Please do not thank my boss ever again. I lost 2 days pay when he found out."

The customer became upset about the way Olyn's boss had treated him and wrote a letter to his boss's boss. Olyn received the 2 days pay that he had lost, but his boss did not speak to him for 3 or 4 weeks.

Another time, a customer really liked a flight attendant that he met on his flight. He liked her so much that he asked Olyn for her telephone number. Olyn explained that he could not give out employees' personal information. That was strictly against company policy. However, he would be willing to pass along the man's name, address and telephone number to the flight attendant, if he'd like. The man understood and eagerly gave the information to Olyn. Olyn passed on the information to the flight attendant. After some time passed, Olyn received an invitation to their wedding.

One cold winter evening, Olyn was returning home very late at night. Unfortunately, he had left home in such a hurry that he had forgotten his wallet, so he did not have his driver's license or any money to buy gas with him. And, of course, he ran out of gas on his way home. As he sat on the side of the road, wondering how on earth he was going to get home, a state patrol officer stopped to see what the problem was. Olyn explained the situation, and the officer felt sorry for him.

Giving Thanks for Olyn: A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends

The officer helped Olyn get to a gas station to get his car started and then loaned him the money to buy enough gas to get him home. Olyn took the officer's name and address and put a check in the mail the next day to repay him + a little extra money to thank him for his kindness. The officer was so impressed that he called Olyn to thank him. It seems that this officer had helped numerous people over the years and Olyn was the only one that ever repaid him! Olyn was a man who was always true to his word.

Olyn came into the lives of many of us here tonight when he joined Northgate UMC in 1981. I know that I speak for everyone here when I say that God really blessed us when He brought Olyn Howser into our church family.

Olyn was so many things to so many people. I know we will all miss him very much. Olyn had a way of making everyone feel special. He was a good listener and he cared deeply for others. He was everyone's confidante - which flattered him very much. He seemed to know just about everything about everyone. Many people would tell Olyn about a problem, upcoming medical procedures or hospitalizations, before they would tell our pastor - regardless of who the pastor was. It wasn't that the people didn't want the pastor to know. It was because Olyn kept in touch with so many people, that he was the first to find out about these kinds of things. Then he would pass along the news to the pastor and our church family.

Olyn's life was all about serving others. He called countless people every day to check up on them, to let them know he was thinking of them or praying for them, to wish them a Happy Birthday or Happy Anniversary- or just to say hello. His calls were generally very brief - usually just a minute or 2, but it was his way of making everyone feel special and cared for.

Of course, I cannot possibly talk about Olyn and not mention our Clothes Closet Ministry. They are synonymous- aren't they? He absolutely loved working in the Clothes Closet and he especially loved helping with the Back to School program. Even when he could no longer drive or walk without the help of his walker, you could find him checking people in at the Clothes Closet on Saturday mornings. As long as someone would bring him up here, he was here! And his church family always brought him because everyone knew how important it was for Olyn to be here serving others any way he could. Olyn Howser loved people and he loved Jesus! Whenever I think of a man with the heart of a true servant, I think of Olyn Howser. God gave us a wonderful example of a man with the heart of Jesus- and one that will be very difficult to emulate - in Olyn Howser.

Olyn was a humble man, who got a little embarrassed whenever I mentioned anything to him about the many good deeds he performed. He told me "We live on a 2 way street. One-way streets are for automobiles. We can't always take and take. Even a sponge you have to squeeze and give some, you know."

I consider those to be words of wisdom from Olyn Howser.

Olyn confided that he felt bad because his physical problems prevented him from being able to do as much as he would have liked to do to serve others for the last couple of years. But he did not stop serving- as many would have done. Rather than stop serving others, Olyn focused on the ways that he could still serve others instead.

Giving Thanks for Olyn: A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends

Olyn was always extremely supportive of my lay speaking ministry. When I came to the early service to deliver the message, Olyn would always tell me that he was looking forward to hearing the message that God had given me. As I delivered the message, I always enjoyed seeing him sitting at the very back of this sanctuary during the early service. He would often give me a thumbs up sign to encourage me as I was preaching. I miss that he is not back there now, but I know he would probably be very embarrassed to hear us say so many good things about him.

I was blessed to know Olyn Howser and I loved him very much for the man he was and the example he set for me. I thank God for allowing me to know such a fine man as Olyn and for bringing him into my life. He encouraged me and he taught me some valuable lessons by the way he lived his life.

You see, Olyn knew that this life is temporary. He knew God through his son, Jesus Christ. As his physical problems increased, he looked to God to help him get through whatever came. He never lost his focus. He never lost his faith. He knew that someday, he would meet his Lord and Savior face to face. And that was a day he looked forward to. That is why he chose the 2 scriptures from Psalms for his memorial service. It was his way of reminding us that it is far too easy to get caught up in the worries of this world. We will all face some tough times as we go through this life. Like Olyn, we also need to “lift our eyes to the hills” and keep our focus on God everyday so we will keep our priorities straight because God has a much bigger plan for us. This life is finite. It will end someday. Someday, we too will leave this world behind. Someday, we too will meet our Savior face to face.

I know that last Sunday at 12:32 PM CDT, Olyn heard the voice of Jesus saying, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.” Now he is enjoying his time with Jesus. It’s so nice to think of Olyn with a healthy body again. I hope he is comfortable with his halo and wings.

I can’t help but wonder what job he’ll find to do in heaven. You know Olyn is not one who would enjoy sitting on a cloud strumming a harp! With his servant’s heart, I know he is already at work, doing what he loves most. He’s probably already figured out a way to serve the other angels in heaven.

I know that he’ll be one of the first to prepare a place for each of us there and one of the first to greet us when we join him in heaven! I’ll be looking for him when I get there. Won’t you?

Gail Blythe



**Giving Thanks for Olyn:
A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends**

From Osten Aune

Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Matthew 25:21&23

Olyn's Rule (*Blessing*)

When we first started gathering at Bible Basics, when the class was closing and it was time to give the closing prayer, Olyn Howser, a long time member of Northgate United Methodist Church, as his habit, would reach out his hands out to the people on either side of him. We were gathered in a circle and slowly the tide of "holding one another's hands" started from either side of Olyn. From one-to-another, from one-to-another the circle was bonded together grasping each other's hands.

One person would give the closing prayer. The holding of hands became a dramatic symbol of being in communion with God and with one another. This was a beautiful symbol of unity with God and unity with one another.

This unity of holding hands during prayer was not planned; it just happened by Olyn's encouragement. At first it was a little cumbersome and uncomfortable for the whole group to hold hands. And at first, sometimes we would forget. But as the small group continued to meet; the closer the small group became. The Bible Basics small study group grew closer relationship to God and closer to one another.

As the beginning weeks turned into years we would remind ourselves to hold hands in union by saying, "Olyn Rule, Olyn Rule" because of Olyn's gentle persuasion and encouragement. Now if we did not hold hands in union we would feel like we were cheated and that we had truly missed something!

To tell you the truth, this should probably be called "Olyn's Blessing" more than "Olyn's Rule."

God Bless.

Osten Aune



**Giving Thanks for Olyn:
A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends**

From Peter McNabb

Olyn was a Scout in the 1930s in Oklahoma. John West was cleaning Olyn's house after Olyn died and found Olyn's Cub Scout manual and Cub Scout neckerchief. He showed them to me and said, "These are probably older than you are." He's right. John then passed these on to me since I am very involved in Scouting. If anyone would like to see them, please let me know. To me, they make a statement that Olyn's life was shaped by the values of Scouting at a young age. Also, that Olyn treasured those values and memories enough to keep his book and neckerchief all the rest of his life.

Peter McNabb



From Mollie & Sallie Bynum

Sallie and I have been talking over our favorite memories of Olyn. First and foremost, we experienced God's love through Olyn's weekly telephone calls each summer while we were in Alaska. Olyn was a first-rate telephone missionary! He kept us aware of Northgate prayer concerns and in touch with our Texas brothers and sisters in Christ. His caring and generosity will always be remembered.

Secondly, Olyn LOVED Spring Creek Bar-B-Q Restaurant!!! He would invite us to share his coupon to dine at the restaurant from time to time. Some of our best evenings were spent eating barbecued ribs and conversing with Olyn and the Northgate Monday Night Diners. From the get-go, Sallie and I were made to feel welcome, a part of the church.

Thirdly, Olyn was a stalwart member of the Walk to Emmaus Community. He was an inspiration to all who knew him because he gave his all as a disciple of Christ. We are most honored to have known Olyn Howser, for we feel that we have felt the presence of Jesus in our midst.

Blessings,
Mollie & Sallie Bynum



**Giving Thanks for Olyn:
A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends**

From John West

Olyn was my friend. We rode many miles together. We prayed many prayers together. We ate many meals together. I tried to estimate how many meals that he had at our house. It would be well into the hundreds. Joyce and I had a little black cat that Olyn loved. When Joyce and I would go out of town we would ask him if he would look after her. Well, I think because we had cable, Olyn would just stay over at our house until we got back.

The best thing I can say is "Olyn was my friend".

John West



From Bonnie Matthews (Olyn's next-door neighbor for 27 years)

My first memory of Olyn was when we first bought the house next door. My husband was trying to mow this tall grass with a small electric mower. He heard another mower and thought someone else was mowing their yard. It was Olyn mowing ours!!

The week after we moved in, we moved my parents in with us. That left no room for my daughter. Olyn rented her a bedroom – just a short time because she married soon after that.

After Olyn retired, he had lunch most days with my parents. He was so good to them --- even after my daddy got old and grouchy. He was full-blooded INDEPENDENT German, and Olyn was “too pushy” (really, just trying to be helpful). He was a true Christian – just turned the other cheek.

Until my husband and I retired, he took them to doctors' appointments or anywhere they needed to go. He was family. We were co-owners of Mikey (my spoiled rotten poodle). Mikey got to visit him last Saturday (Olyn died on Sunday).

I just talked to my sister. She wanted to be here, but already had a birthday dinner planned for her daughter-in-law. She wanted to add that he was a GOOD, GOOD person. He is going to be missed by many.

John, you said yesterday he stayed with your cat because you had cable. I wondered if he spent time with Mother and Daddy because our house was cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter

Bonnie Matthews



Giving Thanks for Olyn: A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends

From Adolph Pavel

My Tribute to Olyn Howser – Creating a Legacy

I did not get to know Olyn Howser until his later years. Our friendship took root not long before he had his eye surgery and was unable to see for several weeks. It was a blessing for me to go to Northgate Plaza and help Olyn eat his noon meal every day while he could not see. Many thought he and I were father and son. I would have been proud to be called Olyn's son. One way Olyn blessed my life was our weekly visits with a cup of vanilla ice cream for Joyce West while she was in Northgate. Olyn was so good to her.

Yes, God has created a legacy through Olyn Howser. God has His providential hand in all things and in the lives of His people. Our lives as believers exist to serve Him in the Kingdom He has established here on earth. Having secured our salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, we are to be servants to those God places in our path. But what happens after the Lord takes us home. Let's look to Olyn for the answer!

The legacy we create while we are alive continues on among those whose lives we touched long after going to be with the Lord. Whatever that legacy is depends on how we lived our earthly lives. Just as we lost a giant in Ronald Reagan, who left us with a legacy of remembrance when he went home to be with His Lord in 2004, in August of 2009, the world lost a giant here in Irving, Texas – Olyn Howser.

Just as with Mr. Reagan, Olyn lived as close to his maker as is possible for a mortal. Every morning, as did Mr. Reagan, Olyn put himself in God's hands, accepting whatever happened as the will of the Lord. I cannot help but think of the apostle Paul pushing forward during times of suffering when I recall how Olyn would not let his infirmities stop him from loving and serving others in his later years. Yes, Olyn has left us with an enduring legacy of remembrance.

He left a legacy of responsibility. When Olyn comes to mind, I think about the great 18th century preacher Jonathon Edwards, who in his early ministry experienced much frustration that could have given him an excuse to hang up his wig and retire his frock. But with his strong sense of responsibility to his mission, he helped spark the Great Awakening. Just as Edwards stayed the course, so it was with Olyn; when physical infirmities began to plague him, he pressed on right up to the end.

He left a legacy of mission. Leaders without a purpose are like ships without a rudder. Although they have vigor and passion, they move about aimlessly and often in vain. Successful leaders have a distinct sense of mission, deftly steering their ships toward a desired destination and encouraging others to follow. If a documentary was made chronicling Olyn's life, it would be said his mission was to serve his God by loving and serving others. And Olyn was always encouraging others to follow his example to the world.

He left a legacy of mentoring. In any relay race, the moment of passing the baton is most critical. Of course, this is true in life. Olyn picked up the baton from those who went before him: parents, teachers, pastors, etc. --- and he ran with it. He would not allow obstacles to stop him from completing his run.

**Giving Thanks for Olyn:
A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends**

Now the baton has been passed to those whose lives Olyn touched. As the author of Proverbs say, "iron sharpens iron." Yes, Olyn, you were the iron that sharpened many of a life. What you did for me in the few years we knew each other is too much to put into words. I look forward to renewing our acquaintance in the new earth Jesus has prepared for us.

Sincerely,
Adolph Pavel



From Pat Hawley

MY FRIEND – OLYN HOWSER
YOU ARE HOME SAFE NOW

We are all here for a reason. I know I was meant to meet Olyn Howser... I played a small role in his life compared to so many. We met in Bible Basics, a class that met at 7pm on Monday nights. He loved the fellowship of that class.

He loved the snacks we all brought too!!! I was the alternate pick up or drop off person when Osten had his hands full. Tuesday was dinner and a movie night at Starplex Cinema. You can watch a movie for .50 cents!!! And Sonic always had a special - buy one – get one free. Olyn loved burgers with mustard and everything on it. The man would scarf it up! Several members of the church went with us too.

After the movie, I would drop him off and he would say, "call me when you get home so I know you got there safe." At Christmas time I would drive him and others around to look at the lights and we would sing carols.

Olyn would call me almost every day. I was often one of his 30-second phone calls, (Hi Pat, how are you? Sister ok? Dogs ok? That's good. You get some rest.) I was a "frequent flyer" or visitor when he was in rehab in Northgate, or Rock Island Rd., or Summerville Assisted Living, Baylor, and finally Hospice. I saw him when his heart was broken at the thought of not ever walking again, or when he realized he could no longer do the clothes closet/food pantry, or when he realized he could never go back home. He tried to never cry in front of me. The cancer was a shock on top of all his other health issues. Toward the end I raced down the hallway for a nurse when he was in pain. I watched him sleep and fell asleep myself. We often "slept together."

I was with Olyn when they put him on Hospice care that Saturday afternoon. He was concerned about how he was going to pay everybody. I told him he didn't have to worry about it anymore.

Olyn died the next day - Sunday at 12:32 pm. He waited until church was out and his church family could get there. I know in my heart Olyn made it Home safe. "God be with you til we meet again."

Pat Hawley



Giving Thanks for Olyn: A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends

From Cheryl Hopkins

You may find that a lot of stories about Olyn are about three central items: Food, Phone Calls, and Prayers. Mine starts with food.

I remember the first time I met Olyn Howser. I was not a member of Northgate yet. Our family was part of Troop 175 and was helping with our first back-to-school program back when it was still held in the Narthex. I walk up with my cooler and box of donuts and Olyn is sitting on his stool at the front door helping with the flow of traffic. He smiles and says, "A woman of my heart, she must have food."

We start joking around about the food and he lets me pass. I bring him back a donut and an orange juice, and to me, that was the start of a wonderful friendship. Even though I credit Grady Sims with actually inviting me into the church, every time I was there, Olyn took the time to welcome and talk to me.

Once I got involved with VBS, age level, and etc., anytime I needed help doing anything (even as Olyn got less mobile), he would say, "Cheryl, if there's anything I can do, let me know." So you would see his face at VBS registration, Easter Egg Hunts, taking guesses on candy corn, and Fall Festivals handling the lollipop booth and helping Dorothy with the money.

I remember him staying to help with a VBS workday after he had helped at clothes closet in the morning and saying to me, "I don't want busy work. I want to actually help." I looked at him and laughed and said, "We don't have time for busy work here." That day, he, Mary and Connie Smith, helped organize the fun foam alphabet letters and I'm happy to say they are still in their little bags and easily accessible.

I got my share of quick little phone calls, too. Only at the time, I didn't realize everyone else was getting them, too. A lot of my phone calls ended up on the answering machine. "Cheryl, this is Olyn. Wanted to see how the family was. Hi Stefan, Hi Dan. Bye." When he was in the nursing home, etc., that phone call was always a wake-up call to go visit. And the next day would find me at his doorstep. Boy, do I miss those phone calls!

When I first started at Northgate, and Olyn was sitting in the back of 8:15 Service, it always amazed me the number of people Olyn knew that was on his prayer list. At first I wondered if all his friends were sick – maybe it wasn't a good thing being his friend. (smile!). But then I finally realized how many people he was friends with.

If you were Olyn's friend, you were his friend for life. And he took the time to pray for everyone with a concern. He was God's Prayer Warrior.

Even though he is not here with us today, I feel he is still praying for and with us, just in a much nicer place. Like everyone who was friends with Olyn, I miss him, but keep remembering, "We shall meet again!"

Cheryl Hopkins



Giving Thanks for Olyn: A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends

From Judy Foster

Olyn was a "bottom-line" guy. His phone calls were short and to the point, which usually consisted of, "Hi! How are you and everybody? Goodbye." (He reminded me of Sgt. Friday on the TV show Dragnet---"Just the facts, Ma'am." Olyn's lifeline was his phone and he kept in-touch with MANY people. When Olyn would come up for the "Class of '39 Breakfast" and stay with my mother and me, he would use my cell phone on Sunday afternoons to make his weekly calls. (I had the "unlimited minutes on weekends" plan for my cell phone, so while I took my usual Sunday afternoon nap, Olyn talked.)

Olyn became a benefactor to our Mannsville United Methodist Church and it all started when my mother, Wilma Bone Foster, sent Olyn a note thanking him for providing Sunday School literature to our church. Olyn and Mom were both members of the Ardmore class of 1939 and their pictures were even side-by-side in their annual. (I don't think that they knew each other when they were in school, but they got acquainted at their 50th year class reunion. I think that was when my mom and dad got on his telephone list.)

The first Saturday of the month was the day when members of the class of '39 would get together for breakfast. After finally talking Olyn into joining the group, he would come up to spend the weekend so that he could go to church up here too. On those weekends he would come up, Olyn would sit inside my screened-in front porch, listen to the birds, and smell the coffee. He never drank any, but Olyn loved to smell it.

Olyn was cheap. He absolutely HATED spending money on himself! Some of his shirts had to have been over 30 years old. He drove a 1968 Chevrolet Impala that he had inherited from his mother and it had more dents in it than my mother's car! His wheel chair came from a yard sale. It was old and weighed a ton! (When going to the breakfasts, I'd put his wheelchair in the trunk and Mom's wheelchair next to him in the back seat.) But.... his wheelchair only cost him \$5.00.

Olyn was a generous man. He gave our church money to send children to camp, teenagers to go to college, and most of the money needed to build our new sanctuary. We dedicated our new sanctuary last Sunday, September 20. Our bishop, district superintendent, and most of our former pastors were in attendance. Olyn's military flag that he had requested my mother to have is now framed and will be given a permanent home in our church, for Olyn will always be a part of our church legacy.

Olyn brought Texas and Oklahoma together---Northgate and Mannsville Methodist. Through him, we have made new friends.

He was stubborn. He was demanding. He was kind. He was thoughtful. I loved him and I MISS him. God Bless You, Olyn Howser!!!!

Judy Foster



Giving Thanks for Olyn: A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends

From Linda Lanier

I remember when I first quit smoking. At first Olyn would call just about every day to say something like, “Well, day 2—how’s it going?” or “Day 9 now! Way to go!” That lasted for a good many days in a row. Then it became weekly, “Week number 9! Good for you!” It was so encouraging to know he was pulling for me; it really helped strengthen my resolve. He would call me just about every week, long after I’d gotten over the constant urge to smoke. Sometimes, his call took me by surprise. I’d think, “Oh yeah, I did used to smoke.” Olyn always remembered and was sweet to encourage me in a way that was genuine. He even remembered the yearly anniversaries and would call every January to congratulate me on another year of being smoke-free. When I think about how the Lord helped me quit, Olyn was a big part of that.

I also remember just about every time he called, I would answer the phone and he’d say, “Well lucky me!” Like he was the lucky one because he was talking to me. That really made me feel good, but I knew the truth: I was the one who was blessed by knowing Olyn and counting myself his friend. He always wanted to know how Jon and the boys were doing. He just cared about everyone. Sometimes I’d go to his house for lunch. He liked cheeseburgers with mustard (or was it no mustard?) so I’d bring Sonic and we’d shoot the breeze for a while. Always with a blessing first. It was such a sweet respite during a hectic workday, sitting there getting caught up and looking out over the view of the park (and the ducks) from his patio window, sometimes with little Mikey, the neighbor’s poodle, putting in his two cents.

A dear friend, Adolph, passed along to me an old Bible that Olyn’s dad had carried in the war and that was passed down to Olyn. I am blessed to have such a meaningful memento of Olyn. I never knew a whole lot about his early life, but I will never forget the man he was. Tall, gentle, authoritative when he needed to be. I remember him being at Northgate’s annual Back to School program early, early in the morning on those August Saturdays, before anyone else, and all the folks would be lined up, parents and grandparents with their little ones. Olyn was always at the head of the line, head and shoulders above everyone else, with his clipboard, getting them all signed in and ensuring order and a peaceful process, with a kind word here and there.

And the effect he had on the teenagers that would come, sometimes against their will, to help out in the Clothes Closet. He had them laughing and happy to help. A few even came back when their community service had been worked off. He just had that effect on people.

He wasn’t perfect, but I learned a lot from him and was very blessed to know him. He was my friend and I miss him.

Linda Lanier



**Giving Thanks for Olyn:
A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends**

From Melba Dobbins

Olyn loved a bargain. I used to work in the church office when Barbara Cardwell was ill or on vacation, and that was when Olyn was still able to drive and do things for himself. He spent a great deal of time in the church office doing whatever it was he did there, and when I was working, he always wanted to bring lunch. He loved to get the "five for five dollars" sandwiches at Arby's, and that was what he would bring for our lunch, and they always tasted so good because we shared them. He used to give me money to buy some item for the church, and he would always say, "Now you know this is coming out of your inheritance." Well, I was pretty sure we had used up our inheritance, but little did I know what he had in store for our inheritance.

Melba Dobbins



From Janan Weeks

My memories of Olyn are:

You could always count on a call from Olyn on your birthday. He would also call and let church members know when someone was ill or needed prayers.

I'll always remember him greeting everyone as we entered the early service on Sunday mornings. Before he started having health problems, he would greet and pass out the bulletins. He would sit on the bench at the back of the dome sanctuary and always have a smile on his face.

I feel his compassion for others will be missed more than anything. He'll be missed, but never forgotten.

Janan Weeks



**Giving Thanks for Olyn:
A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends**

From Ann Black

Olyn's passing did have me thinking of all the kind, sweet, and thoughtful things he was always doing. After the passing of Hazel Paige, Olyn took over on his own calling all of us on all event reminders - he would call and wish us happy birthdays, anniversaries, etc. He would call at the hospital to see how we were doing from any procedures that we were having done, etc. He would then let us know how someone else was doing from their procedures. In other words, he was our email before there was email.

Also, we personally talked about Ardmore a lot, especially times during the 50's and early 60's. I spent more than several summers visiting in Ardmore, as a dear friend of mine had moved to Ardmore with her family from Wichita Falls ... fun memories of Ardmore and nearby Lake Murray where Olyn grew up.

Olyn never failed to gently fuss at you if you were doing something he deemed unacceptable, but that was OK - so did my Mom and Dad. Yes, he was a father figure to our kids as well as "old" kids.

Thanks for the memories, Olyn.

Ann Black



From Ruth Kelley

Olyn Howser was my Very Best Friend. I knew Olyn in so many ways. He was Always there for me in every situation over the years. I felt like he helped raise my kids & then their kids in his fine words and advice he would pass along when I ask for his advice. He always took time to call every day and check on us. He would listen then if you wanted his opinion he would give it to you. He was one of the most kind and Christian man I will ever know.

His wise and kind words will be missed by me. Thank God for allowing me to share my time with him while he was here on earth. We enjoyed going shopping and eating out. He loved shrimp & Chinese food & salads. He always had an interesting story to tell about his life adventures. My grandson Zachary has your car and he is making it a classic just like you, Olyn. He will be missed for a long time.

A very dear Man & My Best Friend.

Ruth Kelley & Family



**Giving Thanks for Olyn:
A Collection of Memories From His Family and Friends**

From Osten Aune

GOD BE WITH YOU TILL WE MEET AGAIN

I am sure that Olyn would be embarrassed for all of the attention given to him now.

- For Olyn always pointed toward God; and never pointed to himself.
- Olyn always worked for God's Glory; and never for his glory.
- Olyn was always a humble, hardworking, servant of God,

"Well done, good and faithful servant ... welcome into the joy of the Lord."

One of the greatest gifts that Olyn ever gave me was the discipline of prayer; especially before meals. Olyn's life was transformed by God and through God, Olyn's life has transformed me, and what transforms my life has the potential to transform the life of others. Olyn will always continue to be my mentor, friend, and constant companion. Olyn will always be in my heart and always in my mind.

Osten Aune



From Joanne Walden

Olyn always sat at the very end of the table in our Sunday School class. He was always the one with the most current "scoop" on everyone in the church when we shared our concerns and celebrations. His reports weren't terribly long, but they told you everything you needed to know: "So & so in first service is having surgery this week. So & so's sister in Arkansas needs our prayers. So & so's home from the hospital."

The chair at the end of the table is empty now, but I know I can still feel his presence. It's a gentle reminder of what we all need to do – love one another as Christ has loved us. We were blessed by having Olyn in our lives – now it's up to us to go and share that blessing.

Joanne Walden



Northgate United Methodist Church – Mission Statement

Our mission is to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and to love our neighbors as ourselves – serving all, especially our community, with the outreaching love of Jesus Christ.