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6-29-2017

Thomas H. Evans

Thomas H. Evans died peacefully on Friday June 23, 2017, in the Mayflower Community Health Center. His wife Rey was at his bedside and his daughters and family had been present during the day. He had lived in retirement at Mayflower for 17 years.

Tom was born November 17, 1939, in Sheboygan Wis., where his father was long-time Congregational minister. He was the youngest of four sons born to Maude and Wilford Hunt Evans.

In the fall of 1958 Tom enrolled at Swarthmore College, a Quaker school near Philadelphia; he graduated with a major in English Literature in 1962. In the fall of 1962 he entered an executive training program for department managers at Strawbridge and Clothier, a large retail company in downtown Philadelphia. Following completion of that training he was an assistant department manager in the Housewares department for another year.

In 1964 he left retailing and entered Chicago Theological Seminary to prepare for ministry in the United Church of Christ. He graduated with Honors in the class of 1968 and thereafter became the Minister of Christian Education at First-Plymouth Congregational Church UCC in Lincoln, Neb., where he served for five years.

Tom was married to his first wife, Linda Baker in 1965; they had three daughters, Jennifer, Karen, and Martha. In 1983 Thomas and Linda Evans were divorced. In 1984 Thomas married Edith Rey Dunker in Des Moines.

Thomas was very active in the local, Conference and National Church of the United Church of Christ. In 1973, he became pastor of the UCC Congregational Church in Whitewater, Wis. In 1978, Thomas was called to the Iowa Conference UCC in Des Moines, Iowa, where he served as Associate Minister in Christian Education, Youth Ministry and Camping for eight years. During this period, he was elected to serve as secretary for the National Advisory Committee of Outdoor Ministries of the United Church Board of Homeland Ministries, and he served for 11 years. 1987, he became Associate Conference Minister for the Massachusetts Conference UCC.

In 1992, he became pastor of the Congregational UCC in Melrose, Mass., where he served until his retirement in 2000. He then lived in New York City for two years, and moved to the Mayflower Community in 2002.

Thomas was active in the life of Mayflower, but became less so as his health declined. He enjoyed classical music, and was an avid reader of both fiction and non-fiction with a special love for spy/espionage novels and murder mysteries. He and Rey enjoyed concerts, date nights out at favorite Des Moines restaurants, movies and shopping, as well as visits with children and grandchildren in both Des Moines and Ankeny.

Thomas was preceded in death by his parents and his older brother David. In addition to Rey he is survived by three daughters, Jennifer Evans of Des Moines, Karen Evans (David) of Buckley, Mich., and Martha (Troy) Errthum of Knoxville, Iowa, and grandsons Trevor, Travis and Tanner. He is also survived by two brothers, the Rev. Stephen Evans of West Bend, Wis., and the Rev. Hugh Evans of Chelmsford, Mass.

Thomas was cremated and his ashes will be interred in the Crystal Lake Township Cemetery near his family cottage at Frankfort, Mich. Memorials may be directed to the Mayflower Community Human Needs Fund.

