



Bill Akason

November 3, 1940 - April 27, 2026

Bill Akason, 85, of Oskaloosa passed away Monday morning, April 27, 2026, at UnityPoint Iowa Methodist Medical Center in Des Moines, Iowa.

On June 1, 1968, Bill married Melba Mendenhall at College Avenue Friends Meeting in Oskaloosa, IA. They had three sons, Philip Andrew, b. 1969; Mark Olaf, b. 1971; and Joel Allen, b. 1975. Bill was also a proud grandfather to six granddaughters and one grandson.

William Burton Akason was born on November 3, 1940, in Halstad, Minnesota, the son of Esther and Martin Akason. He sang his first public solo as a second grader in the Sunday School Christmas Pageant at Halstad Lutheran Church. He joined the adult choir as an 8th grader. After high school, Bill continued with music at Concordia College in Moorhead, MN, graduating with a Bachelor of Music degree.

He began his music teaching career in Aitkin, MN. This experience solidified

his love of teaching music, which led him to pursue his master's in music from the University of Iowa. He then began his 34-year career as a choir teacher in the Oskaloosa School District. He retired from teaching in 2000.

Bill was an active member of the music community in Oskaloosa for many years. He proudly served for 38 years as the choir director at the St. Paul Congregational Church. Bill loved to refer to them as his "little Mormon Tabernacle Choir." After retiring as the church's choir director, he continued to share his love of music by singing in the choir and men's quartet at the Central United Methodist Church. Bill also enjoyed being a music accompanist for his friend, Twink Vatter, at the Presbyterian Church. He participated in the Oskaloosa Community Theater throughout the years. His favorite role was as the Rabbi in the musical Fiddler on the Roof, where he enjoyed entertaining the audience with his creative blessings.

Bill was a life-member in the Iowa Choral Directors' Association (ICDA). He held various board and committee positions and enjoyed participating as a judge in state-wide singing competitions.

Bill was an avid reader and passionate supporter of the Oskaloosa Public

Library,
serving in many volunteer roles throughout the years. He also believed
strongly in every
individual's right to vote. He proudly served as a lead voting precinct volunteer
at Grant
Elementary School.

Bill enjoyed traveling throughout the world with family and friends. One of his
fondest
memories was of riding a camel in the African desert. Bill and Melba loved
traveling
together to Alaska. After Melba's passing, Bill continued to visit the state
frequently. His
travels also enhanced his love of genealogy as he visited many locations
throughout the
world from which his ancestors originated. Bill's family is now well equipped
with many
folders of genealogical information.

Bill took great joy in following his grandchildren's lives. He carefully kept track
and often
reported out on their activities, making every effort to show up, whether in
person or
virtually. His presence and engagement with the family remained until the very
end.

His family includes his son Philip and wife Ginger, and their daughters, Logan
Daniels
(Will) and Lindsey; his son Mark and wife Megan, and their children, Taylor,
Lauren, and
Will; and his son Joel and wife Beth, and their daughters, Brenna and Morgan.

In addition to his wife, Melba, on January 30, 2010, Bill was preceded in death by his parents, his stepfather, Norman Aamodt, a brother, James, and a stepsister, Lois Kuhn.

Memorial services for Bill will be held at 10:30 a.m., on Saturday, May 23, 2026, at the Central United Methodist Church with Pastor Jihoon Lee officiating. Burial will be in Forest Cemetery. The visitation will begin at 11 a.m. on Friday at Langkamp Funeral Chapel; the family will greet visitors from 5 to 7 p.m. Memorial contributions can be made to the Oskaloosa Schools Vocal Music program and Central United Methodist Church.

Cemetery Details

Forest Cemetery

934 North 9th ST
Oskaloosa, IA 52577
secretary@forestcemetery.com
<http://www.forestcemetery.org/>

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 22. 11:00 AM (CT)

Langkamp Funeral Chapel & Crematory
2116 N 3rd St
Oskaloosa, IA 52577
(641) 672-2181
langkampfuneralchapel@gmail.com
<https://www.langkampfuneralchapel.com>

The family will greet visitors from 5-7 p.m.

Memorial Service

MAY 23. 10:30 AM (CT)

Central United Methodist Church Kent Chapel
201 North Market ST
Oskaloosa, IA 52577

Tribute Wall



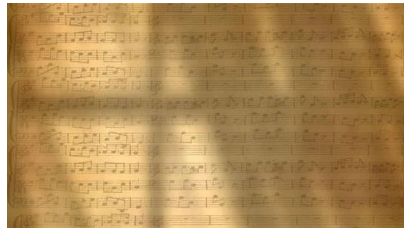
“ *Langkamp Funeral Chapel & Crematory created a Memorial Service for Bill Akason in memory of Bill Akason*



Langkamp Funeral Chapel & Crematory - May 22 at 11:02 AM



“ *Langkamp Funeral Chapel & Crematory created a Tribute Video in memory of Bill Akason*



Langkamp Funeral Chapel & Crematory - May 15 at 01:02 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Bill Akason.*



May 22 at 11:17 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Bill Akason.

May 22 at 11:17 AM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Bill Akason.



May 21 at 10:49 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Bill Akason.

May 21 at 10:49 PM



“ A grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Bill Akason.

May 20 at 08:28 PM

QU

“ An obit misses so much of Bill’s life and character. I got to know Bill first of all as the Jr high music teacher and then as a member of my choir at CUMC, where he also became a sub accompanist when Carolyn was ill. He then joined the Grandad’s quartet at accompanist and when Tom Holmberg died, he filled in as baritone until he lost his voice, so he went back to the piano. His most important role though, was as coach to the quartet. He was so willing to assist, fill in, help in so many ways. He became like a brother to me. I miss him dearly.

quinton - May 20 at 07:29 AM

BL

“ I so appreciated Bill; as a teacher, a cohort in Osky Comm Theater’s production of *The Music Man*, as a part of the St Paul Congregational Church choir, and as a friend. I like to think we had a special connection over the years and I will miss him terribly. Had just seen him the week before and he was always happy to see you and full of optimism! Barb Sunstrum Lindenmayer

Barb Lindenmayer - May 15 at 04:00 PM



“ Miranda Dillon lit a candle in memory of Bill Akason



Miranda Dillon - May 15 at 03:10 PM



“ I remember him so well. Choir was always a blast. Learning to read music and singing together was the highlight of my junior high years. You will be greatly missed.

Miranda Dillon - May 15 at 03:10 PM



“ Bill was a great Guy, friend, and neighbor and will be missed dearly. May he be with his best friend and wife Melba.

Tom Walling - May 12 at 11:35 AM



“ Bill will forever be Mr. A. He was a great teacher and later a good friend. RIP Mr. A. The heavens just gained a great choral directory
❤️

Mary Wisbrock - May 11 at 08:21 PM



“ Kathryn E. purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Bill Akason.



Kathryn E. - May 10 at 05:32 PM



“ Kathryn E. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bill Akason.

Kathryn E. - May 10 at 05:32 PM

SD

“ As the son of Beverly Akason Ditmer and the grandson of Elmer Akason, I sought out Bill in 2018 after my mother passed. Bill provided me with family contacts in Norway that I have now twice visited. He provided a wealth of other family history as well. I cherish that afternoon spent in his Oscaloosa home.

Steven Ditmer - May 10 at 10:56 AM

DC

“ Bill was one of a kind. The Akason relatives thank him for all the research and writing he did about the legacy of the Akason family. He will be missed. God Bless Bill Akason RIP.

Dennis Craig - May 10 at 10:21 AM

CG

“ Phil, Mark & Joel
Your father's impact as a teacher was immeasurable. I hope you find comfort in knowing how many lives he influenced.
Cyndy Gray

Cyndy Gray - May 09 at 05:43 PM

DG

“ RIP Mr. Akason

Diana Gordin - May 02 at 09:44 AM

MV

“ *Mr. Akason was a teacher, friend and a prince of a fellow!*

God Bless Mr. Akason, my condolences to your family!

Mike Vogt



Mike Vogt - May 01 at 09:26 PM

MT

“ *Remember Mr. Akason fondly!*

Marvel Tomlinson - April 30 at 09:45 PM



“ *My condolences to you all. Mr Akason was my favorite teacher of all time - because he saw me and encouraged my love for music. I wasn't brave for many teachers, but with him, I could try new parts of music and played my first piano accompaniment in public. I treasure my time under his instruction and always will.*

Deb Northcutt - April 30 at 05:29 PM

SK

“ *Me. Akason was a great choir director, a great communicator, and a great man.*

May he rest in peace.

Sarah Kehlenbeck - April 30 at 12:13 AM

SA

What a great man, he built my confidence more than I think any teacher or instructor ever did at such a important time in life. He was my choirs director from 7th to 9th grade. Many funny unforgettable memories. The patience this man had was out of this world! Rest in Peace Mr. Akason!

Sandy Andesron-Hewitt - April 30 at 01:24 PM

A(

“ *I was privileged to have Mr Bill Akason as a choir director in middle school, but what I remember most about Mr Akason is the feeling that he gave me after only knowing me one day of choir... he took me off guard in the hallway when he saw me and said my name with a smile on his face- like I was a friend & he was glad to see me. In his presence- no matter who you were - he made you feel like you were part of his music family. Even years after graduating he would always say hi when he saw me. I feel blessed to have been part of his music family at oskaloosa junior high. If I even make one student feel like I did when I saw him I've done my job as an orchestra teacher.*

Angela McDonald (Witzenburg) - April 29 at 10:24 PM

RJ

“ I was honored to meet Bill at the Election Precinct Ward 4. We had just moved into the ward so this was our first time voting at Grant. Believe me, Bill definitely had things under control. When the next election came I found myself as a volunteer and working with this marvelous human. I learned a lot from Bill including his wonderful sense of humor—put to test following closing of the polls. It was a requirement that the election materials be returned to the court house and accounted. A Democrat and a Republican were to take the material back. I told Bill we could load the stuff into my pickup, take it back and then I would bring him back to get his vehicle at the Grant building. Now it being late at night and B Ave E being very dark, I pulled into the driveway and Bill started laughing—took me a bit to realize I had missed judged the driveway and we were headed straight for the front doors on the SIDEWALK. Thereafter, he always drove us to the courthouse. If I volunteered, Bill would just look me in the eyes and laugh. I’ll miss him. RIP.

Roger Johannes - April 29 at 09:18 PM

JV

“ I have always remember our music Director and loved having his education. A great leader in the Oskaloosa School system and greatly appreciated for all his teaching. God bless him in heaven and prayers to all family members also know to many of us. He is in a much better place now looking down at all of us. Blessings from Joni Van Ommen, Place, Vaughn.

Joni Vaughn - April 29 at 08:45 PM

JP

“ Mr. Akason was a terrific choir director. He always guided us to be the best choir we could be. In addition, he was the choir director at my church. (St. Paul's Congregational UCC) I was so honored when he came to my mom's funeral service in Des Moines and he sang at my dad's service. He was a great man. Prayers for his family.

Judy Penland - April 29 at 07:13 PM

JA

“ Bill was my choir director. I am so very sorry to hear of his passing. My deepest sympathy to the family!!!!

Jan Atkins - April 29 at 06:12 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Bill Akason.



April 29 at 06:11 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Bill Akason.

April 29 at 06:11 PM

TB

“ Thank you for being a great teacher. You sat me in a room with a piano and a recorder and had me sing to make up missing class. I can still hear your singing voice. Bless you and your family.

Teri Brown - April 29 at 04:26 PM

JP

“ *Mr. Akason was a great man. From the first time I met him in 8th grade chorus and every time I saw him through the years. He always tools the time to connect with me and see how I was doing. He will be missed. Prayers to his family.*

Josh Petersen - April 29 at 02:59 PM

AA

“ *The way his face lit up while teaching, I can still see like it was yesterday- 30 years later. He was so passionate, and talented. I'll forever be grateful to have had his instruction, and see the joy music brings to the soul!*

Amanda Almond (Van Auken) - April 29 at 11:08 AM

DH

“ *Deepest sympathies to Bill's family. I knew Bill through the Iowa Choral Director's Association. He was a kind, caring man and I looked forward to seeing him every year at our choral conductor's symposium and at our retired choir day more recently. He is conducting an angelic choir now.*

Dawn Hutchison - April 29 at 10:31 AM

CB

“ *What can I say about Bill Akason? He was such a wonderful person to be around, and he had a lovely singing voice. My best Bill story is when I ran into him in Hy-Vee about a year after Melba died. He called me over because I am a 'Home Ec person,' to ask me a food question. He was regularly making ham steaks for dinner and was browning them in a skillet. He wanted to know if there was another way to brown them. I told him he could use his broiler, and he asked 'what's a broiler?' I tried to explain what and where it was, but I finally told him he should just keep browning the ham in a skillet since that was working just fine!*

My sympathies to his family and friends; the world is lonelier place without him.

Cheryl Benson - April 29 at 10:28 AM

JE

“ *Jill Ewing lit a candle in memory of Bill Akason*



Jill Ewing - April 29 at 10:21 AM

VC

“ *Such a sweet, kind, joyful man who influenced many! May you rest in the loving arms of Jesus!*

Vickie Ches - April 29 at 09:48 AM

LD

“ *Our sympathy to the family N our prayers N thoughts are with/you all Linda N John Dixon Olathe Ks*



Linda Dixon - April 29 at 09:38 AM

RM

“ *Robert Morrison lit a candle in memory of Bill Akason*



robert morrison - April 29 at 01:47 AM

KB

“ *Bill was wonderful man, a positive role-model and influence through generations of our family in school settings and church. His leadership and music direction always resulted in a superior and moving performances! Bill was always kind, attentive. and funny. We were all blessed to know him, there will never be another like Bill Akason. Kathy and Tim Besco*



Kathleen Ann Besco - April 29 at 01:29 AM

JS

“ Jerry & Chris Slobe lit a candle in memory of Bill Akason



Jerry & Chris Slobe - April 28 at 11:34 PM

RC

“ Bill was our choir director when I pastored First Congregational UCC. He was such a talented musician, colleague, and friend. We have kept in touch with each other all these years, which has been a blessing. I am truly heartbroken that he is now gone, but I know he is at peace in God's eternal realm, reunited with Melba once again. My heart goes out to his family. Rest in peace, my friend.

Rev. Casey Cain - April 28 at 10:03 PM

LH

“ First a treasured teacher, then a beloved friend. Heart broken. Much love to all who knew this delightful human...he will be missed. Special love to his family. Sigh.

Lynn Hodgeman - April 28 at 09:18 PM

CA

Well stated Lynn.

Cathy Angle - April 28 at 09:24 PM

SG

Agreed!

Shirley Goemaat - April 28 at 09:43 PM

MW

Ahh Mr. A One of my favorites. Remember going to his wedding when I was in High School. He sang at our wedding. RIP Mr. A!! You were one of a kind!

Mary Wisbrock - April 28 at 11:28 PM

JR

He was the best.

Jane Reynolds - April 29 at 03:44 PM

CA

“ *One of my favorite teachers, and a friend that belonged to my church. He will be missed.*

Cathy Angle - April 28 at 08:43 PM

BN

“ *Becky Netten lit a candle in memory of Bill Akason*



Becky Netten - April 28 at 07:12 PM

DV

“ *Mr. Akason was truly a wonderful man..He and his wife Melba truly cared for Oskaloosa students... My sympathy to his friends and family.*

Diann McMains Vermeer - April 28 at 07:11 PM



“ *Mr. Akason was a great chorus instructor in middle school. He helped me to continue my love for music all through my life. I still love to sing today. Rest in peace and my God be with your family during their loss.*

Jennifer Bennett - April 28 at 07:06 PM

LW

“ *Bill was first my teacher, then many years later, my friend. He was truly THE person who inspired me to become an educator. He encouraged me, advised me and helped me see my self worth. My deepest condolences to the family. All of us who knew him were blessed.*

Laura Larsen (nee Webster) - April 28 at 06:10 PM