



## Thomas Dunbar

March 6, 1935 - March 28, 2025

On Friday, March 28, 2025, Thomas “Tom” Lee Dunbar, 90, closed his eyes at his home in Oskaloosa, Iowa, and opened them in the presence of his Lord and Savior, finally seeing face to face the One he so loved.

Tom, the son of Mark Verill and Isabel Panter (Healam) Dunbar, was born March 6, 1935, in Okanogan, Washington. He grew up with his family in nearby Methow, Washington, where he helped with the family store and his dad’s apple orchard until his graduation from Pateros High School in 1953. Tom then attended Cascade College in Portland, Oregon, where he earned a BA in Religion, and briefly attended Western Evangelical Seminary. He then spent the remainder of his life in ministry to God whether through foreign missions, pastoring churches, teaching, or translating.

On the morning of June 8, 1957, Tom graduated from college and that evening, he married his college sweetheart, Ellen Ida Dregnie. While on a college music missions trip to Mexico, God impressed upon his heart a call to serve in full time missions. In preparation for serving with World Gospel Mission, Ellen received a nursing degree and Tom pastored a Free Methodist church in Carlton, Oregon. Beginning in 1961, Tom and Ellen spent the next 40 years serving God in various ways on multiple mission fields, both domestic and foreign. They served in Honduras, the Mexico field while living in McAllen, Texas, and Paraguay, as well as in Oregon, while pastoring the Portland First Free Methodist Church. Upon retirement in 2002, they moved to Oskaloosa, Iowa, to be near family. They remained until 2008, when Tom felt the urge to

move back to, as he would say, “God’s Country”: North-Central Washington. Tom and Ellen then lived in Chelan, Washington, near Tom’s childhood home in Methow until health concerns and a desire to be closer to their children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren led them back to Oskaloosa in 2021. Prior to leaving for Honduras on their first foreign missions’ assignment, Tom and Ellen attended language school in Costa Rica, where Tom discovered a true love for the Spanish language (which he claimed would be the official language of Heaven) and for the Latin American people. This dual love followed him for the remainder of his life, and in his retirement he poured his time and energy into translating books, ministering to and teaching English to migrant workers in Chelan, and continuing his own studies, using his Spanish Bible for daily devotions until the day he died.

Tom’s life verse was found in John 15:16, and it is fair to say that he lived it out: “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you” (NIV). Tom has left behind him a true legacy amongst everyone who had the privilege of knowing him. His love for his God, his wife, and his family—in that order—followed him until the moment of his death, and his family is grateful for the incredible example he has provided.

Tom Dunbar is survived by his wife of almost 68 years, Ellen, along with their five children: DeAnne (Mark) Doll of Oskaloosa, IA, Mark (Serena) Dunbar of Saltillo, Mexico, Kevin (Nancy) Dunbar of Newberg, OR, Beth (KC) Adams of St. Helens, OR, and Angela (Gene) Johnson of Motley, MN. He also leaves behind his 13 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren, and three siblings: Virgil (Lorraine) Dunbar of Portland, OR; Dorothy Harvey of Phoenix, AZ; and Mary Webb of Methow, WA.

He is preceded in death by his parents.

Tom’s memorial celebration will be held at Gateway Nazarene Church in Oskaloosa, Iowa, at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 5. There will not be a

visitation time. In lieu of flowers, you might want to consider giving to the Tom Dunbar Memorial through World Gospel Mission ([wgm.org/tom-dunbar-memorial](http://wgm.org/tom-dunbar-memorial)) which will help fund new missionaries from Latin America. Langkamp Funeral Chapel & Crematory has been entrusted with the arrangements for Tom.

# Cemetery Details

## Methow Cemetery

Backcast Rd  
Pateros, WA 98846

# Previous Events

## Memorial Celebration

APR 5. 9:00 AM (CT)

Gateway Nazarene Church  
140 Gateway Dr  
Oskaloosa, IA 52577

*Reverend Mark Doll will be officiating.*

# Tribute Wall



“ *Langkamp Funeral Chapel & Crematory created a A Service of Celebration and Remembrance for Tom in memory of Thomas Dunbar*



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**Langkamp Funeral Chapel & Crematory** - April 05, 2025 at 12:37 PM

NC

“ *Tom was a blessing to our family, as I am sure he was to so many other families. Praying for you. I'm thankful for the connections he made over the years.*

*Love,  
From the Cox family*

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**nicolle cox** - April 06, 2025 at 12:28 AM

DO

“ *I'm sorry to hear of Tom's passing and express my deepest condolences to his loved ones. When Tom and I served together in the Oskaloosa Kiwanis Club, I found him to be a delightful member of our organization. He was kind, humble and compassionate, always with a positive outlook. His life was his testimony of the Lord, and his memory will be cherished by so many.*

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**Diane Ottosson** - April 03, 2025 at 09:05 PM

JP

“ Tom and Ellen at a wedding shower given by our FM Church in Gresham, Oregon many years ago.



judie Whetzell Peterson - April 03, 2025 at 07:41 PM

JP

Tom and Ellen 1957 at a wedding shower given by our little church in Gresham, Oregon.

judie Whetzell Peterson - April 03, 2025 at 07:43 PM

JP

“ A picture of Tom at a wedding shower given for him and Ellen at our little Free Methodist Church in Gresham, Oregon. They were very loved there all those many years ago!



judie Whetzell Peterson - April 03, 2025 at 07:32 PM

JS

“ Such a beautifully written tribute for a life so well-lived! I did not meet meet Brother Tom here, but i know i will someday. My condolences to Mark and DeAnne Doll, and especially to his wife Ellen.

Jean Stanford - April 03, 2025 at 11:23 AM

RD

“ What a loving sweet friend who knew how to speak Truth with Grace. My wife has heard me say, "when I grow up, I want to be like Tom". I'm late 70's now and still working on that. Our choir director, Steve Sturtz, would put me next to Tom in the bass section. Tom had perfect pitch - I was loud - we were a great team and he taught me so much. I can't wait to see you again amigo - in heaven this time. My prayers and love to Ellen and the family. What a Legacy you leave behind!!

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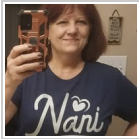
**Ray Dobbs** - April 02, 2025 at 07:22 PM

DM

“ Fondlest memories of times spent with Brother Tom. I cherish those memories. The Lord will bring comfort to the hearts of his precious family. I say this with full assurance, for I too have experienced that comfort. God bless the Dunbar family.

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**Dr. Robert Morris** - April 02, 2025 at 06:20 PM



“ Tom will forever hold a special place in my heart, as will Ellen. Two very special people that weathered an extremely difficult time with me, while in Paraguay, South America. Tom certainly heard, "well done, thy good and faithful servant", as he entered into eternity. I will be looking forward to a big reunion in heaven some day.  
Jacqueline Myers

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**Jacqueline Myers** - April 02, 2025 at 05:36 PM

DW

“ It was a blessing to know Tom for the short amount of time that I did! To Ellen, Deanne and all of the family, I am sorry for your loss. Blessings to you all! - Denita

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**Denita West** - April 02, 2025 at 02:52 PM