



Eric Alan Stone

December 7, 1965 - September 8, 2023

ADRIAN- Eric Alan Stone, 57, of Adrian, Michigan completed his earthly journey early Friday morning, September 8, 2023, at home surrounded by his family. Hospice of Lenawee helped Eric and his family complete his journey with terminal cancer.

Eric was born on December 7, 1965 in Adrian, MI, the youngest child of Lewis and Janice (Breon) Stone. He graduated from Adrian High School in 1984 and went on to obtain a BA in theater and communication with a minor in music from Adrian College. Eric continued his education at Methodist Theological School in Ohio where he earned two Masters—in liturgical arts and divinity. For the past 35 years, Eric has shared his life and mission with his wife, Sherry. On May 28, 1988, Eric was united in marriage to Sherry Rokita and they have been blessed with two sons, Jacob and Julian, and many wonderful memories.

Eric was a loving and devoted father who was never afraid to accept his sons for who they are and help them to grow. He raised Jacob to be a dedicated University of Michigan and Pittsburgh sports fan and shared his love of cinema with Julian, especially anything from Marvel.

Eric and Sherry met at Judson Collins United Methodist Camp as summer staff. Their great love was Camp Kinawind, where they spent 30+ years working and volunteering. Kinawind was their home-in-the-woods, where they met their “All of Us Together” family.

Eric dedicated his life to helping others find meaning, connection, and the

Divine in all things. He made a lasting impression on everyone he met. During his lifetime, he gave his time and talents at St. Luke's United Methodist Church of Essexville, University of Michigan Wesley Foundation, Central Michigan University Wesley Foundation, Waterford Central United Methodist Church, University of Illinois Wesley Foundation, and Orchard United Methodist Church. Eric was most recently the pastor of Adrian First United Methodist Church.

His love of theater continued throughout his life as he was involved with many productions at the Croswell Opera House in Adrian and the Bay City Players. Eric enjoyed being in nature and camping with family and friends. He often captured these great moments and others with his camera. Eric was an animal lover and had many four-legged fur babies in his lifetime.

Eric was passionate about social justice and inclusion of all people. He never shied away from difficult conversations and was advocate for those marginalized and oppressed.

In addition to his wife, Sherry, Eric is survived by his mother, Janice; sons, Jacob (Audra) Stone and Julian Stone; siblings, Karen Stone (Warren Klofkorn), Linda (Rick) Ridley, Michelle Rion and Judy Stone (Randall Downer); mother-in-law, Mary Margaret Rokita; brothers-in-law, Patrick (Michelle) Rokita and Scott Rokita (Jessica Paquette); and nephews and nieces, James Downer, Pheobe Downer, Michael Rokita and Kathryn Rokita. He was preceded in death by his father, Lewis; father-in-law, James Rokita and brother-in-law, Nick Rion.

A celebration of life will take place on Friday, September 15, 2023 at 4 p.m. at the Adrian First United Methodist Church with Bishop David Alan Bard officiating. The family will receive friends at the church on Friday from 2 to 4 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be directed to the family at this time. Eric's family is setting up a trust to carry on Eric's passions: a justice award and a memorial service and learning trip with Strong Ministries to Costa Rica.

Arrangements have been entrusted to Wagley Funeral Home, Adrian where online condolences and memories may be shared at www.WagleyFuneralHomes.com.

Previous Events

Memorial Visitation

SEP **15**. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church
1245 West Maple Avenue
Adrian, MI

Celebration of Life

SEP **15**. 4:00 PM (ET)

First United Methodist Church
1245 West Maple Avenue
Adrian, MI

Tribute Wall



“ *Wagley Funeral Home and Cremation Service created a Webcast in memory of Eric Alan Stone*



Wagley Funeral Home - September 13, 2023 at 09:59 AM

RS

“ *Eric always lived his passion for justice with a serious joy. Even when he disagreed with someone, he never became disagreeable. His life was an inspiration to me and to so many. He is truly missed.*

Robert Schoenhals - September 21, 2023 at 10:24 AM

RM

“ *Please accept our sincere condolences. Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Pat and Ron Matthews*

Ron and Pat Matthews - September 15, 2023 at 11:32 AM

JS

“ *His presence lit up the space he was in. Vibrant, alive and warm are words I associate with Eric. He accompanied my daughter to Honduras, which was significant. Thanks, Eric. See you, again.*

John Schneider - September 15, 2023 at 08:45 AM



“ Joyful Memory was purchased for the family of Eric Alan Stone.



September 13, 2023 at 09:57 PM



“ Linda G. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Eric Alan Stone.

Linda G. - September 13, 2023 at 03:35 PM



“ Linda G. purchased a sympathy card for the family of Eric Alan Stone.



Linda G. - September 13, 2023 at 03:31 PM



“ Ann and I offer our deepest condolences on Pastor Eric's passing. We find comfort in the fact that is immortal self is free of pain and discomort.



David and Ann Guldin - September 13, 2023 at 10:22 AM

MW

“Eric’s arrival at Adrian First United Methodist Church was in the midst of the COVID shutdown. He worked diligently to create worship services that would be meaningful for those watching via a livestream. The first advent he was at Adrian FUMC, his wife Sherry and I worked with him to create his decor vision in the sanctuary that would not only prove to be beautiful to those live-streaming, but just in case the COVID numbers dropped and we could return to in person worship- Eric wanted the space to be GRAND. His vision made both Sherry and me a little weak in the knees but we eventually came to a compromise that seemed to please him. I liken the “grandiose” vision Eric had to that of his ministry- he loved sharing the word of God and nothing was too big or beyond greatness.

As he started worship each Sunday he would say “I am Eric Stone and my pronouns are he, him, his. I am the pastor at Adrian First United Methodist Church- and you are the ministers.” As I reflect on those words this is yet another example of the inclusivity he deeply valued in his ministry. What a joy it was to know Eric and how deeply saddened I am that the world has lost another soul who loved as Jesus would have us love one another. 🕊️💜

Marcia Wright - September 12, 2023 at 06:39 PM



“Eric graciously invited me to preach on Native American Sunday at the request of the UMW unit at Essexville. I will ever be grateful for that opportunity to meet Eric. We discovered we shared a connection through Wesley at CMU as well as a passion for social justice.

Rene Johnson

Rene Johnson - September 12, 2023 at 08:18 AM



“ 2 indelible, wonderful memories for me: 1) Eric’s comforting presence and companionship in the Ann Arbor District office in December 1991 as we waited to hear if we would be certified candidates for ordained ministry and 2) Dean Eric leading “The Twelve Days of Christmas “ at Camp Kinawind, complete with imitating a laboring goose using marvelous facial expressions. Rest well, friend and companion on the journey.

Weatherly Verhelst - September 10, 2023 at 09:12 AM

RP

“ Thanks be to God for Eric’s commitment to making Keep Making Peace relevant to creating a more just and peaceable planet. And thanks for bringing prophetic bumper stickers to Annual Conference at Adrian College. His legacy blesses us. Shalom/Salaam/Shanti to Sherry, family, and friends! Rev. Rich and Jan Peacock

Rev. Rich Peacock - September 09, 2023 at 07:29 PM