



David Charles Difatta

August 15, 1946 - November 1, 2024

David Charles Difatta was a man of faith. Born on August 15, 1946 in Chicago, Illinois, he grew up in Lincoln Park, Michigan where he attended Calvary Lutheran church and school. An avid outdoorsman, David enjoyed spending time with his grandfather and hunting with his uncles on the family farm. As an adult, he loved to watch A Christmas Story because it reminded him of his life growing up on Victoria Street with his mother Irene, his brother, and his sister.

Upon graduating high school, he followed his mother's advice and attended Concordia Lutheran Teachers Junior College in Ann Arbor, studying education. While there, he made life-long friendships, which he cherished greatly. When he completed his two years there, he transferred to Concordia College in Seward, Nebraska. However, in December of 1967 he received a notice from the US government.

Honoring the call of his country, David went to Fort Knox and became a private in the US Army. While training, David earned commendations for his shooting, but he caught the eye of the army chaplain, who requested David train to become a chaplain's assistant. In 1968, David was sent to Thailand to assist the chaplain there while they tended to the men providing air support for the soldiers in neighboring Vietnam near Saigon.

It was during his time as a soldier his mother became concerned that he would not get any letters while overseas. Sharing her thoughts with the women in her department at Fisher Body Auto, she and her colleague, Nona, decided to introduce their children. When Nona's daughter Connie was asked to write to this young soldier, she was quite surprised and a little hesitant to write to a stranger, but she complied. Thus, a letter writing romance bloomed, and David proposed to Connie while on leave.

The two were married in the spring of 1970 after David was honorably discharged from the army, and once his duty to his country had been satisfied, David continued on his journey to becoming a teacher. He completed his education at Concordia in Seward; and after hearing that his first Call as a teacher would be to East Bethlehem Lutheran in Detroit, Michigan, Connie exclaimed, "We're going home!"

David's passion was teaching, and he served for nearly 30 years at East Bethlehem Lutheran church and school in Detroit, teaching grades 4-8, coaching everything from soccer to basketball, taking 5th & 6th grade students annually to Camp Wolverine in the middle of the winter, and acting as athletic director. He retired from the teaching ministry after teaching four additional years at Peace Lutheran in Warren. His dedication to his students and their families was the hallmark of his tenure.

Nonetheless, if you take the teacher out of the classroom, you then make the world his classroom. David's passion for learning continued through his love of reading. His favorite topic was reading military history, especially where it intersected with men of faith. His passion found new avenues as he and his wife engaged in teaching others about the past by participating in living history demonstrations throughout the Midwest.

He also found joy in returning to one of his favorite hobbies—shooting. An

avid marksman, he earned multiple awards in regional and national black powder N SSA shooting events.

He continued his work in the church over the years by serving on many boards, participating in the Sportsmen's Club, teaching Bible classes, and most recently at the Holy Cross Lutheran food pantry.

More than anything, though, David found pleasure in his family. He loved being a dad, and was full of pranks, the man with the hook ghost stories, and dadisms like "Are you a monkey? Am I a tree? Then why are you climbing on me???" His three children—Abbie, Becky, and John—have fond memories of campouts with Dad and Mom in the pop-up, raking leaves every fall, getting picked up from school in the "blue goose" school bus, going to Tiger games, eating popcorn, and watching movies. They will remember staples from him grading papers lying in piles on the end tables, helping him put together bulletin boards at school, being urged to eat something because it would "put hair on your chest," and ketchup on everything. He attended as many softball, baseball, and football games as he could and was active in the Lutheran East Booster Club, taking tickets for Friday night lights. His children were the ears for his long stories and interesting, eclectic facts and the delight in his eyes.

As his own children grew, David was proud that all three became teachers themselves—two of them even marrying teachers. He loved spending time with his beloved grandchildren, and nothing would please him more than when the whole family got together. He enjoyed trips on trains, family visits to Cedar Point, introducing the kids to the Tigers and Red Wings, lamenting the Lions every Thanksgiving (although he was excited for this season!), reading books to them, playing "tickle monster," going with them to historical destinations, sharing his love of shooting with the next generation, teaching them sudoku and other games, and telling them about Jesus.

It is with great sadness that we mourn the passing of David on Friday, November 1, 2024; however, we rejoice because we know he rests safe in the arms of his loving Savior Jesus. Those who love him and are still part of the church militant look forward to the day when we can be reunited with him as the church triumphant! David's greatest wish was that others would know Christ Crucified and believe in Him. To that end, we rejoice in David's life, and we say, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Welcome Home."

David was preceded in death by his mother Irene Grace Campau. He is survived by his loving wife Connie; children Abigail (David) Schlie, Rebecca (Andrew) Efird, and John (Maria) Difatta; grandchildren Emma, Benjamin, Steven, Evelyn, Gianna, Lucia, and Gavin; brother John (Anita) Difatta; sister Carrie (Ron Kramer) Monroy; brothers and sisters-in-laws; many nieces and nephews; and beloved cousins. He will be buried with full military honors at Great Lakes National Cemetery.

Public Visitation:

Wednesday, November 6, 2024 from 3pm-8pm
Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home
705 W. Eleven Mile Rd., Royal Oak, MI 48067

Funeral:

Thursday, November 7, 2024 at 11:00 am
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
30003 Ryan Road, Warren, MI 48092

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Warren, Michigan and earmarked for the Holy Cross Food Pantry.

Cemetery Details

Great Lakes National Cemetery

4200 Belford Road
Holly Township, MI 48442

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 6. 3:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 541-7000
royal@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Funeral Service

NOV 7. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM.

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Burial

NOV 7. 2:00 PM (ET)

Great Lakes National Cemetery
4200 Belford Road
Holly Township, MI 48442

Tribute Wall

CT

“ I remember David as a young boy at Calvary Lutheran Church and school, where my daughters also went. His mother was a wonderful mom and also a devoted Christian. My deepest sympathy to his whole family. Cindy Thomas

Cindy Thomas - November 05, 2024 at 07:47 PM

KP

I remember David fondly as student at Calvary and member of the youth group. The entire Difatta family were dear friends. I was so interested in reading David's obituary. What a soldier of Christ and a wonderful ministry to children especially but also all whose lives he touched throughout his entire life. So many memories to share as a family. Well done, David, now resting in the arms of his Savior Jesus.

Ken Palmreuter - December 12, 2024 at 03:26 PM

RA

Dave and I were both teachers (he at East Bethlehem and I at St. Philip, Our Saviour, and Detroit Urban School). I have fond memories of Dave and I competing in boys' basket in the elementary Lutheran Schools Eastside Athletics League. Dave was a gracious competitor. He will be sorely missed. May our gracious Lord comfort his family peace as we all mourn his home going. To GOD be the glory.

Rev. Howard Alexander - March 08, 2025 at 01:21 PM

KJ

I was a former student at East Bethlehem. Somehow he popped in my thoughts and I googled his name and discovered this. May he rest.

Kevin Jones - August 25, 2025 at 01:55 PM