



David O. Esche, 73, of West Des Moines, Iowa, passed away peacefully in his sleep on March 4, 2025 in his residence at Grand Living At Tower Place.

A memorial service in celebration of his life will be held at 11:00 am on Saturday, April 12, 2025, at the First Presbyterian Church, 133 E. North St., Geneseo, IL 61254. Inurnment will be in Wisconsin at a later date.

David Owen was born on March 6, 1951 at 10:00am at St. Mary's hospital in LaSalle, IL to Floyd and Marcia (Siggelkoe) Esche. He married his high school sweet-heart, Sharon (Hawse) on June 22, 1974. They were happily married for 50 years.

He graduated from LaSalle-Peru Township High school in 1969. He got a BS in Microbiology from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 1973. He received his Master of Divinity "magna cum laude" at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 1977. He earned his Doctor of Ministry from McCormic Theological Seminary in 1987.

He began his career as a pastor at Bethel Presbyterian Church in Peoria, IL in July 1978. He then served as pastor of yoked churches in Oneida, IL from 1982 - 1993. He served the First Presbyterian Church in Geneseo, IL from July 1, 1993 - July 31, 2013. He then performed as a transitional pastor at several churches in neighboring towns before finally retiring from the pulpit in 2017.

Though officially retired, he continued to pour his time and energy into Rebuilding Together, a home repair and renovation charity that he helped charter in Geneseo in 1994. Through his time working with the organization he saw it grow from an annual day of work in Geneseo, to a full time community support agency that offered assistance year round and has expanded to cover the entirety of Henry County.

David is survived by his wife; Sharon; two sons: Jonathan D. (Kristin) Esche of Johnston, IA and Andrew P. (Rachael) Esche of Surprise AZ; five grandchildren; and three siblings: Margaret (Joe) Jankauskis of Sycamore, IL, Peter (Kathy) Esche of Northfield, MA and Allison Reidies of LaSalle, IL. He is preceded in death by his parents.

David's warmth and dedication touched many lives, and he will be deeply missed by all who knew him. Memorials may be directed to Rebuilding Together Henry County.