



## Willis Dean Poland

August 24, 1927 - June 6, 2018

Willis D. Poland

Will Poland, 90, of Traverse City, Michigan, passed away peacefully on June 6, 2018.

Will was born to Jesse and Alice Poland on August 24, 1927, in Barnes, Kansas, a small country town in the northern part of the state. After graduating high school, Will joined the U.S. Navy and served in the Philippines at the conclusion of World War II. Upon his return to the states, he took advantage of the GI Bill and attended Kansas State University where he obtained his Bachelor of Science degree in 1950. He went on to obtain his Master of Science degree from Kansas State in 1954 and his PhD. from The Ohio State University in 1963.

From 1950 to 1960 he also worked as a teacher, student counselor, and clinical counselor in both Kansas and Minnesota. Upon obtaining his PhD., he served as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Iowa from 1963-1969. Will then spent the remainder of his professional career as a professor in the Psychology Department at the University of Cincinnati until his retirement in 1991. He served as the clinical supervisor and director of training at the psychological services center where he prepared doctoral candidates for clinical therapy. Additionally, he received intensive post-graduate training in Gestalt Therapy and maintained a small private practice.

Will, his wife Jill Bentgen, and daughters Consuelo and Sara, moved to Traverse City in 1994 where he continued to lead a very active life. He was a long-time member of Central United Methodist Church. He had an extensive and fulfilling faith journey. Will studied all aspects of the Christian faith, taught numerous classes, and served in several ministries such as Stephen Ministries, The Community Meal, Reconciling Ministries, Faith Link, and the Library Committee. He also pursued his theological studies by taking classes at NMC throughout his retirement.

Will was an avid reader, enjoyed playing golf, watching movies, loved classical and jazz

music, and caring for his many Dalmatians over the years. He also proudly served on the Traverse City Human Rights Commission.

He was a warm and caring person and an exceptional listener. Friends and family would often call upon Will to work through difficult issues during challenging periods of their lives. He cared deeply about the people in his life.

Will is survived by his wife Jill Bentgen and daughters Consuelo Poland and Sara Poland; he is also survived by his daughter Debra Holthus (Jim) and his son Paul Poland (Pam) from his first marriage to Mildred Poland. He is also survived by five grandchildren, Josh Holthus (Katey), Ben Holthus (Brynn), Sarah Seifert (Chris), Eric Poland, and Elliana Jean; and four great-grandchildren. Will was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Melvin Poland, and sister Helen Knedlik. He is survived by his sister Laura Weyand and brother Harold Poland. He was a wonderful husband, father, and friend. He will be missed by the many lives he touched.

In lieu of flowers the family asks that memorial contributions be directed to; Justice For Our Neighbors, 222 Cass Street, Traverse City, MI 49684, Central United Methodist Church Library, 222 N. Cass Street, Traverse City, MI 49684, or Manhattan Christian College, 1415 Anderson Ave, Manhattan, KS 66502.

A memorial service for Will, will take place at 3:30 pm on Saturday, June 16, 2018 at Central United Methodist Church, with a visitation for family and friends beginning at 1:30 pm. A luncheon will be held in the church fellowship hall immediately following the service.

# Events

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**JUN** **Visitation** 01:30PM - 03:30PM

**16**

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Central United Methodist  
222 Cass Street, Traverse City, MI, US

**JUN** **Memorial Service** 03:30PM

**16**

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Central United Methodist  
222 Cass Street, Traverse City, MI, US

# Comments

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“ Family of Will Poland,

We at Horizon Books are saddened to learn of his passing and our hearts go out to you. We feel blessed that we were Mr. P's bookstore of choice for the many books he purchased in his pursuit of knowledge & reading pleasure. I recall being in a book group with him & some of the lively discussions that were had. Sunday shifts were something I looked forward to as we often were able to chat over his New York Times purchase. What a real gentleman and an inspiration to be a life long learner. We will miss seeing him. We are indeed fortunate that he retired to Traverse City. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this time.

Margaret  
Bookseller  
Horizon Books

**Margaret S** - June 09, 2018 at 07:35 PM

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“ Pam, Paul, Eric and family... we are so sorry for your loss. Prayers and love for you all!

**Hallie Welch** - June 09, 2018 at 10:04 AM

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“ I am so sorry to hear of Will's passing. We worked together as Stephen Ministry leaders and I learned so much from him during that time. We also attended some extraordinary Bible history classes at Northwestern Michigan College. Will dug deep during his faith journey, and contributed so much to the classes, taught by Dave Terrell, a former Catholic priest. We have been gone from Traverse City for many years, but my husband and I often thought of Will and our time at Central. I am visiting my sister in TC, and learned of Will's passing today. God bless you, Jill, and your precious daughters. Marian Morris

**Marian Morris** - June 08, 2018 at 10:03 PM

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“ Paul, Pam, Eric and family. Praying your good memories give you comfort and peace. Love to you during this difficult time. Debbie Norris

**Deborah Norris** - June 08, 2018 at 04:50 PM