

In these extraordinary times, we have lost a remarkable man. John Thomas Clayton, 92, died on March 14, 2023. Born in St. Louis in 1930 to Ward and Alice Clayton, he attended Beaumont High School and went on to graduate from St. Louis College of Pharmacy, following his father and four uncles as a Pharmacist.

He married NorEtta (Norton) Clayton on Friday, June 13, 1952. Tom took over the family's pharmacy business on North Grand Ave. after his father's death, but he and Nory moved into the suburbs and had three children. They had great adventures together and explored a changing culture and their place in it. Tom and Nory joined Northminster Presbyterian Church in Dellwood and became heavily involved in its progressive spiritual and community life. The whole family was involved in worship as well as Christian education, music and drama. The church and issues of advocating for civil and reproductive rights became defining parts of their identities. So much so, that in the early 80's, after a pharmacy job abruptly ended, Tom and Nory became Volunteers in Mission through Presbyterian Church (USA). They traveled overseas to India and Nepal for Tom to work as a hospital pharmacist and Nory to work in Administration and health care. That began over 14 years working overseas, including Soviet-occupied Afghanistan from which they had to escape once under mortar fire, went on to India several different times, and ended their service in Haiti. Serving people of different cultures, backgrounds and resources proved quite fulfilling and rewarding to them both.

In 2010, Nory passed away on her birthday and Tom was alone. He grieved but was able to enjoy his family. By the grace of God, he became reacquainted with Marilynne Counts, a friend from Northminster. She found a wonderful place in his life and they

developed a loving relationship. They too had many adventures together and enjoyed each other and their families. They were together until Tom's passing.

Tom is survived by his three children, Jamie (Gary) Hanak, their children, Kate (Chris) Lowry, Jerry (Beka) Hanak, Tom Hanak, and her grandchild, James Lowry; Amanda Schilling, her children, Marshall (Heather) Johnson, Allison Schilling, Cosmo Schilling, and her grandchild, Max Johnson; and Tim (Gwynne Hannum) Clayton, their children, Patrick Clayton and the late Jesse Bradshaw.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 15, at 2:00pm at Ferguson First Presbyterian Church, 401 Darst Rd., 63135. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be given to the World Mission Fund, Presbyterian Church (USA).