



## Rev. Russell E. Sargent

June 3, 1919 - April 25, 2016

Reverend Russell E. Sargent

The Reverend Russell E. Sargent passed away peacefully at his home in Cairo, New York on Monday April 25, 2016. Rev. Sargent was well known in various areas of New York state, having served as Pastor at United Methodist Churches in Bayville, North Fenton, Red Hook, Elizaville, Rowe, Fleishmann's, Margaretville, Franklin, Sydney and Athens.

Sargent made both regional and national news in 1967 when he rode his horse Lord Baltimore over 220 miles from Red Hook in Dutchess County to St. John the Devine Methodist Church in NYC and then on to Bridgeport, Connecticut delivering keynote sermons in commemoration of the role of circuit riders for the 200th anniversary of the Methodist Church in the United States. Upon his "retirement" in 1989 he served as Associate Pastor of the Catskill United Methodist Church through 1999. During this time period, he also took various mission trips to Latin America in relief of Methodist missionaries. He continued serving as the Pastor Emeritus until he reached the age of 90. Reverend Sargent was an active Mason for 56 years. He also served a tour as the Pastor on the QE II from California to Australia. He declined a long-term offer to serve with the QE II, instead choosing to continue his pastoral role.

Russell met and married the love of his life Nancy Stella Borgese while they both attended Drew University in Madison, New Jersey. He was a divinity

student at Drew Theological Seminary, while Nancy was one of the first of seven women accepted to attend Drew. Rev. Sargent in subsequent years received Masters Degrees in marriage and family counseling and counselling from Columbia University. Russell and Nancy married on March 25, 1945 and began a 16-year journey serving as Methodist Missionaries in Chile, Costa Rica and Mexico. They were married for over 68 years until Nancy's death in 2012.

While in Chile, they lived and worked among the Araucanian Indians in very primitive conditions. They lived in a house without electricity, running water or plumbing. During this period in his ministry, Rev. Sargent rode on horse back to the various Araucanian Indian villages to preach the gospel. During the five-year mission, he established 15 new Methodist churches and a boarding school.

The Sargents were then called to a mission in Costa Rica, where he preached at the work farms set up by the United Fruit Company. Rev. Sargent established 11 new Methodist Churches in Costa Rica. Many years later, a youth camp "Campamento Metodista Russell Sargent" was named in his honor for his work throughout Costa Rica.

Russell and Nancy's third major mission appointment was to Mexico. The work took involved a much different role. Reverend Sargent directed the Heifer International Project, which provides low income families with livestock. Families are taught the basics of animal husbandry and must sign a contract which is designed for self-sufficiency. Participants must agree that they will not sell or butcher the animals until they have produced enough offspring to return the same number to the project as well as sufficient to keep their enterprise going should they chose to sell or butcher an animal. The animals returned to the project are then distributed to other families in the community. Rev. Sargent was involved in many critical aspects of the ministry, including traveling to the U.S.A. to bring livestock to Mexico. He also purchased land on behalf of the United Methodist Church, to build churches, schools and hospitals. He was also instrumental in establishing a family planning clinic and

hired one of the first female OB-GYN Doctors to serve the needs of the community.

Born on June 3, 1919 in Joplin, Montana Russell was the son of the late Lewis and Edna Sargent. He was raised on a dairy farm in Red Wing, Minnesota and graduated from Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota where he excelled in sports and became a tri-state silver medalist in wrestling. The reverend often mentioned that if he had won his final match, he planned to become a professional wrestler. Obviously, God had other plans for his life. Russell earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology and then went on to attend Drew University, completing a Master of Divinity from Drew Theological Seminary.

He enjoyed traveling the world with his beloved Nancy. Their world travel destinations included Cuba, Central and South America, Europe, China, Turkey and the Holy Land. Russell was a compassionate, positive and spiritual man. Those who knew him best were forever laughing at his "corny" jokes.

Reverend Sargent is survived by his children; Jeanette Sargent-Hill and her husband Arthur of Red Hook, New York, John Sargent and his partner Tracey Farley of Cairo, NY, Luther Sargent and his wife Graciela of Basra, Iraq, Paul Sargent and his wife Jerelyn of North Greenbush, NY and David Sargent of Albany, NY. Russell was the loving Grandfather of Yve Miller (Justin), Cassandra Lawson (Jonathan), Laura Hill, Amanda Hill, Joseph Sargent (Laura), Noah Sargent, Alexandra Sargent, David Sargent, Mark Sargent, Aaron Sargent, Miriam Sargent and the great-grandfather to Sedona and Jessie Miller and Elizabeth Sargent. Russell is also survived by several nieces and nephews and a host of other relatives and friends. Russell was pre-deceased by his sisters Evelyn Klecker and Delores Mann (late James). On behalf of the Sargent family, we would like to extend our sincere appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Samuel Merkan, The Eddy Visiting Nurses, The Pines and Hospice of Columbia and Greene Counties.

Services and viewing will be held at Catskill United Methodist Church, 40 Woodland Avenue, Catskill, NY 12414 on Friday, April 29, 2016 with viewing from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon. The funeral service will follow at 12:00 Noon and will be delivered at the Catskill United Methodist Church by pastor the Reverend Michelle Lewis. Interment will follow in the Cairo Cemetery, Cairo NY. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to the Sargent Mission Fund c/o The Catskill United Methodist Church, 40 Woodland Avenue, Catskill, NY 12414.

Funeral arrangements are under the direction of Richards Funeral Home, Cairo, NY.

Condolences may be made at [www.richardsfuneralhomeinc.net](http://www.richardsfuneralhomeinc.net).

# Cemetery Details

## Cairo Cemetery

County Route # 84  
Cairo, NY 12413

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 29. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Catskill United Methodist Church  
40 Woodland Avenue  
Catskill, NY 12414

## Funeral

APR 29. 12:00 PM (ET)

Catskill United Methodist Church  
40 Woodland Avenue  
Catskill, NY 12414

# Tribute Wall

KK

“ *It is not another verse or sermon, not another book (here read this), it is not planting another tree or gift of money but it is the arrival of another BELIEVER. When the apostle Paul was lonely he was blessed and encouraged by another believer, Titus. Christians are meant to fellowship. The Christian faith is not designed to be done in isolation.*



*Across time and miles, the Karr family would like to reach out and send our condolences for the loss of Reverend Russell Sargent. He was a son, husband, father, friend, church leader, and a good example for everyone who knew him. His life was well-lived. His energy and spirit does not end here but continues on. He will be remembered and missed! Rest in peace!*

*Ecclesiastes 12:7*

*Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.*

*The soul is the eternal part of man that will live forever.*

*Please accept our deepest sympathies and know that our prayers are with the family now and always.*

*The Karr family,*

*Paul and Cecelia (Cele) – both with our Lord*

*Cheryl, Danielle (Dee), Rebecca (Becky), and Christian (Kip)*

*Red Hook United Methodist (the 1960s)*

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**Kip Karr** - January 24, 2021 at 07:10 PM

ML

“ Greetings and condolences from Marge Lewis and family! I am one of Max and Carol Sargent's daughters and am still helping to run the Nursery in Red Wing. We remember fondly the visits we had from your family and always thought that Russell's work as a missionary was very extraordinary. The obituary reiterated that and I am pleased to hear of his involvement with the Heifer project! I remember seeing a small booklet of prayers written by Russel with a picture of him on horseback on the front cover I believe. As a young girl I remember visiting your family and felt that I deeply disappointed your Mother, Nancy, by not taking seconds of her spaghetti dinner!! I think that the FIRST helping was triple the amount I would have been able to consume! Our welcome mat is always out so please stop in if you are in our area! My husband and I are semi retired but are still in Red Wing and at the Nursery often. Our son David is now managing the Nursery and my sister, Julie along with her daughter Anne are continuing to be involved as well. We will always remember Russel and Nancy with great warmth and pride! Love, Marge Lewis

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Marge Lewis - May 03, 2016 at 08:40 PM

JP

“ Dear the family of Russell and Nancy,  
Russell will be greatly missed. We were honored to have Russell and Nancy attend our wedding in 1973. Russell helped preform the ceremony which made the day even more special.  
I remember as a child visiting your home and always having a full feast of Italian foods much more than we would ever eat!  
My daughters and I visited them in Cairo in the late 1990's and enjoyed our time with them so very much, visiting and touring the area. they were such gracious hosts!  
they will be greatly missed, but remembered with much fondness!  
May God Bless both Russell and Nancy and all of you, as you carry on their traditions in their loving memory.  
Lovingly, Julie Sargent Peterson  
(Daughter of Max Sargent)

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**Julia Peterson** - May 03, 2016 at 06:19 PM

DW

“ To the Sargent family, on behalf of my father and three sisters, along with myself, I would like to send our condolences from the Weiss family. Not only was your father the pastor of the church, but Dave was in my class in school, and Paul was in the group with me on a tour of Italy in the spring of 1974. How the years fly by. Your father was a well respected man, but he now is back with your mom looking down on all of you. You all are in our prayers and thoughts.  
don weiss

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**Don Weiss** - May 03, 2016 at 09:03 AM

FS

“ Thank you John for the phone message regarding Russell's passing. My memories go way back to Sargent reunion days in Minnesota as a child and young adult. I mostly remember the seemingly exotic missionary life in South American that Russell talked about, Nancy (the New York Italian wife!), and I think 5 younger children that were very "busy". Wonderful memories about our far away cousins with a very different life than rural Norwegian Minnesota life. My wife, Faye and my son Nick really enjoyed our visit in Rochester Minnesota from John and Paul when they were here 4 or 5 years ago for John's medical visit at Mayo. Thank you both for having the energy to look us up and I hope our paths cross again. Give our warmest regards and sympathy to the entire Russell and Nancy Sargent family.

Love, Forrest Sargent, Rochester, Minnesota

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**Forrest Sargent** - May 03, 2016 at 07:57 AM

BF

“ Barb, Sally, & Jeff Mann & our families purchased the Strength & Solace Spray for the family of Rev. Russell E. Sargent.



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**Barb, Sally, & Jeff Mann & our families** - April 27, 2016 at 04:48 PM

ME

“ Mark Eldridge sent a virtual gift in memory of Rev. Russell E. Sargent



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**Mark Eldridge** - April 27, 2016 at 12:56 AM

TF

“ *The Eldridge Family purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Rev. Russell E. Sargent.*



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**The Eldridge Family** - April 26, 2016 at 11:19 PM