



## Lawrence Eldred Kelley

May 25, 1937 - April 30, 2020

Lawrence (Larry) Eldred Kelley

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After a tough couple of years of living with Alzheimer's-Dementia and other recent health issues, an angel came to escort Larry to his Heavenly Home. He always prayed this would happen for many others, and we trust that the Lord sent an angel for him also. On April 30, 2020, Larry took his last breath here on planet earth and awoke in the presence of Jesus. It was something he looked forward to with great expectation, no more sorrow, no more pain.

Larry was born on May 25, 1937, to Eldred and Lorraine (Kirk) Kelley in Long Beach, California. They moved up north to the Central Valley when he was a young boy. He loved growing up in the country, helping his grandpa and his Dad on their small grape farm. Larry also remembered how his Dad would work part-time as a pastor at the local gospel rescue mission, 'teaching the hobos about Jesus.' He attended the local public schools and graduated from Clovis Union High School in California in 1955. Larry promptly enlisted in the United States Air Force and was stationed at Cannon Air Force Base in Clovis, New Mexico. He enjoyed traveling worldwide as an Aircraft Electrician Larry loved his time as an Airman and was excited to serve his country. Larry was a proud veteran, and whenever he had the chance to would tell young people to join the military, "because they'll make a man out of you and teach you skills you can use your whole life!" Larry valued this time of his life and spoke of it often. He proudly served from 1955 until 1964. Later on and for a

few years, he worked as a civilian at the Naval Air Station on Alameda Island in the bay area of northern California.

Eventually, Larry moved back to New Mexico to be closer to family and friends. By this time, he had three children: Danny, Mike, and Sandy, whom he loved very much. Distance and circumstances prevented him from seeing them as often as he would have liked, but those times together were some of the most cherished memories Larry always kept in his heart.

After doing various jobs, he was eventually employed in the late 80's at the Bureau of Land Management in Las Cruces as their Procurement Officer.

Larry enjoyed his co-workers and loved the adventures he had when they sent him out into the wilderness.

In 1988 while attending the First Presbyterian Church, Larry saw Debbi (deGraaf) Gorzeman and her three young children and boldly introduced himself to them. The rest is history, as they say! In 1989, he and Debbi were married, and he gained three bonus children —Janelle, Travis, and Lindsay Gorzeman.

On July 22, 2019, they marked their 30th wedding anniversary. They moved from Las Cruces to Roswell in February 1991, and he worked in the family business at Horizon Dairy. In 1996, when the dairy sold, Larry earned his Commercial Drivers License and hauled milk for the local transport company. He climbed up and down the milk tankers for fourteen years until he retired in 2009 at the age of 72. Larry was proud to say that he never had a mishap or an accident his entire career. Larry was careful and very meticulous.

Larry enjoyed reading, fixing things, tinkering, and watching classic television. He was known around town by his little red Chevy truck. Larry was never the most vocal person in the room but always loved getting to know people one on one.

He had been a Charter Member of Grace Community Church since it was established in 1998. Larry was a prayer warrior and especially had a heart for those who were struggling. He would often stop right where he was and pray

for people.

On August 24, 2019, Larry became very sick and was hospitalized. He never regained his full strength, so he went back and forth between the hospital and local care facilities. Although Larry's health was failing and his memory was fading, he always knew who his family was and who was special to him. Over the past few years, two family friends helped care for him. We were grateful that Wendy Pehrson and Gale Wright were willing to do that. He loved them both.

Much appreciation also goes out to Larry's professional care providers, especially Rosana Grajeda, she is amazing. And to all the caring staff members at Eastern NM Medical Center, from the janitors to the doctors - Thank You. To his Primary Care Provider, Kandace McClelland, thanks for your kind spirit. We are also grateful to the staff at the Avamere Memory Care Unit, namely Kevin, Sulema, Belem, Elsa, Belinda, and many others. Your kindness did NOT go unnoticed. We would also like to include the CNAs (Isaac and Freida) and Nurses (Jesica and Ronni) at the Casa Maria Care Facility. We are thankful for ALL your selfless and serving hearts.

Larry is survived by his only sibling, Karen Blankenship of Knoxville, Tennessee; and his two nieces: Tammy and Patty, and their families; son: Daniel D Kelley (Christy) and Michael W Kelley (Beckie); daughter, Sandra Scholz (Klaus); grandchildren: Tegan M. Lee, Daniel R Kelley, Claire E Kelley, Ashley Smith, and Zane Slocum; three great-grandchildren: Jordan and Devin Lee, and little Ellie Smith; wife, Debbi of thirty-one years along with her children: Janelle (Casey) DeHaan, Travis (Hilary) Gorzeman of Carlsbad and Lindsay Gorzeman; as well as the grandkids that called him Papa Larry were: Anja Larae, Selah Grace, Clara Mae, Darla Jane, Mackenzie Lynn, Zachary Henry and little Jacob Robert (who called him Papa Lelley)!

Pastor Rick Hale will share a message of hope on Saturday, October 10, 2020, at 10:00 AM at General Douglas L. McBride Veterans Cemetery in

Roswell, New Mexico. Please use safety precautions if planning to attend.  
In lieu of flowers, kindly consider donating to Harvest Ministries OR Grace  
Community Church's HOPE Fund, located here in Roswell, New Mexico.  
Please take a moment and share a fond memory or thoughtful expression of  
sympathy for Larry's family at [www.andersonbethany.com](http://www.andersonbethany.com).

# Tribute Wall



“ *Lawrence Eldred Kelley*

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December 29, 2022 at 05:26 PM



“ *Larry was a good friend and coworker. He will be missed. -Kenneth Bevers*

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**Kenneth Bevers** - October 05, 2020 at 07:38 PM