



Reynir Gudmundsson

July 5, 1942 - March 28, 2023

REYNIR: Gudmundsson (July 5, 1942-March 28, 2023)

WATCH the Live Streaming of Reynir's Celebration of Life Service May 13, 2023, starting at 3:00pm (Pacific Time) <http://www.campushillchurch.net/>

Reynir Guðmundsson was born on the 5th of July, 1942 in Reykjavík, Iceland, the eldest child of Guðmundur Sæmundsson and Guðrún Ásgeirsdóttir. There soon arrived his three siblings, Elisabet or "Elsa" who preceded him in death, Sigríður, his younger sister, and Sæmundur, his brother.

Reynir and his sister Elsa were born in the house on Kapparstig Street, downtown Reykjavík. Elsa, the family historian, tells that he was "quite the boy." Evidently he would sit outside on the porch to watch the world go by and think, often forgetting that he was supposed to be watching his baby sister!

From there the family moved to 58 Skipasund Street where his father had built a new house for the family. Reynir had a small room in the basement where he would practice the accordion and his trumpet. While still very young, he got a job delivering newspapers to all the houses on his street early in the morning before he went to school at Laugarnes Elementary School. In the summers he would be sent to Blönduós in the north of Iceland to his aunt Ingileif's farm. He remembers these summers as times of hard work, but

pleasant quiet times.

His high school studies at the Háskola coincided with the family's move to Kopavogi. Around this time (he was now 14 years old), he received a visit from Elder Jón Jónsson, then dean of men at the Adventist academy, inviting him to finish his secondary studies at the academy. It was under the spiritual mentorship of Jón that Reynir was eventually baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist church and remained a faithful member all his life. He also made lifelong friends at the academy, including Róbert Brimdal, Reynir Sveinsson, and Garðar Cortes. It was also here that he began to develop as a vocal musician, finding his tenor role models in such operatic greats as Fritz Wunderlich and Jussi Björling.

After graduating from the Adventist academy, he spent a summer working at Skodsborg Sanatorium, an Adventist medical institution located in Copenhagen, Denmark. On returning to Iceland, he attended the Teacher Training College in Reykjavík where he was mentored by famed Icelandic vocal teacher, Guðrún Sveinsdóttir. Wishing to perfect his English, he spent two years studying at Newbold College in Bracknell, England. Returning once again to his homeland, he accepted a teaching position at Hliðardalsskóli, the Adventist academy.

Reynir's life might have taken a very different turn had he not received a visit from Professor Rochelle Kilgore, a retired English teacher who, every summer, recruited students from Germany and Scandinavia for Atlantic Union College. Wanting to continue with his English studies and desiring to adventure in the New World, he accepted her invitation to study in the United States. He came to the U.S. on an American-Scandinavian Society Scholarship to continue his graduate studies at Boston University where he completed his Masters in Music degree. In the meantime, he took some undergraduate music courses at Atlantic Union College where he met his

future wife, Lourdes Elena Morales.

Reynir always assured everyone that it was love at first sight. Lourdes, on the other hand, simply says it was a case of intense curiosity at meeting a “real live Icelander.” The last time she had heard the name “Iceland” had been in her 4th grade geography class!! The relationship developed around Reynir and Lourdes’ love of music and soon they were performing at local civic groups singing Icelandic and Spanish folksongs as well as taking a Sunday job singing at a local Congregational church.

The couple were married on May 16, 1971 in Worcester, MA where their first and only child, Carmen Elena, was born. The Gudmundssons settled in South Lancaster, MA but soon moved to Rhode Island where Reynir took a music teaching position at Barrington College while Lourdes pursued doctoral studies at Brown University.

Around this time a call came through for Reynir to conduct the college choir at Antillean College (now Antillean Adventist University) and teach voice lessons. Eventually he took a leave of absence to complete his doctoral studies at Boston University and the couple returned to Connecticut where Reynir had the opportunity to establish what came to be called the Creative Arts Program for the City of Holyoke, MA and direct an inner city boys’ choir in New Haven, CT. He was performer and executive director of Opera Works, a touring company that brought opera to the schools while serving as Media Librarian for the New Haven Public School System.

During this time of intense activity, Reynir was actively building his career as a professional free-lance singer, regularly performing with opera companies in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, and his native Iceland. He spent a summer studying operatic repertoire through the AIMS program in Vienna,

Austria.

At this juncture, Reynir's life will take yet another interesting turn as the Gudmundssons moved to California. Once again his passion and energy for music led him to vocal music positions at Moreno Valley High School's Art Academy, San Bernardino Valley College, California Baptist University, and Martin Luther King, Jr. High School in addition to his work as Minister of Music and choir director at Campus Hill SDA Church. Ever seeking new ways to bring music to the Riverside/San Bernardino communities, he founded what came to be the Riverside Lyric Opera together with Doris Pérez and Dan Olson, beloved musical friends and supporters. The company continues its music education and entertainment work to this day.

Reynir always brought music to the church he loved. While living in New England he served as choir director at the New Haven SDA Church and the Bridgeport SDA Church. In California his service was focused on Campus Hill SDA Church's sanctuary choir. He recorded sacred music, sometimes including his wife, Lourdes, and other musical friends. These remain as a testament to his beautiful tenor voice and his love for sacred music.

Reynir touched many lives, particularly that of his students. One of his most devoted students, Sue Bruegger, attributed her dream of becoming a singer to Reynir's skilled and patient work with her, from a monotone to a credible performer. He will be remembered for his love of music, his love of family, friends, colleagues, and students, his zest for life and his overarching love of God—all these are the rich legacy Reynir leaves all of us.

A Celebration of Life will be held on May 13, 2023 at 3:00pm (Pacific) at the Campus Hill SDA Church in Loma Linda, CA. The address is 11057 Hill Drive, Loma Linda CA 92354. The phone number is 909-796-0222. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Parks & Street Ministry (a ministry to the unsheltered

of the Inland Empire) at the Campus Hill Church website: Donations to the Parks and Streets Ministry in the months of May and June will be in-honor of Reynir Gudmundsson, who was a long time member of Campus Hill Church, The link for information and donations is: <https://www.campushillchurch.net/ministries/parksstreets>

All gifts to Parks and Streets are tax deductible and a receipt is available.

A reception will follow.

See below for driving directions.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life & Reception

MAY 13. 3:00 PM - 5:00 PM (PT)

Campus Hill SDA Church
11057 Hill Drive
Loma Linda, CA 92354

The reception will follow the Celebration of Life Service

Tribute Wall



“ *Reflecting on Memories created a Reynir’s Celebration of Life Service Loma Linda Campus Hill Church in memory of Reynir Gudmundsson*



Reflecting on Memories - May 13, 2023 at 04:37 AM



“ *Reflecting on Memories created a Tribute Video in memory of Reynir Gudmundsson*



Reflecting on Memories - April 05, 2023 at 01:25 AM

JU

A a movie on Iceland today reminded me of Reynir. Both music students at Newbold College, I used to accompany him on the piano. Beautiful Icelandic folk songs... Many thoughts and regards to Lourdes and family. Joëlle [from France]

Joelle GOUEL, pianist [BA+MA music in US - January 26, 2025 at 01:57 PM

DS

“ *Mr. Gudmundsson was my voice teacher at Barrington College. I had great respect for him. For some reason I looked him up today. It's been over 45 years, but I still have fond memories.* ”

Diana Jutila Scott - December 19, 2023 at 06:51 PM



“ 45 files added to the album *Campus Hill Celebration of Life* ”



Reflecting on Memories - May 15, 2023 at 01:17 PM



“ 55 files added to the album *Memories Album* ”



Reflecting on Memories - May 13, 2023 at 11:24 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Reynir Gudmundsson.



May 09, 2023 at 08:01 PM



“ Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Reynir Gudmundsson.



May 09, 2023 at 01:23 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Reynir Family Album



Reflecting on Memories - April 25, 2023 at 03:56 PM

SB

I am deeply saddened to see of the passing of "Mr. Gudmundsson" (as I called him my teenage years in the '70's.) Lourdes, I hope to write to you soon, but I can say that he perhaps singlehanded helped to change the whole course of my life. He was, and has always been, one of the most important men in my life and I am very touched to be mentioned in his obituary. Thank you for your impact in my life Mr. Gudmundsson and my prayers to the family. Sue Bruegger

Sue Bruegger - June 28, 2023 at 10:33 AM

DM

“ I will never forget that smile or twinkle in his eyes when he talked about Lourdes, or his daughter or his grandkids. I really appreciate all he did for me, my brother, and my friends. Thanks to his good heart and Lourdes’s we had a good place to call home!

Dennise Mendez - April 13, 2023 at 05:29 PM

LG

Dear Dennise, so nice to see your tribute to my beloved. We loved having you be our "neighbor"! Carmen and I send you, your husband, and parents much love and good wishes.

Lourdes Gudmundsson - April 20, 2023 at 01:57 PM

AP

“ Our dear friend Reynir is resting now, waiting for the Lord to call him and to take him to heaven with all his dear family. He left us with nice memories, his kindness and friendly smile, his beautiful voice and his dedication to his family and his church. Dear friend, we know the Lord took you because you were ready to meet him. We will soon see you in heaven because our Lord is coming soon! May God keep his family in His loving and merciful care. Our dear Lourdes, Carmen and daughters , God gave you a devoted husband, father and grandfather, whose memory and love will live forever in your hearts. Now we are crying with you, but soon God will give him back to you when He comes in glory, and you will all live with him forever. Hugs full of love and blessings from Alejo and Myrtha. ❤️❤️🙏🙏🙏

Alejo and Myrtha Pizarro - April 06, 2023 at 03:26 PM

LG

Dear Myrtha and Alejo, your words are so comforting. We treasure your love and friendship over the years, but especially now. May the Lord return your kindnesses many-fold!

Lourdes Gudmundsson - April 20, 2023 at 02:01 PM



“Reynir was surprised when I reminded him of the time he saw me super nervous before performing at an evangelistic meeting. He didn't think it was a big deal, but it was literally life transforming for me. It was a event held in the late evening, so it was dark, yet he still noticed how tense I was holding my trumpet. He came over and asked me if I was OK. I said I was a little nervous. He asked me if he could help and I said, "Sure." Then he asked if he could put his hands on my shoulders and I nodded. He gently pushed down on my shoulders. I hadn't noticed they were pretty much climbing into my ears they were so tense. Then he told me to breathe deeply and slowly. My cardiac distress began to subside. Not only did that help my performance of the music that night, but any time I felt the jitters before speaking or performing in public, I remembered Dr. Gudmundsson's kindness. He didn't have to help me out. But he did. It meant way more to me than he thought. At least that's the impression that I got when I reminded him of that brief moment that has lasted a lifetime. Truth is, I can't help but remember him with fondness every time--and it has been very often--that I put his intervention into practice. I will always remember Reynir.

Luis Acosta - April 06, 2023 at 01:41 PM

LG

What a heartwarming memory, Luis!! Thank you so very much for sharing it. We treasure our friendship with you and Felicia from our wonderful Puerto Rico years. Be blessed!

Lourdes Gudmundsson - April 20, 2023 at 02:03 PM

AB

“ First met Reynir over 40 years ago in RI where Lourdes was finishing her PHD. We have always appreciated his sense of humor and open spirit. and we will miss his beautiful singing and choirs. Bonnie especially enjoyed accompanying you both on the piano over the years. Thankful for "The Blessed Hope," - Alton and Bonnie Johnson, Calimesa CA

Alton and Bonnie - April 04, 2023 at 01:55 PM

LG

Yes, dear friends, we did share so much music and fun together. Your tribute has truly warmed our hearts. Hope to see again soon! Love from Lourdes and Carmen

Lourdes Gudmundsson - April 20, 2023 at 02:05 PM

RB

“ Reynir once shared with me that "Lourdes is my biggest fan '. That was always so with the two of them. He was a totally unique and special man, gifted and humerous, , full of love and mischief and laughter. Whatta guy.

Robin Baldwin - April 02, 2023 at 02:13 PM

LG

All these adjectives fit my Reynir SO well!!! And yes I was and still am his greatest fan as we take our shared love of music to the heavenly courts and make the rafters ring!!!

Lourdes Gudmundsson - April 20, 2023 at 02:06 PM

GV

“Reynir, was a talented and Godly man, who touched and enhanced many people during his lifetime.

His prized gems were in lovely wife Lourdes of 51 years, his beautiful daughter Carmen, along with his two granddaughters Juliana and Soffia. They will soon be reunited and much sooner than we can imagine.

May he rest in peace until that soon coming day when Christ returns, the trumpet sounds and he awakens to an incredible sight as he is lifted into the air immortal in the blink of an eye to meet his Savior and his loved ones where they will have an eternity to spend together.

What a day that will be!

With love...

*Gabe Videla
His Cousin*

Gabe Videla - April 01, 2023 at 04:21 PM

MS

Reynir was a wonderful man. Kind and talented. His marvelous operatic voice will not be forgotten.

Monica Stevens - April 02, 2023 at 08:01 AM

CP

One thing you get to love about both Lourdes and Reynir is the incredible gifting of talent on both and the understated humility that generated admiration for them. What I remember about Reynir is his genuine contentment in being around and with his warm, passionate wife. The love was palpable. I knew of his musical gift but never had the privilege of hearing its expression. I look forward to that in heaven.

Dear Lourdes, keep the fires burning. The reunion may be sooner than we all think.

May you feel the love we have for you and the closeness of God's presence .

Blessings!

Cynthia and Phillip

Cynthia Prime - April 14, 2023 at 02:57 PM

LG

So much love coming through these kind and generous and comforting words, my dear Cynthia and Phillip! I will treasure that love over the coming weeks and months and years, remembering how blessed we are to have friends like you!!!

Lourdes Gudmundsson - April 20, 2023 at 02:12 PM



“ 9 files added to the album Reynir Family Album



Reflecting on Memories - March 31, 2023 at 12:05 PM



“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



REYNIR GUDMUNDSSON

Reflecting on Memories - March 30, 2023 at 10:27 PM

LA

absolutely beautiful

Laura - April 05, 2023 at 04:00 PM

LA

God bless Reynir, Lourdes He was a wonderful man so lucky to have such a wonderful man. May God bless you in this time. In a blink of an eye Jesus will be with our husbands. I am always with you in spirit! your cousin!

Laura - April 06, 2023 at 02:49 PM

LG

Dear Laura, you are so right! We will see our beloveds sooner than we can imagine when the Lord appears in the glorious clouds of heavenly angels. Our faith and our hope are not in vain. Sending lots of love your way....!

Lourdes Gudmundsson - April 25, 2023 at 04:45 PM