

Stephen Claycomb Bruner

Stephen Claycomb Bruner was born in Chicago and grew up in Racine, Wisconsin, as the middle of five brothers. He attended Yale College, and Harvard Law School, graduating cum laude. After volunteering for the US Navy from 1968–1972, Steve worked for the law firm of Winston & Strawn, where friends introduced him to his future wife Beth. They were married in 1973.

Steve retired from Winston & Strawn in 2001 and enjoyed an amazing ‘second act’ in retirement. He became fluent in Italian, enrolled in graduate school, and obtained a PhD in modern European history with a focus on Italy. His dissertation was on Italian colonialism and was eventually revised into a book.

Steve was a lifelong Christian of deep faith, serving in ministry in a wide variety of ways, including teaching Bible study, visiting the sick and homebound, and serving as an elder. Steve’s faith was evident in his kind and Christ-like character. He was caring, patient, and gentle, possessed of a sense of poise and equanimity that only rarely deserted him.

He had a delightful sense of humor that buoyed him through hard days. He had a quiet but fierce determination when he put his mind to something, whether it was swimming laps, mastering a new hymn, winning at Hearts, or perfecting his apple pie recipe.

Steve passed away from Parkinson’s Disease on June 8th, 2026. Steve’s family expresses their deep gratitude for his caregivers, especially David Tembo and Teta Vundamina, who did so much to improve his quality of life. Steve is survived by the love of his life, Beth Bruner; children Elizabeth (Michael) Bruner, and David (Becca) Bruner; grandchildren Elizabeth, Eleanor, Benjamin, and Margaret; brothers Philip (Margee) and Robert (Bobbie) Bruner; and numerous beloved nieces and nephews.

**Memorial contributions may be made to
the National Parkinson’s Institute
or to First Presbyterian Church of River Forest**

A Service of Witness to the Resurrection and Memorial Celebration

Stephen C. Bruner
November 11, 1941–June 8, 2026



First Presbyterian Church of River Forest
Saturday, July 18, 2026

Order of Service

Prelude

Dr. Jane Holstein, organist
Selections by J.S. Bach
Stuttgart; St. Denio

Welcome

Rev. Donna Marsh, Pastor

Opening Prayer

*Hymn 499

He Leadeth Me

Prayer of Confession

Holy God,
you see us as we are,
and you know our innermost thoughts.
We forget that all life comes from you
and to you all life returns.
We have not always sought or done your will.
Forgive us, we pray, and
renew our hearts and spirits
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Old Testament Scripture Reading

Psalm 23

Robert F. Bruner

New Testament Scripture Reading

Philippians 4:4–9

Elizabeth Bruner

Words of Remembrance

Elizabeth Bruner

Old Testament Scripture Reading

Isaiah 43:1–7

David Bruner

Words of Remembrance

David Bruner

New Testament Scripture Reading

Ephesians 6:10–20; John 1:1–18

Rev. Marsh

Homily

Rev. Marsh

Thanksgiving for Caregivers

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

*Affirmation of Faith—Romans 8:1, 28, 38

We believe there is now no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus.
We know that all things work together for good
for those who love God,
who are called according to God's purposes.
We are sure that neither death nor life,
nor angels nor rulers,
nor things present nor things to come,
nor anything else in all creation,
will be able to separate us
from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

*Closing Hymn 529

For All the Saints

Benediction

Postlude

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

**Please stand in body or spirit*