



Dear friend suffering the loss of a loved one,

After observing what Rev. Dietrich Gruen did to help so many of us celebrate the life of my business partner and friend of 25 years, Fred Kurschner, I can highly commend him and his Pastoral services to those in their hour of need.

I watched Dietrich go the extra mile to meet with the grieving family on the same day he was notified. He did his research confirming biographical information on the recently deceased. He attended the visitation time, gathering memories and gleaning impressions of Fred, which he creatively wove into a message of comfort and hope during the funeral itself. Dietrich also did the grave-site burial and was invited to stay for the reception. Finally, he and his wife Sue met with the family in a follow-up visit. It was during those more informal conversations that Dietrich shared comforting, insightful thoughts and prayers.

Dietrich turned what could have been a dreary and anonymous funeral into a positive and celebratory event; he was able to capture the essence of Fred. It was like Dietrich was no longer conducting a funeral of a stranger, but of our common friend most beloved by those gathered to support the family and share their memories and grief. Fred came alive through the memories Dietrich gleaned and shared, in person and from the pulpit. As with many families, there were issues that divided, engulfed and entangled the relationships. Dietrich was more than willing to listen and address them. Dietrich was also able to reach out to long-lost relatives with the stories he had come to know about him.

Because of his longtime commitment to those in need (and through his wife Sue, a Clinical Social Worker licensed in both mental health and family practice), he has access to other professional resources who can and did help. Dietrich told me he and Sue often join forces for funeral and follow-up ministry, when needed. While Rev. Gruen is an active worshipper in a specific church and ordained with a particular denomination, his approach is more like a community chaplain. It would be appropriate for a wide range of individuals; both the un-churched and the devout Christian.

We miss our friend and business partner, as does Fred's widow and children. On behalf of friends and business colleagues, I extend my sincerest thanks to people like Dietrich; who have the training, experience and interest to step up and communicate good news at the point of real need.

Sincerely,

Don Faber