



Eric N Vitz

February 23, 1972 - October 31, 2014

Eric Norman Vitz, 42, of Bluffton passed away on Friday morning at Lutheran Hospital in Fort Wayne of complications from Endocarditis & subsequent brain trauma.

Eric was born on February 23, 1972 in Elyria, Ohio to Norman & Doreen (Lakey-Hoyt) Vitz. He graduated from Vestaburg High School in 1990. He went on to attend Baker College and graduated from Great Lakes Christian College in 1995 earning a Bachelor's of Religious Education with a focus on Christian Ministry. He completed his Masters in Professional Communication from Purdue University.

He worked at Medical Protective in Fort Wayne, Inventure Foods in Bluffton, served as Director of Virtual Campus at Trine University, and was the Director of Distance Learning at I.P.F.W. He was an active member of the First Church of Christ in Bluffton where he served as an elder, drama ministry participant, small group leader and helped with multi media. He also filled in preaching occasionally as he would say, "just for kicks and giggles."

On May 11, 1996 in Charlotte, Michigan, Eric and Jamie (Haynie) were married. He is survived by his wife along with three girls; Claudia - 14, Ellie - 12 and Sydney – 10, all of Bluffton. Other survivors include his mother, Doreen Porter, of Greenwood, Indiana and siblings; Debra (Howard) Marks of

CA., Nancy (Tom) Witt of Avon, IN, John Ballas, Lori (Steve) Burke, Kathy Ballas, Sue (Tom) Tappenden, Jeff Ballas all of Michigan, Scott (Sara) Vitz of Leo, IN, Kelly (Lisa Saunders) Vitz of MI., and Crystal Porter of Greenwood, IN.

Eric will be remembered as living a life that brought joy and laughter to all who knew him. He loved his family and friends and was adored by many for his quick wit and infectious laugh. He intentionally chose to make the most out of the life he was given and tried to make the lives of those around him brighter. His passing has left a tremendous wound, but his steadfast faith and walk with Christ leave no doubt that he is at home with his Redeemer. We imagine the angels rolling with laughter on the streets of gold.

A service to celebrate Eric's life will be held at 10:30 on Wednesday (November 5, 2014) at First Church of Christ in Bluffton. Ministers Larry Sprinkle and Tom Haynie will officiate. Calling Hours will be held from 2 to 8 on Tuesday at the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home in Bluffton, with additional calling for one hour prior to the service at the church. Burial will follow at Elm Grove Cemetery in Bluffton. Memorials may be made in Eric's memory to a fund for his daughters' educations with checks payable to Jamie Vitz. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the care of the Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral home in Bluffton. Friends can send online condolences to Eric's family at www.thomarich.com.

Cemetery Details

Elm Grove Cemetery

3500 East State Road 124
Bluffton, IN

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV 4. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home
308 West Washington Street
Bluffton, IN 46714
<http://www.thomarich.com>

Visitation

NOV 5. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

First Church of Christ
909 W Spring St
Bluffton, IN

Service

NOV 5. 10:30 AM (ET)

First Church of Christ
909 W Spring St
Bluffton, IN

Tribute Wall



“ *Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Eric N Vitz*



Thoma/Rich, Lemler Funeral Home - November 05, 2014 at 09:30 AM



In memory of my little brother

Lori Burke - October 31, 2018 at 06:01 AM



“ *Eric N Vitz*

September 08, 2022 at 08:26 PM



“ *Our deepest sympathies. We just heard the news this past weekend at our Dad's funeral (Robert Powell) from some relatives. Eric was faithful in his work for the Lord and we are thankful for the time he ministered at the Christian Church in Rockford. You will be in our thoughts and prayers.----Ron, Pam, Matthew & Miriam Powell
Eleanore Powell*

Ron & Pam Powell - November 11, 2014 at 02:40 PM

LF

“ Linda Forbes lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz



Linda Forbes - November 11, 2014 at 10:42 AM

MB

“ 2 files added to the album New Album Name



Mahmudur Bhuiya - November 10, 2014 at 03:35 PM



“ Stephani McDowell lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz



Stephani McDowell - November 10, 2014 at 08:02 AM

AS

“ Alice Schueller lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz



Alice Schueller - November 09, 2014 at 06:01 PM

PB

“ I was at Great Lakes Bible College with Eric for two and a half years. He was a wonderful person to be around. I just heard of his passing. I hope all will accept my condolences. Had I known of his passing earlier, I would have made a way to have been there.

Paul R Berg - November 05, 2014 at 10:26 PM



“ Eric was fairly new to Medical Protective, but I had the opportunity to be one of the interviewers when he first applied. I was impressed with his knowledge and was planning to meet with him to learn new skills. Eric's family will continue to be in my prayers. May God strengthen them through this difficult time - provide them with peace and closure.

Stephani McDowell - November 05, 2014 at 08:01 AM

LS

“ LuAnn Solt lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz



LuAnn Solt - November 04, 2014 at 05:45 PM

CS

“ Jamie, Claudia, Ellie, Sidney, Doreen and all of Eric's brothers and sisters, I am so sad for your loss. Eric accomplished more in half a life than most people accomplish in a whole life. I am so thankful for the wonderful memories I have of Eric and his brothers camping at Mackinaw, Michigan's UP, Silver Lake and many other fun times. Eric will live on in all of our hearts, sometimes during sadness when we are thinking of him, he will still make us laugh. By God's Grace we will go on!

Craig Shattuck Kingsley, Mi.

Craig Shattuck - November 04, 2014 at 04:40 PM

MH

“ My condolences to the Vitz family. I only worked with Eric for a short time while he was at CME , May God give you peace in knowing that Eric is with him and both are watching over you.

Michelle Hardy - November 04, 2014 at 04:31 PM



“ *Healing Tears - All White* was purchased for the family of Eric N Vitz.



November 04, 2014 at 04:29 PM



“ Floor Plant for Sympathy was purchased for the family of Eric N Vitz.



November 04, 2014 at 12:20 PM



“ Hi my name is Frederick Kinsey! I went to school with Eric and remember him well! I am truely sorry for your loss and my prayers go out to you and your family! I wish that I could go to the funeral but can't because I live in Mi.

Frederick Kinsey - November 04, 2014 at 11:06 AM



“ Tracy & Jeanna Campbell purchased the Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Yellow and White for the family of Eric N Vitz.



Tracy & Jeanna Campbell - November 04, 2014 at 09:14 AM



“ Debbie Schenkel lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz



Debbie Schenkel - November 04, 2014 at 08:58 AM

AS

“ *Mr. Vitz was my teacher this semester for my online communications class at IPFW. I did not know him well but he seemed to love what he was doing. Sending up prayers for his wife and daughters.*



Angie Slentz - November 04, 2014 at 08:44 AM

SM

“ *Stephani McDowell lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz*



Stephani McDowell - November 04, 2014 at 07:23 AM

DP

“ *Will miss that smile!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*



David Perry - November 04, 2014 at 06:19 AM

LB

“ *LORI BURKE lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz*



LORI BURKE - November 04, 2014 at 03:24 AM

SW

“ I remember much about Eric. I was thinking of Him leading worship at GLCC singing "hail Jesus your my king" Eric is living as we feel the loss of him. God has him and that is Awesome. Loved his gift to make others laugh and smile. it runs in the family and will carry on I'm sure.

Sam Wisley - November 03, 2014 at 10:36 PM

JB

“ We are so sorry for your loss. We are thinking of all of you! ~Michael, Jen, Chloe and Lily Bailey



Jen Bailey - November 03, 2014 at 09:08 PM

SC

“ To the Vitz family:
You are in my heart and prayers.
Eric was a delight and joy to know.
May the memories of him continue to bring you comfort.
Sheila Cuffy - IPFW



Sheila Cuffy - November 03, 2014 at 05:55 PM

SG

“ Jamie, Claudia, Ellie and Sydney--My heartfelt sympathy goes out to you. I am praying for you and thinking of you. God Bless you.



Sandy Gianelli - November 03, 2014 at 04:21 PM

TA

“ *Tiff Adkins lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz*



Tiff Adkins - November 03, 2014 at 01:58 PM

SN

“ *Sincerely, Your friends at AMC Novi purchased the Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Lavender and White for the family of Eric N Vitz.*



Sincerely, Your friends at AMC Novi - November 03, 2014 at 01:12 PM

DM

“ *Delta Community Christian Church - Lansing, MI purchased the Peace, Prayers & Blessings - Blue and White for the family of Eric N Vitz.*



Delta Community Christian Church - Lansing, MI - November 03, 2014 at 10:43 AM

CD

“ *Cindy and Jerry Dillon purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Eric N Vitz.*



Cindy and Jerry Dillon - November 03, 2014 at 08:26 AM

JM

“ Our thoughts and prayers are with you. Jim and Sara McGovern



Jim and Sara McGovern - November 03, 2014 at 08:24 AM

DS

“ My condolences to you Jamie, Claudia, Ellie and Sydney. Also to Eric’s family, church family and friends. Eric is a precious treasure to the world, his family and friends, and to Jesus. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones.” Psalm 116:15 NAS. May God release His goodness and presence over each of you. Cross the threshold of faith as Eric did. Put your believing trust in Jesus the Christ and ask him into your heart and life to be your forgiver/savior, leader/lord, healer and forever friend. He has a wonderful purpose and destiny for your life. Follow and enjoy Him passionately!
David Martin Stevens – friend and co-worker of Kelly Vitz and Lisa Saunders.

David Martin Stevens - November 03, 2014 at 08:03 AM



“ Blue & White Sympathy Basket was purchased for the family of Eric N Vitz.



November 03, 2014 at 07:53 AM

DN

“ I am so sorry to hear of your loss. Many thoughts and prayers are with the family in such a painful time. Don and Dianna Nielsen



Don and Dianna Nielsen - November 03, 2014 at 07:44 AM

TS

“ Toni S lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz



Toni S - November 03, 2014 at 06:50 AM

AS

“ Eric, you will be missed greatly. I remember the times you spent at our home with our kids Melissa and Mathew Shattuck. I also remember those name games you and I would have. You were also quit the card . I would also like to tell you about the picture that was given to us during our Melissa's death, of all you kids it meant a great deal to us. Thank you so much. Also remember when you kids were younger, you came over and we had just bought a 4-wheeler , rod was getting ready to turn the screw down on the gas, when you climbed on and said I know how to drive it, next thing we knew you had driven it into our BBQ. Thank God you were not hurt. We our going to miss you so very much. I have a feeling that you and Melissa are having a good joke on me about those names we called each other. Also to Eric's family we are so sad that this nice young man is gone, he will be remembered for ever. So very sorry we know how this feels, our daughter and Eric were very good friends, and she passed away Dec 2. Almost a year ago. My heart is filled with so much sorrow for you Jamie and girls. Also to his mother, brother's and sister's. Audrey Shattuck

Audrey Shattuck - November 02, 2014 at 07:34 PM

BR

“ I was Eric's junior high English teacher at Vestaburg. It's hard to forget his mischievous face and blonde bobbed hair. He made teaching fun for me, and it appears he continued to light up people's lives for the rest of his short life. May the angels carry him to paradise. Betsy Pollard Rau, aka "Mrs. Rau."

betsy rau - November 02, 2014 at 07:31 PM

NM

“ So sorry to hear about Eric, i remember him from high school always making me laugh. My prayers go out to all his family and friends. Nora funsch McDonald

nora funsch McDonald - November 02, 2014 at 06:59 PM

NM

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Nora funsch McDonald

nora funsch McDonald - November 02, 2014 at 06:59 PM

KS

“ Eric was an amazing father.. And was a close friend of mine's father. When I was younger, my friend Walker and I would hang out with Claudia, and I remember one night we went out for ice cream. I remember we were in a van, and Eric was driving. I remember his big smile. Now, have you minded, I was a troubled kid. He never faltered his smile. He had the best smile. Claudia haven't been close since we were very, very young, and I may not be on best terms with the Lord but the whole family is in my prayers. A new smile is waiting in line at the golden gates. God bless the family and friends and if anyone needs a shoulder to cry on I will always be here.

- Kyra Stroud

Kyra Stroud - November 02, 2014 at 06:22 PM

JB

“ James Brown lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz



James Brown - November 02, 2014 at 05:21 PM

BF

“ *Bill And Melinda Foreman lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz*



Bill and Melinda Foreman - November 02, 2014 at 05:19 PM

MS

“ *Michelle Snyder lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz*



Michelle Snyder - November 02, 2014 at 03:46 PM

GC

“ *Gloria, Cary and Dennis Cranson purchased the Multicolor Bright Sympathy Floor Basket for the family of Eric N Vitz.*



Gloria, Cary and Dennis Cranson - November 02, 2014 at 09:32 AM

MH

“ I remember with fondness the few times I was able to attend the Haynieclan fantasy football drafts with Eric. And I also remember the few Haynie Christmas' I was able to attend as well. And I remember Eric as a good man, a great father, and husband very much in love with his wife. Like the apostle Paul, Eric could have said, "emulate me as I emulate Christ". That being said we can rejoice because like Paul and so many others before him, Eric has been called home, albeit early, to sit at the feet of the One he tried so hard to emulate. I commiserate with Jamie and the girls and wish so much that I could be there to hug, hold, laugh, and encourage!

Matthew Haynie - November 02, 2014 at 07:44 AM

GH

“ I remember so vividly the sunday morning that Eric was baptized into Christ at the Ferris Church of Christ I rejoice that Eric made that decision to follow Christ. We are so proud of Eric and the life he lived and to have been a part of his life.

Gerald Hull - November 02, 2014 at 06:31 AM



“ Eric was on my softball team for Charlotte Church of Christ back in the day! He was most likely the only one to hit a home run at our field. Eric was a team leader who had a great gift called "Charm" in my view is a very needed quality for a minister! His second gift was brother kindness a gift most Christians should have! And most of all He was a Awesome Christian Father! Heaven is a great place to be and I know 100% He is their and watching down on us cheering us on! To my sister Jamie and family Eric will always be with you in your hearts and in your mind! His love for you will be forever! I dedicate the song - I am already there by Lonestar - God Bless!

Brandon Voss - November 01, 2014 at 11:27 PM



“ *Brandon Voss lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz*



Brandon Voss - November 01, 2014 at 11:14 PM



“ *Eicher Family lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz*



Eicher Family - November 01, 2014 at 09:50 PM



“ *Eric was fun. He would preach sometimes at our church and we knew him. I'm sorry to seem him leave so young. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jaymie and the girls.*

Bryce Steiner - November 01, 2014 at 04:53 PM



“ *Doug Lautzenheiser purchased the Healing Tears - Blue and White for the family of Eric N Vitz.*



Doug Lautzenheiser - November 01, 2014 at 11:18 AM

BE

“ *Sorry to hear about Eric. You and the girls are in my prayers.*

Becky Elzey - November 01, 2014 at 09:27 AM

MH

“ *I remember Eric as a fun loving guy. In college he had a knack for spinning things on his finger. That was the theme of his how-to speech in speech class his freshman year at Great Lakes Christian College.*

Matt Higs - November 01, 2014 at 08:34 AM

JH

“ *Janet Heyerly lit a candle in memory of Eric N Vitz*



Janet Heyerly - October 31, 2014 at 09:30 PM