



Merle Kenneth Larson

March 24, 1940 - November 5, 2025

Merle K. Larson, Hutchinson, formerly from Dassel, 85, passed away on Wednesday, November 5, 2025, in St. Paul, surrounded by loved ones. He was born in Oakland, CA on March 24, 1940.

“Food is Love” was more than a saying to Merle. He lived it, whether planning meals for a houseful of family members on extended visits, offering six course dinners for eight at church auctions, planning and leading political fund-raising dinners, or fixing a wonderful breakfast for two for his wife, Nancy.

His love for food extended into his career as a food scientist for 30 years at General Mills. He loved telling people he fed over 3 million people as one of the developers of Hamburger Helper. He received his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in food science at UC Davis California in 1968.

Merle was an active member of St. John’s Church, Darwin MN, and Meeker County DFL, Dassel MN, holding leadership positions in both the church and the local political organization. He loved carving and making things out of wood, including two boats. He was a hands-on person who on his own figured out how to do things like rebuild a car engine, repair plumbing and electrical systems, remodel the house, and even write novels.

Merle was married to his wife Nancy (Carroll) Larson for 64 years. They were

married at St. Leonard's Catholic Church, Fremont, California, on Sept. 2, 1961.

Merle is survived by his wife, Nancy, children Patrick (Malin) Larson, Frankfurt, Germany, Andrew (Patricia) Larson, Rochester MN, Victoria (Daniel) Turner, Woodbury MN, Melisa (Chad) Rokala, Cokato MN, 12 grandchildren, 16 great grandchildren, and one great-great grandson. He was preceded in death by his infant sister Joan, mother Carmen Willis, father Kenneth Larson, brother Tom Larson, sister Sandra Deman, and grandson Starson Buckles.

Evening visitation is on Thursday, November 13, 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the Johnson Family Funeral Home, 611 2nd St. Dassel, MN. Funeral services are on Friday, November 14 at 1:00 pm at St. John's Catholic Church, 106 N. 4th St. Darwin MN, with visitation one hour prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Meeker County food shelf.

Cemetery Details

St. John's Catholic Cemetery

Darwin, MN 55324

Previous Events

Visitation

NOV **13.** 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Johnson Funeral Home
PO Box 1 611 N 2nd Street
Dassel, MN 55325
(320) 275-3381
jfhdassel@spectrum.net

Funeral Service

NOV **14.** 1:00 PM (CT)

St John's Catholic Church
106 N 4th St
Darwin, MN 55324-6016
(320) 275-2915

Tribute Wall



“ Basket of Memories was purchased for the family of Merle Kenneth Larson.



November 13, 2025 at 10:33 AM



“ Lori Meyer and Jerry Samargia planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Merle Kenneth Larson.

Lori Meyer and Jerry Samargia - November 13, 2025 at 10:33 AM