

Belvedere Family Community: The Passing of William D. Lay

Justin Okamoto
August 18, 2025



Belvedere Family Community

The Passing of William D. Lay

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We are saddened to share that our dear brother, William D. Lay, passed into the Spirit World on August 14, 2025.

Bill lived a life of deep faith, scholarship, and love for family and community. From his missionary work with CAUSA International to his years as a respected professor at the University of Bridgeport, he touched countless lives with his teaching, service, and heart for others. He was also a devoted husband, father, and grandfather who shared his love for nature, music, and faith with everyone around him.

His Seonghwa Ceremony will be held on Saturday, August 23, 2025 at 8:00 AM at Edwards-Dowdle Funeral Home in Dobbs Ferry, NY.

For full details on Brother Bill's life, Seonghwa service, and ways to support the family, please see the document below:

[View Full Information Here](#)

Let us keep Bill and his family in our prayers, and may Heaven bless his smooth and glorious transition into eternal life.

Visit our website

Belvedere Family Community
723 S Broadway
Tarrytown, NY, 10591

info@belvederefamily.com

The Passing of William D. Lay



William D Lay, son of Kenneth and Theodeanne Lay, was born on December 5, 1952, in Tokyo, Japan, where Kenneth was serving in the United States Army. After his father retired from the army, Bill and his family settled in Ripon, Wisconsin. After graduating high school, Bill attended the University of Notre Dame, where he completed two years of study before transferring to the University of Wisconsin, where he earned a B.S. in Chemistry and served as a research assistant to Nobel Laureate, Herbert C. Brown.

Bill joined the Unification Church in 1975 in Oakland, California. He became a member of the IOWC team and moved to New York in 1976. In 1978, he taught himself Spanish and became involved with the Spanish-language ministry, overseeing church services for the Spanish-speaking community.

In 1980, Bill began working with CAUSA International. Through CAUSA, Bill traveled across the globe – Latin America, the United States, Western Europe, Asia, and Australia - conducting seminars for leaders interested in the CAUSA Worldview. In 1986, after visiting and seeing over 50 countries, he was appointed Vice President of CAUSA International.

After graduating from Columbia Law School in 1992, Bill was selected to clerk at the New York Court of Appeals in Albany, the highest court in New York state. Following his time there, Bill and his family settled in Port Washington, New York, where he raised his five children,

Nathanael, Daniel, Kori, Kalia, and Jina. He taught Sunday school in his living room to his children and other Unification church families. He always thrived teaching in any capacity. Bill and his family also spent many vacations in upstate New York where he taught his children how to cross country ski, which was one of his favorite activities. He and his family would also do yearly Summer road trips to his hometown of Ripon to spend time with his children's beloved Grandpa and Nannie.

In 2008, the Professors World Peace Academy established a partnership with the University of Bridgeport Bill was drawn back to his first love: teaching. He became a full-time faculty member at the University of Bridgeport, where he established both undergraduate and graduate programs in Criminal Justice and Human Security. Professor Lay was revered and respected by his students for his clear and engaging lectures and the personal attention he gave to each student who sought his support, as evidenced by his 4.7 out of 5 rating on RateMyProfessors!

Bill and his wife Taeko have been together for 15 years. They are re-Blessed. They made a home in Harrison, New York with Taeko's daughters, Mika and Johanna. Just this year, they moved to Hawthorne, New Jersey to be closer to their grandchildren, Maya and Yana.

To say that Bill loved the outdoors would be an understatement. He was a decorated marathon runner and avid hiker. He led countless camping and backpacking trips and shared his love and respect for nature with his children, as well as many others. He was also a crossword puzzle aficionado, often completing the Sunday Times crossword in pen. He was always excited to pick up the guitar – another skill he taught himself – and get a singing circle going. He passed on many of these talents to his children.

Bill Lay is survived by his beloved wife, Taeko, his children and their significant others, Nathanael and Barbara, Daniel and Haley, Kori and Correy, Kalia and Dan, and Jina and Cam, and two stepdaughters, Mika and Johanna, with her husband Kushal. He is also survived by his two grandchildren, Maya and Yana.

Brother Bill's Seonghwa Ceremony will be held on Saturday, August 23rd
at 8:00 AM at the:

Edwards-Dowdle Funeral Home

64 Ashford Ave

Dobbs Ferry, NY 10522

The Zoom Link to participate online is:

Edwards Dowdle is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: William D. Lay Funeral Service

Time: Aug 23, 2025 8:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87968012567>

Meeting ID: 879 6801 2567

Join instructions

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/87968012567?signature=gRtNy7JrmR1Orjo56vCwVWlyC-gSQjXVicyTczrMmEA>

Please text or WhatsApp message Will Jacobson: (914) 357-3332 if you are having any issues with Zoom.

If you would like to offer a financial gift to the Lay Family, please use this GoFundMe Link:

<https://gofund.me/5f4c0d8e>

To Send Flowers please use this Local Florist Shop ~ **FREE Delivery**

Whispering Pines of Chappaqua Inc.

29 King Street

Chappaqua, NY 10514

(914) 238-5661

Funeral Prices:

Standing Sprays ~ \$275.00 and Up

Floor Baskets ~ \$200 and Up

Heart on a Stand ~ \$350 and Up

NO Delivery Charges for Bill's Seonghwa Ceremony

There will be a Prayer Vigil 40 Hours before the Seonghwas Ceremony

You can sign up on this link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1BWQD-C-Kg6cFIEkPPHGI33FKWjRykhDKa1xhvdvm9Co/edit?usp=sharing>

May Heaven Bless Brother Bill Lay's Smooth & Glorious Transition into
Eternal Life!

In Loving Memory of William D. Lay



👤

Taeko Lay is organizing this fundraiser.

🔒

Donation protected

William Lay's journey with cancer began in late September 2023, shortly after returning from a deeply meaningful climb to the summit of Mt. Fuji in Japan—a testament to his strength, determination, and love for life. Not long after, he was diagnosed with colon cancer, which later progressed to stage four and spread to his stomach. In November of that year, William underwent major surgery, marking the beginning of his long and courageous road toward healing.

Over the following two years, William faced two rounds of chemotherapy with grace and resilience. By May 2025, he made the brave decision to discontinue treatment and instead focus on quality of life—choosing to be surrounded by the love of his wife, children, and grandchildren while embracing alternative approaches to healing.

In June, he entered hospice care and spent his final weeks in the comfort of his home, enveloped in love. Family and friends gathered around him, sharing stories, playing music, and celebrating the life of a man who meant so much to so many.

On August 14, 2025, William passed away peacefully in his sleep, surrounded by those he loved most. His journey was one of strength, courage, and deep connection. His spirit lives on in the hearts of all who knew and loved him.

📌

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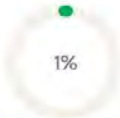
👤

Taeko Lay
Organizer
Hawthorne, NJ

Contact

\$440 raised

\$40K goal · 3 donations



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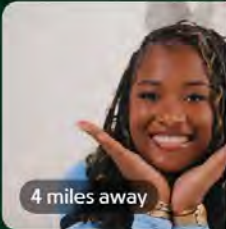
\$4,627 raised



3 miles away

Keep Alexandria's Family Together
by Kate for Emergencies

\$18,454 raised



4 miles away

Support Syrai's Family Loss
by Priscilla for Funerals

\$17,060 raised

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