

Matthew Dillon Heaton was born April 4, 1970 in Northfield, MN. His parents are Richard L. and Patricia A. (Monroe) Heaton. He moved around to many different places until he started elementary school at Bendix Elementary in Annandale, MN. When he was nine, he moved to St. Cloud, MN and continued his education until he graduated from St. Cloud Technical High School in 1988. He then attended Vermillion Community College in Ely, MN and studied business.

Matt enjoyed hunting, fishing, archery and his dogs.

He was married to Brenda Mackedanz in September of 1995. They had two children, Ashley Patricia and Luke Matthew. After his divorce he had a lifelong friendship with Sheila Althaus, who stood by him through many troubles.

Matt worked at various jobs in management. He helped create and open All Aboard buffet in Willmar, MN. Then he started his own restaurant called Ashley's Chicken named after his daughter. After that closed, he started a business cleaning restaurant grills and kitchens. He worked as a manager at Huisken Meat Company in Sauk Rapids, MN for seven years and also worked at Shearer's in Perham.

Matt had some struggles in life that kept him from reaching his potential. In spite of that, he had a very strong Christian faith and had a strong desire to go into some sort of ministry to tell people of Christ's saving grace and love for them. He was an avid student of the Bible. Matt went on a mission trip to Honduras in 2017, did a Bible Study with the children, and built a building for the orphanage there along with outreach. He did Bible Studies with inmates at the Benton County Jail and spoke to the youth at churches to encourage them to make better choices than he had. He was the director of Celebrate Recovery in St. Cloud at Westwood Community Church. He was very generous and handed out Bibles to people in the community that needed one. Matt got his big hug from Jesus on Wednesday, August 7, 2024.

Matt was preceded in death by his grandparents Warren and Vera (Otterson) Heaton and Benedict and Clara (Seelye) Monroe and his youngest brother Lee Andrew Heaton.

He is survived by his parents Richard and Patricia; his daughter Ashley (Kyle) Froelich; son Luke Heaton (Paige Daniel); grandkids Watson Lee Froelich and Colton Daniel Heaton; brothers Randy Heaton, Tim (Kristine) Heaton, and Rodger Heaton; his nieces Katlyn, Jordan (Kaden), and Alexis; nephews Nathan (Katrina), Jacob, and Andrew; five aunts and four uncles; and many other friends and family.

Matt was very much loved and will be extremely missed.

# Remembering

T H E L I F E O F



**Matthew Dillon Heaton**

**April 4, 1970 - August 7, 2024**

## **When Tomorrow Starts Without Me**

When tomorrow starts without me,  
And I'm not there to see,  
If the sun should rise and find your eyes  
All filled with tears for me;  
I wish so much you wouldn't cry  
The way you did today,  
While thinking of the many things,  
We didn't get to say.

I know how much you love, me,  
As much as I love you,  
And each time you think of me,  
I know you'll miss me too;

But when tomorrow starts without me,  
Please try to understand,  
That an angel came and called my name,  
And took me by the hand,  
And said my place was ready,  
In heaven far above  
And that I'd have to leave behind  
All those I dearly love.

But as I turned to walk away,  
A tear fell from my eye  
For all my life, I'd always thought,  
I didn't want to die.  
I had so much to live for,  
So much left yet to do,  
It seemed almost impossible,  
That I was leaving you.

I thought of all the yesterdays,  
The good ones and the bad,  
The thought of all the love we shared,  
And all the fun we had.  
If I could relive yesterday  
Just even for a while,  
I'd say good-bye and kiss you  
And maybe see you smile.

But then I fully realized  
That this could never be,  
For emptiness and memories,  
Would take the place of me.  
And when I thought of worldly things  
I might miss come tomorrow,  
I thought of you, and when I did  
My heart was filled with sorrow.

But when I walked through heaven's gates  
I felt so much at home  
When God looked down and smiled at me,  
From His great golden throne.

He said, "This is eternity,  
And all I've promised you.  
Today your life on earth is past  
But here it starts anew.  
I promise no tomorrow,

But today will always last,  
And since each day's the same way,  
There's no longing for the past.  
You have been so faithful,  
So trusting and so true.  
Though there were times  
You did some things  
You knew you shouldn't do.

But you have been forgiven  
And now at last you're free.  
So won't you come and take my hand  
And share my life with me?"  
So when tomorrow starts without me,  
Don't think we're far apart,  
For every time you think of me,  
I'm right here, in your heart.

-David M. Romano

## **Funeral Service**

Thursday, August 15, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.  
Crosspoint Alliance Church  
Perham, Minnesota

## **Officiant**

Pastor Michael Bochman

## **Musician**

Gary Foss

## **Casket Bearers**

Randy Heaton - Tim Heaton  
Rodger Heaton - Luke Heaton  
Nathan Heaton - Jacob Heaton

## **Interment**

Lake Eunice Evangelical Free Cemetery  
Detroit Lakes, Minnesota