



## Thomas H. Israel

August 20, 1931 - February 22, 2021

Thomas Israel, 89, of Lebanon, died Monday, February 22, 2021. He was the son of the late Harry and Margaret (Richelderfer) Israel.

Born August 20, 1931, in Hazleton, PA, he was a 1949 graduate of Lebanon High School. He earned his Bachelor's Degree at Lebanon Valley College and a Master's Degree in Education at Penn State University. He continued his post-graduate studies in elementary education at the University of Colorado and pursued further organ study with professors at both Penn State and in Boulder. He also participated in various summer church music workshops at Union Theological Seminary in New York City.

He taught for 40 years in the Lebanon School District, 37 of which were spent as a sixth grade teacher at Southwest Elementary School. Earlier he had taught in the Harding and Stevens buildings. He completed his teaching career at Lebanon's Middle School. After his retirement in 1993 he devoted considerable time to foreign travel and to attending operas and concerts in the world's most famous theaters. He was a lifelong opera buff. His travels took him to 80 countries.

Israel was well-known as a church organist, and during a lengthy career of 72 years he served various Lutheran churches in Lebanon, Hershey, and Reading. For 23 years he was also organist at Temple Ohev Sholom in Harrisburg. His most recent position was as organist at Hill Lutheran Church.

He was a member of Hill Lutheran Church, where he began his organ-playing career while still a high school student. He was a member of the Lancaster Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, the Lebanon County Educational Honor Society, and the Pennsylvania Association of School Retirees.

Surviving are a sister Ann Uphouse of Phoenixville, as well as several nieces and nephews in the Philadelphia area.

A private graveside service will be held at Grand View Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be sent to Hill Lutheran Church's music fund, 998 North Mill Street, Lebanon, PA 17046.

# Comments

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“ Extending deepest sympathy to Thomas Israel's family, friends, and colleagues. We have lost a fine man, a dedicated educator, and wonderful musician. And, of course, we must acknowledge that he was also a great world traveler! Fortunate to have known him since sixth grade at Southwest Elementary. Always a gentleman who lived a rich, full life. Rest in peace, Mr. Israel. Safe passage to the next horizon. Enjoy the opera from your well-earned seat in the VIP section of God's heavenly kingdom.



**John Shott** - March 01, 2021 at 07:42 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



**Bonnie Shank** - February 24, 2021 at 06:41 PM

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“ Rest in Peace Tom and keep making beautiful organ music in heaven.



**Bonnie Shank** - February 24, 2021 at 04:31 PM