



# Bryan Healy Dunagan

*September 21, 1979–October 26, 2023*

**“THE STEADFAST LOVE OF THE LORD NEVER CEASES:  
HIS MERCIES NEVER COME TO AN END; THEY ARE NEW  
EVERY MORNING; GREAT IS YOUR FAITHFULNESS.”  
LAMENTATIONS 3:22–23**

Rev. Dr. Bryan Healy Dunagan, aged 44, passed away of natural causes at his home in Dallas, TX, on October 26, 2023. Bryan was a disciple of Jesus Christ, a devoted son, a beloved husband, and an adoring father.

As a pastor, Bryan was widely known for being both brilliant and winsome. A fearless leader, he provided the church with direction and tirelessly gave himself for the flourishing of the church’s staff and congregation, the broader community, and the world. He had a wonderful and self-deprecating sense of humor. He was generous, kind, and forgiving. He was disciplined and bold, but gentle and lowly. He was loved by many.

Bryan was born at Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas on September 21, 1979, to Deborah and Michael Dunagan. In middle school, he moved to Houston where his faith began to take root under the teaching and mentorship of Dr. Vic Pentz at First Presbyterian Church of Houston. During Bryan's formative years, his competitive spirit and sensitivity towards others began to emerge. He graduated in the top 1% of his Lamar High School class and played on the varsity lacrosse team that won the state championship. He attended Stanford University where he continued playing lacrosse and was active in campus ministries. His faith continued to grow as he attended Menlo Park Presbyterian Church in Palo Alto. He was both a role model for younger students and a consummate prankster. Highly competitive, Bryan would dominate opponents in a "friendly" game of lacrosse or basketball, and then immediately feel badly about doing so. He always wanted to win, but – more than that – he cared deeply for the feelings and well-being of others.

Bryan loved to learn. He earned a Bachelor of Arts from Stanford University, a Masters of Divinity from Regent College, and a Doctor of Ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary. He mastered many scholarly theological concepts and could explain them with ease. His mind was steeped in the Scriptures and the writings of influential Christian thinkers from the early desert fathers to contemporary writers like Dallas Willard. Yet even this ocean of sophisticated knowledge was not able to prevent a Chevy Chase Christmas Vacation movie quote from bubbling up to the surface from time to time.

Bryan lost his mother, Deborah, during his senior year at Stanford. He received the news of her passing after he helped Stanford's lacrosse team finish second in the nation at the National Club League Championship tournament. Bryan scored seven goals in the first-round game of the tournament, only later to receive this tragic news. In the wake of that loss, Bryan's high school pastor and mentor, Vic Pentz, suggested that the young Political Science Major use his natural gifts for ministry to shepherd students at Peachtree Presbyterian Church in Atlanta. Bryan came to life investing in students and developing his talent for teaching.

During the summer of 2002, Bryan met Atlanta native Alison Wheeler, “Ali,” at Peachtree Presbyterian’s youth camp, Camp Rutledge. The two were instantly smitten, drawn to one another’s love of Jesus, compassion for others, and athletic prowess on the ultimate frisbee field. Bryan and Ali dated from a distance as Bryan attended Regent in Vancouver and Ali continued her undergraduate studies at Davidson in North Carolina. In 2008, they married in Atlanta, where Bryan was working as a Teaching Pastor at Peachtree Presbyterian Church. During this time, Bryan and Ali developed rich friendships and welcomed their twins, Annie and Wheeler.

In 2014, Bryan and Ali moved to Dallas where Bryan was installed as the Senior Pastor of Highland Park Presbyterian Church at age 34. He led his staff and congregation through a denominational change, a monumental building campaign, the Covid-19 chaos, and the planting of three new local community churches: Peak Street Church, Grace Church Lake Highlands, and Good Shepherd Oak Cliff. Bryan’s tenure transformed not only the church’s campus, but also the lives of thousands of people in Dallas and beyond. He communicated the gospel clearly and with abundant love and grace, capturing the hearts of many.

Together Bryan and Ali sharpened one another more into the image of Jesus. Ali was transformed by Bryan’s view of grace and his love for the city. Bryan had a vision for the flourishing of the city of Dallas, bridge building, and learning from leaders of organizations like Act, Mercy Street, Dallas Leadership Foundation, Redeemed Women, and Behind Every Door, to name a few. Bryan championed Ali’s passion for global missions and became caught up in the movement of God around the world. From Cuba and the Dominican Republic, to Kenya, Pakistan, and Istanbul, Bryan was drawn to God’s heartbeat for people of all tribes, tongues, and languages. Ali fondly recalls the joy they shared getting to serve as a family in the Dominican Republic in recent years.

In 2017, the Dunagan family was blessed with the birth of their third child, Collier Jane. As the children grew up, they learned from their daddy to love the mountains, lakes, oceans, and adventure. Bryan felt the most freedom and joy when he was in the mountains. Bryan cherished soul rest and grew transformational

friendships as he created margin for play: honoring an annual trip with college friends and a winter ski trip with his best friends for the past twenty years.

Here in Dallas, Bryan could frequently be found on the sidelines of youth sporting events, whether coaching lacrosse for his son, Wheeler, or championing his daughters, Annie and Collier Jane. He was a devoted daddy who loved his family well.

Those who knew Bryan consider it an honor to have journeyed with him. His vibrant spirit is survived here on earth by his beloved wife Ali, his children Annie (10), Wheeler (10), and Collier Jane (6), his father, Michael Dunagan, his aunts, Betty Lyon and Fay Dunagan, and uncles Edward Dunagan (and wife Allyson Dunagan), and David Dunagan, all of Dallas. He is also survived by his step-sister Nicole McKenney of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

---

***Remembering Bryan*** A common question being asked right now is, “What can I do to help?” Here are three ways:

### **1. SHARE MEMORIES AND PHOTOS**

As we grieve, we want to create a collection of memories and photos of Bryan Dunagan to remember him well for years to come. Please share with us how Bryan has impacted you, what you remember best about him, your stories, and your favorite pictures to help build his legacy.

### **2. GIVE TO THE DUNAGAN FAMILY MEMORIAL FUND**

Make a gift to help support the Dunagan family.

### **3. PRAY**

We’re lifting up the Dunagan family, our congregation, our Family of Churches, our staff, and our entire community inside and outside of our church walls. We are asking for God to give us wisdom as we grieve and to guide our church through our next steps.

Learn more about each of these opportunities at [\*\*hppres.org/bryan\*\*](http://hppres.org/bryan).