

Roy Kraft, Twin Lakes minister, dead at 85

B10-1C
Longtime leader
was known for
helping people

By **MARINA MALIKOFF**
Sentinel staff writer

APTOS — About 14 church-goers heard the Rev. Roy Kraft's first sermon in the tiny, termite-infested Twin Lakes Baptist Church on Seventh Avenue nearly five decades ago.

When Kraft is remembered Sunday in the church's now 1,800-seat sanctuary in Aptos, it will likely be standing-room only.

"There are good speakers and there are good pastors, and he was both," said David Hart, a longtime congregation member and Kraft's best friend.

Kraft died in his sleep Sunday at his Santa Cruz home. He was 85.

"He died the ideal death," said his identical twin brother, the Rev. Ralph Kraft of Watsonville. "He went to sleep and woke up in heaven."

Kraft dedicated his life to easing the pain and suffering of those who crossed his path. He healed with the words of God — without apology and without excuse.

"(Kraft) made a heroic stand for the word of God," said Ralph Kraft, himself a former pastor at First Baptist Church of Watsonville and First Baptist Church of Los Altos. "People are tired of a sermon that is just a philosophy."

When he retired in 1990 after 47 years, Roy Kraft had transformed the burgeoning, steeple-topped "Little Brown Church by the Sea"



Dan Coyro/Sentinel file photo

Rev. Roy Kraft, shown in this June 1990 photo, built Twin Lakes Baptist Church into a 3,000 member congregation.

into a 3,000-member congregation that in 1973 moved into a 35-acre mega-church in Aptos. While he was pastor, the church developed a vast youth and music program supported by a staff of 100 and a \$4 million annual budget.

He also found time to marry a few couples along the way, Hart said.

Please see **KRAFT** — BACK PAGE

Kraft

Continued from Page 1

"He married three of our four children," Hart said. "Our children admired him. He was just the best friend a person could have."

When not at the pulpit or broadcasting his "Morning Chimes" radio show on KSCO, Kraft and his wife of 60 years, Jeannette, traveled around the world in ministry.

"He was very committed to missionary work," Ralph Kraft said. "The last year or two of his pastorate he had a missionary budget of \$1 million per year."

Humble Christian beginnings in Kansas likely set the stage for Kraft's life at the pulpit.

"They were on very short rations," Jeannette Kraft said in a 1990 Sentinel interview. "Roy's mother made their underwear from flour sacks. When they un-

dressed for gym, one would be 'Globe A-1' and the other would be 'Pillsbury's Best.'"

After high school, the twins followed in the footsteps of their oldest brother, who later became chairman of the board for Safeway's Canadian operation.

But both young men left the grocery business and enrolled at Biola University in La Mirada after their second oldest brother was killed by a drunken driver just three weeks shy of his seminary graduation.

"A drunk fellow ran into him, hit him head on and killed him," Ralph Kraft said. "It was a real jolt to us."

Ralph Kraft and his wife were on a ministry in Canada and Seattle when they learned of Roy Kraft's death.

"I think his love for people stood out so very, very clearly," Ralph Kraft said. "If someone was hurting, he'd be there to help."

A memorial service will be 2 p.m. Sunday at Twin Lakes Baptist Church, 2701 Cabrillo College Drive, Aptos.