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David Krentel, 72, fundraiser, Christian educator

By **JAY LEVIN**
STAFF WRITER

David Krentel, chief fundraiser for the Christian Health Care Center in Wyckoff, also was a minister and Bible school teacher. Sundays would find him at the East Bergen Christian Church, a Chinese congregation in Teaneck, where he ministered to young parishioners, some of whom are international students from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The Rev. Hei King, the pastor, said Mr. Krentel was a beloved father figure. When not teaching students the Bible or playing pingpong or watching football with them, he helped acclimate them to America by leading field trips to Broadway, museums and even Amish country. "He had a big heart and reached out across cultures," King said.

Mr. Krentel, 72, died of a heart at-

tack in his sleep last Friday at his Ridge-wood home, said his daughter, Alison Krentel.

Hours earlier, he had presided at the Christian Health Care Center's third-annual, football-themed beefsteak fundraiser at The Brownstone in Paterson.

"He was working the room and doing what he was gifted at: engaging and connecting with people and making sure the event went off without a hitch," said Julie Lee, senior vice president for community development and marketing services at the Christian Health Care Center, which offers senior residences and elder-care services on a 78-acre campus.

Mr. Krentel was executive director of the center's foundation since 2004.

"Under his leadership, we raised ap-

proximately \$15 million," Lee said.

An unofficial member of the pastoral staff, Mr. Krentel also led weekly Bible study at the Christian Health Care Center's independent living facility, Evergreen Court. And on Monday evenings, he taught Bible at the Hawthorne Gospel Church.

"He was a devoted Christian with a strong faith. That was his mission: to share the Gospel and share the love of Christ," his daughter said.

The Virginia-born Mr. Krentel had a two-phase career. He ministered at Hawthorne Gospel and at churches in Texas, Illinois and North Carolina.

Some 20 years ago he got into foundation work, first at World Vision, the Christian humanitarian organization, and then at the Christian Health Care Center.

"His calling was the pastoral ministry, but he was very good at raising money," Alison Krentel said. "Dad was

very warm and genuine, smart and well-read and was able to talk to anybody about anything."

She said her father relished his part-time role at the East Bergen Christian Church.

"He was a kid at heart in so many ways ... and had fun working with those kids at the church and showing them America, too," she said.

King, the pastor, said Mr. Krentel spoke a little Chinese, "but not very good." But fluency was not a prerequisite for the English minister, which was Mr. Krentel's title.

"He is a good example of a Christian," King said. "We see Jesus through his lifestyle."

Mr. Krentel also participated in overseas missions, including last year in Zambia, where he taught pastors at a Bible college.

Douglas A. Struyk, president and CEO of the Christian Health Care

Center, cited Mr. Krentel's integrity and "servant leadership."

"He not only inspired donors to support Christian Health Care Center's mission but also enabled those donors to feel personally connected to the difference that they were making in the lives we serve in Jesus' name," Struyk said in a statement. "In his honor and from his example, we have created the David Krentel Memorial Fund to further his passions for our ministry and give thanks for his legacy."

In addition to his daughter, of Otawa, Mr. Krentel is survived by a son, Jonathan, of Reston, Va.; four siblings; and five grandchildren.

Visiting is from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. today at the Vander Plaats Funeral Home in Wyckoff. The funeral service will be at 10 a.m. Saturday at the Hawthorne Gospel Church.

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