

## MEMORIAL

### Reverend Ronald Creager

1936 - 2021

Rev. Ronald Creager of Penn Hills, age 85, (May 6, 1936 - November 1, 2021) passed away peacefully at home with his family. Ron served in the Presbytery of Miami Valley as an Interim Pastor from 1994- 1997 at Fairborn First Presbyterian Church and from 1997-1999 at Piqua, Westminster Presbyterian Church before retiring in 1999. Ron graduated at the top of his class from Franklin Marshall College and received a Master of Divinity from Princeton Seminary and continued his education after retirement through OSHER Lifelong Learning at Carnegie Mellon and Pitt. Ron enjoyed symphony concerts, theatre, and was a movie buff which he used in his Adult Education classes and Stephen's Ministry. Ron loved sports, especially Yankees baseball, and enjoyed traveling and volunteering at conference centers with his wife, as well as their winters in Florida. He also loved spending time with his grandchildren.

Beloved husband of 21 years to Carol "Liz" Creager. Loving father of Cathy Creager of Trumbull, CT, Chris Guggenheimer (Barry) of Cincinnati, OH, and Carrie Leib (Chris) of Cleveland, OH, and step-father of Rick Clark (Patti) of Largo, FL, Suzy McCune of Trafford, the late David K. Birge, and Michael Birge of Penn Hills. Cherished grandfather of Brax Spaulding, Taylor Stephens, Kaeli Stephens, Audra Stephens, Rick Clark, IV (Melina), and Christopher McCune. Great-grandfather of Phoebe Isabella Clark. Brother of Keith Creager of Waynesboro, PA, and the late Glenn Creager. Sympathy cards may be sent to the Creager Family, c/o Wolfe Memorial, 3604 Greensburg Pike, Pittsburgh PA 15221.

The Dayton Memorial Presbyterian Church voted to dissolve the congregation on February 9, 2020, yet the legacy of its faithful witness endures. In gratitude for the ministry of this congregation over many generations we share this historical sketch offered by PMV historian Virginia Rainey:

"In December 1866, a committee of the YMCA of the Third Street Presbyterian (New School) Church decided to open a mission. They purchased land at Third and Terry Streets to erect a chapel, which was dedicated on July 7, 1867. In 1868 Rev. Henry Calhoun organized the mission as the East Third Street Presbyterian Church. In 1871 the congregation set forth to build a more substantial edifice. The following year the congregation renamed itself Memorial in gratitude to all who had given so much to create this church.

In 1881 the church underwent trial by fire when smoke and flames were discovered during Sunday worship. Despite heavy damage, the church was repaired within three months and refurbished with furnishings from the Third Street Church, which was replacing its own sanctuary. When the flood waters of 1913 spared the church, the doors were opened to shelter and feed the homeless under the direction of pastor Daniel Brownlee. During World War II the congregation established a fund for relocation. Land was purchased at Smithville Road and Argella Avenue in September 1944. The first services at the new site were held December 1949. In September 1952 Rev. Paul C. Nicholson began his long pastorate and oversaw the construction of an educational wing that was dedicated in 1959.

On March 13, 1971, the church again experienced fire when arsonists set blazes that engulfed the sanctuary. Again the congregation rebuilt, dedicating the new sanctuary in 1973."

The building went on to house the offices of Miami Valley Presbytery and the Stitches of Love network of the presbytery and recently found new life in providing a temporary home base for Brethren Disaster Ministries to do tornado recovery in the Dayton area.

As a presbytery connected by covenant relationship in our common ministry, we give thanks for the faithful witness over generations of the members and leaders of Dayton Memorial Presbyterian Church. May we continue in this common mission and ministry of revealing God's kingdom and the love of Jesus Christ in the world.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE MINISTRY OF THE  
HAMILTON: WESTWOOD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

As of December 31, 2021, the Hamilton:Westwood Church closed its doors. Needless to say, this decision was emotionally difficult and stressful for their Session and congregational members. We come to a place now to celebrate their ministry and outreach to their community and beyond.

We start with their Mission Statement: "Westwood Presbyterian Church is a fellowship of believers existing to share the Good News of Jesus Christ by ministering to our members, friends, community and the world." After 63 years of ministry, they were faithful to the end to this statement. Even with reduced membership and reduced income, and the presence of Covid, Westwood was able to contribute to needs in their community.

- Both Website and in person worship services were held
- A Care Team was established to provide care and support to church members and friends – sending cards, making phone calls, visiting in hospitals, nursing homes and individual homes, CD's were recorded and delivered them
- Developed a Helping Hands Project
- Donated items to the One-Way Farm; donated items and canned goods for Serve City; donated to Hospitality House
- Supported the meal center with monthly donations of baked goods
- Held a drive-up Chili Takeout
- Collected items for a mitten tree

Rev. Norman Godfrey also retired as of December 31, 2021. He expressed his thankfulness for his time with Westwood Church and lamented the closing. Rev. Godfrey wrote an Epitaph for the church as follows:

"Here lies a church that lived for sixty-three years. It touched and inspired hundreds of lives and served the Hamilton community well. It will continue to live on in the hearts and memories of those who survive today."

We thank God for these faithful servants who served well at Westwood Presbyterian Church.