



In Loving Memory of **Edward N. McNulty**

1938 – 2023

The Rev. Dr. Edward Nelson McNulty, 88, passed away Monday, Sept. 16, 2024, at his residence in Bellbrook, OH.

For over forty years, Ed served as pastor to communities in OH, ND, WV, PA, and NY, before retiring to KY and Bellbrook, OH. He earned his BA from Butler, University in Butler, Indiana, his MDiv from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago, IL, and his D.Min. from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH. Ed was a welcome addition to the Committee on Representation and Diversity in recent years where he led conversations about movies that challenged our thinking about race, gender and other important topics. He also recently served as a temporary pastor at Middletown First Presbyterian and moderated the session at Blue Ball Presbyterian Church.

Edward grew up in Indianapolis, the son of Bernard and Thelma McNulty. His stories about his childhood captured glimpses of him running wild with his friends, discovering the magic of cinema, rowing out of his living room in a canoe, and coping with the pain of his parent's divorce.

On Sundays, a local Baptist minister gathered children on a bus, to take them to Sunday school. His baptism in a river eventually led Edward into the ministry. His deep regard for American history and the democracy led him to choose the Presbyterian church, for its elected leadership.

Edward played a small part in Indiana's sci fi history, as a member of the Indiana Sci Fi Association (ISFA). The fanzine he helped edit circulated throughout the state, and he and his friends attended sci fi conventions in Chicago, NYC, and OH, including an infamous one in Bellefontaine, OH, 1954, where he sold some of his enviable (and secret) collection of Astounding magazines to Issac Asimov.

In 1959, Edward married Sandra Hoover Meredith in Indianapolis. They moved to Chicago for his seminary studies, working as house parents to ten boys at an orphanage. They had five children, Nevin (Scott), Ellen, Rebecca, Paul, and Daniel. Ed's ministry took them to OH and ND, where they took in foster children.

The McNulty home was full of stories, music, art, books, and vivid discussions about the theological and social issues of the 60s and 70s. The family hiked and camped as often as they could. Sandra taught the children to identify plants and wildlife, while Edward taught them to

love the stars and the beauty of this earth.

In 1964, Edward responded to the call for ministers and youth to shine a national spotlight on the extreme discrimination and poverty in Mississippi. His two-week sojourn as a member of Freedom Summer opened a lifelong commitment to social justice, rooted firmly in the teachings of Jesus, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mahatma Gandhi. Add to these three his admiration for Abraham Lincoln, and the full meaning and richness of his work begins to unfold.

In the 70s, Edward began producing deeply moving audio-visual presentations exploring the social issues of the day: war and peace, poverty and the family, race and discrimination. He and Sandra collaborated on multi-media presentations on Daughters of Eve and Children. His writings on multi-media led to the first of about sixteen books, Gadgets, Gimmicks and Grace (Abbey Press, 1976), followed by Television: A Guide for Christians (Abingdon, 1976), Controversial Topics for Youth Groups (Group Books, 1988), Faith and Films (Presbyterian Publishing Corp., 2007) and Jesus Christ: Movie Star (Read the Spirit, 2015).

As a Christian educator, Edward viewed films as modern parables. He often said that if Christ were alive today, he would have been a filmmaker. This idea blossomed into Visual Parables: For Those With Eyes to See and eventually, into Visual Parables: Faith-and-Film Reviews and Study Guides, founded in 1990 and currently produced by Read the Spirit.

Edward found the spirit of Christ's teachings in the most unlikely of places: Snoopy's kisses that ended Lucy's crab-ins, Edith Bunker's peacemaking between Archie and son-in-law Mike in All In The Family. He delighted in discussing the theological underpinnings of Cool Hand Luke with director Michael Rhodes and collaborated with him on Film Clips – a post-9/11 short that worked to heal the country during a time of great collective pain.

He led thousands of discussions and film reviews, connecting scripture with modern storytelling. For him, Christ's teachings were an ever-present call to action for peace, reconciliation, and love. He never stopped reviewing films, traveling to new places, honoring American historical landmarks, or loving his family. His last recommendation was for the animated film The Wild Robot. It reminded him of the beauty of The Iron Giant. Edward was preceded in death by his wife Sandra (Meredith) McNulty; one son, Nevin "Scott" McNulty; his father, Bernard McNulty; his mother, Thelma (White) Holmes; his stepfather Rudolph Holmes; and a foster child, Darrell Roths. He is survived by his children, Ellen (Steve) Brownson, Rebecca McNulty (Andrea Ellis), Paul (Candy) McNulty, and Daniel McNulty; grandchildren, Isabella McNulty, Sean (Heather) Brownson, and Angela (Josh) Shetler; and great-grandchildren, Dean and Sasha Brownson, and Alyse, Julie and Austin Shetler; one foster child, Iris Roths; and a foreign exchange student daughter, Elise Reunanen.

A memorial service will be held in the spring of 2025, in Bellbrook, OH. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation to one of Edward's favorite organizations: The Carter Center, the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Southern Poverty Law Center, or the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation.