



CENTERVILLE MESSENGER Free Upon Request-Published Weekly by Centerville Church of Christ, 138 N. Central Ave., Centerville, TN 37033-1427
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Paul and Judy are pictured in 1982 with lifelong friends at the Outreach Center for their 25th anniversary with the Centerville Church of Christ. Dad moved on to preach for 23 more years until his passing at age 70. He was wonderful minister yet also a great father. *Submitted by his daughter Susan Rogers Harber*

September 19, 2021 150th Celebration By Judy Rogers

My life originated in 1936 within the Old Jefferson community of Smyrna, Tennessee. I was blessed with a very happy upbringing within a close-knit family, school, church and community. There was abundant love in my home with parents who sought strong morals and kindness to all. I lived on a large farm on Lamar Road and attended Old Jefferson Church of Christ from the day I was born. Paul Rogers was central to my world from the age of 16 when he arrived as our new minister in 1952. He was 18 years old and a freshman at David Lipscomb College. My mother Emily Johns invited all visiting preachers for lunch, and he was a regular guest in our home. He established a presence in Rutherford County with door knocking, and the membership increased to 120 within four years. He also expanded the church with an additional wing for Sunday School rooms. He was active with the youth and coached a softball team on Lamar Road. I wed Paul three years later, and my personal reward stems from having him as a special Christian husband and father to our four children.

There is no greater honor and privilege than to serve as a minister's wife over 48 wonderful years within the Centerville Church of Christ. I hold dear the tremendous memories of my involvement through the years and formed lifelong friendships that are ever-present today. I have pursued assistance to everyone as the wife of a preacher both publicly and privately in a strong effort to change mankind for better and spread the Gospel. I cooked numerous meals and made many visits to the sick and to knock on doors for new converts in 64 years as a member. My sour dough bread ministry has been a prime endeavor for all in need that I initiated in 1980. I also attended multiple showers and funerals. For 50 years, I worked in the nursery during Vacation Bible School and enjoyed every moment. When I first arrived to Centerville in the late 1950s, I was recruited to hand-stitch treasured quilts for those in need with the benevolent quilters in an Outreach program every Wednesday. I learned so much wisdom and

(continued pg. 2)

Continued pg. 1) insight from the older ladies, who took me under wing and are special in my heart to this day. Paul and I initiated an open door to those who desired prayers or a home to stay within amongst hard times. During gospel meetings, we accommodated the visiting preacher to sojourn in our home. Further, Paul conducted multiple gospel meetings throughout the United States during his ministry, and I traveled with him for support. In 1979, the Centerville congregation as a whole purchased the 'One-year Bible' to learn and prosper in wisdom from every verse with daily reading. I have continued reading this same Bible for 32 years and feel stronger as a Christian. Paul and I were a good team, and we participated in every activity with the congregation in a big way. The longevity and goodwill of this congregation is a testament to the hard-working members of 150 years, who create a beautiful story within the history of Centerville. Paul Rogers preached his first sermon in Birmingham, Alabama in 1952 at 17 years old within the Central Church of Christ. Upon arrival to Centerville, Paul referred to his new home as the 'city on a hill encircled by the beauty of Duck River.'

An elder's meeting on November 30, 1956 established minutes selecting Paul as the new preacher with Dr. Parker Elrod leading the committee. Willard Collins, president of David Lipscomb College, recommended Paul for the position. Paul, a native to Birmingham, Alabama, arrived on January 1, 1957 to our county on a stunning New Year's Day, and I wore a long pony tail and was expecting our first child Larry at age 20. Paul was 22 years old with seven months passed since his graduation from David Lipscomb College where he was the editor of school paper. When Paul embarked on Centerville, there were 345 members and two Sunday morning services meeting from 1957 through 1966 in the original building. I attended both services with three young children. This early timeframe accommodated General Shoe (Genesco) employees an interval to attend during gospel meetings.

A small white house was situated just across the street from the church having been purchased for office space and classrooms in 1957. This early office was later moved into the new Education building constructed at the corner of College Avenue and Church Street. Ann Wharton was the first church secretary. In 1958, the annual budget was \$20,800.

Paul moved on to attain his Masters at Harding Graduate School in Memphis and was full of ideas brimming for an active and soul-winning ministry. He had skills in motivating others and always looked for an individual's best traits that could be magnified into spiritual gifts. He supported and inspired young men to preach and sought Bill McDonald as a young teen to speak on a Sunday evening. After Paul baptized Bill, he conveyed 'I intend to make a preacher out of you.' Bill moved on to become a dynamic minister in the brotherhood and changed untold lives for better.

Paul's desk in his office held 100 folders at a time with a creative framework for future sermons. Many of these folders lined his desk and floor. He labored long hours seven days a week over five decades in this role and desired the congregation be a grand success. Paul related 'I want to give life and vitality to the word of God.' Paul counseled many congregants over sorrows and troubles, and he was a mainstay for peace and resolution.

In 1965, the congregation on Church Street locked their doors for the first time with no staff present, and a new building was dedicated as the Centerville Church of Christ. In a new chapter of time, safety was paramount to protect the congregation. For 95 years, these same doors were left open to all at the corner of Church and College Street.

Paul dreamed big from the first day. He envisioned Tulipwood, a youth camp, and a goal of 1,000 for Vacation Bible School; and these dreams came true. In 1959, VBS spilled over into the high school for needed classrooms just a block away with 902 enrolled. Camp Meribah was his mastermind magnified by generosity of 158 acres from member Hartie Lee Coble.

Paul was a historian on a high level and carefully cataloged each sermon and book within the church library with dates and signatures of authors. Every time he preached a funeral, he purchased a book for this library. In 1958, there were 200 books at hand that increased to 700 volumes in 1967. The library expanded into new space in 1992; and in 1996, over 2,000 books lined these shelves and available to all. The religious text shared space with books selected by Paul on nature, presidents, history and travel. Some collector books were dated prior to 1850. His Video sermons were also housed in this special room. Elizabeth Sessler, a retired teacher, attended Centerville Church of Christ for 70 years and was a prime librarian and caretaker.

The new Centerville Church of Christ was dedicated on September 4, 1966 with 1,071 in attendance. With ambitious objectives still forthcoming, Paul continued to plan and prepare for the future. A Children's Home was devised in 1969 on Hillcrest Drive; and I remember being present to see the excitement firsthand on opening day with Clara and Roy Shannon as custodians. Missions, Tulipwood (75 apartments in a \$2.5 million complex) and Camp Meribah were paramount ventures still serving goodwill on a daily basis. The effort in Turk and Caicos Islands in 1985 was a very successful mission ministry. The Benevolence program in the Outreach Center served those in financial need with food and clothing. The five acres on Swan Street were donated by W.E. McDonald and Dr. Parker Elrod in 1978 for this structure. Visitation teams began in 1969 with Bill Davis as first director. The program was dynamic for 40 years and met on Thursday evenings in private homes where members shared a meal and reported on their progress. Paul and I attended every Thursday evening and so enjoyed relationships with fellow members. Nearly 100 volunteers were on teams visiting the sick and inviting others to church. These teams averaged 75 visits a week. In 1980, Visitation teams reported 1,300 visits.

A weekly radio broadcast began in 1950. By 1959, a new Sunday morning segment 'Gospel in Word and Song' commenced on WHLP. The radio service celebrated a 35th anniversary in 1994, as Paul developed a lifelong friendship with station director Steve Turner. By 1978, Paul was reaching a large audience on a 50,000-watt Vicksburg, Mississippi FM station. Televised coverage of the service was intact in 1986 with great enthusiasm and led to baptisms (by Paul) in Turk and Caicos Islands, where the church continues to support in Missions. In 1990, two new TV cameras were purchased for this continued expansion. By 1986, Paul sought a vision to create a Fellowship Hall that emerged as reality and is widely utilized to this day by community and church members.

Paul scribed five books in his life time, including 'Lest We Forget...150 years of Church of Christ in Hickman County', 'Surely Things Believed Among Us', 'I have Much People in this City,' 'These 40 Years' and 'Revelation'. He also composed a song 'Christ is All the World to Me' for Christian songbooks. This song was sung in his honor at his funeral in 2005 by the David Lipscomb Acapella Chorus.

Paul preached more than 5,000 sermons over his lifetime and baptized 2,000. When he became ill, he penned these words 'Life on this planet is very often a series of unexpected twists and turns. The unthinkable suddenly becomes thinkable and the unexpected becomes raw reality.' There were 800 members in 2005 when he perished. Paul was born in 1935 and laid to rest at a young age of 70 in the Centerville Cemetery and was always well-known as an 'encourager'. His tombstone is engraved with these words of theologian John Wycliffe 'The highest service men may attain to on earth is to preach the word of God.'

Sympathy



Elizabeth Givens

1935- 2021

...We express our sympathy to the family of Elizabeth Givens. Elizabeth was a member of the Centerville Church of Christ for a number of years where she loved to sing. We express our sympathy to her son Brent (Margaret) Givens, sisters Shirley DeVore and Betty Claud.

...We express our sympathy to the family of Pearl Gordon who passed away. She was the mother of Elaine (Leon Gilbert).

Memorial

...a Memorial has been given to Kay Cares Fund (Wayne Qualls' Class) in sympathy and love for the recent passing of Welch Whitesell, father of Joy McDonald, by Randy and Kim James.

Thank You

Stephen Dotson writes:

"Centerville Church Family, I want to thank you for all the calls, cards, food and most importantly your prayers during this difficult summer of injuries and illnesses. You kindnesses have been greatly appreciated. Lisa and I love you all."

Farris Baker, Jr. writes: " Church Family, Thank you for all the cards, calls, and birthday cake for my birthday. I greatly appreciate the thoughtfulness."



STEWARDSHIP REPORT

CONTRIBUTION

Aug. 15th:
\$ 13,304.30

Camp:
\$ 185.00

Budget:
\$ 12,979.00

Placing Membership



We would like to welcome
Gary & Portia Baker
to our Centerville Family!

Their address is :

1382 Walker Road
Centerville, Tennessee 37033

Welcome!

Nursing Home

Life Care Center:

Katherine Hoover, Louise Gordon, Brownie Mayberry, Donna Blackwell, Betty Davis, Bobby Breece, Betty Claud, Addie Bell Nash, Georgia Moss, Larry Talley

St. Thomas Hickman Nursing Home:

Mildred Bridges, Winnie Aydelott, Martha Bates, Francis McClanahan



...Danny Tucker (Allison Horner) is in the hospital with Covid in Smithville, Tennessee.

...Charles Horner is recovering Covid.

...Bobby McCoy is in St. Thomas Hickman Hospital with an infection in his colon.

...Betty Claud's health has declined in recent weeks.

...Betty Davis spent several days in the local hospital due to dehydration and an infection. She is better and back at Life Care.

...George Simmons will have back surgery August 23rd.

...Brett McCord, brother of Ashley Halliburton, is in ICU at Centennial Hospital battling Covid. He is improving daily.

...Melvin Roberson is recovering at home.

...Keith Barber is recovering from a stroke. His address is:

Roy K. Barber
NHC
5010 Trotwood Avenue
Columbia, TN. 38401

Recovering from surgery or other illness:

Pat Sparkman, Dot Allen, Chris Buchanan, Keith Barber, Stephen Dotson, Phillip Dotson, Fred Bowman, David King, Jamie Stoltz, Caleb Barker, Jessie Seagraves, Elton Morgan, Jerry Greene, Lovada Burklow, Loudean Qualls, Jimmy Copley, Alden Chilton, Reba Horner, Dan Elkins, Ann Spencer

Please Pray For Those Who Are Dealing With Cancer:

Jimmy Savley, Kari Mobley, Wayne Cornwell, Sandra Cooper, Brenda Martinez, Raymond Stoltz, Luther Brown, Wendy Pace, David Dansby, Kenneth Dotson, Allison Staten, Gail Kincade, Steve Higginbotham, Everett Kelley, Thomas Gaines, Colleen Polk, Michael McCarley, Allan Newton, George Peterson, Lonnie Gilliam, Phil Shelton, Ann Luran Plunkett, Jimmy Jenkins, Susan Hardy, Jimmy Copley, Gwen Rogers, David Talley, Jerry Shepard, Jimmy Mathis

Home:

John Thomas Givens, Lonnie & Marilyn Gilliam, Bobby & Joyce Mayberry, Claudine Morrison, Dorris & Margie Claud, Floy Lyell, A.J. & Willie B. Coates, J.W. & Sue Roder, Troy Parks

Month of Sundays



Sunday September 5, 2021

Join us Sunday, September 5th as Jeremy Butt, Minister of the Northview Congregation in Columbia, Tennessee will kick off our "Month Of Sundays". He will speak at our morning worship, teach a combined bible class and speak again after our fellowship meal.

Lunch Served In The Fellowship Hall Following Bible Class
Barbeque & Sides
Bill McDonald's Class will provide baked beans, chips & desserts.
Wayne Qualls' Class will provide coleslaw, chips, and desserts.
 Drinks will be provided.
 No 5 P.M. Worship
 Join Us For A Great Day!

150th Anniversary

The Centerville Church Of Christ

September 19, 2021

9:00 A.M. Worship Speaker: Jim Brown
 10:15 Combined Adult Bible Classes
 Speaker: Bryan McAlister
5th Grade And Down Go To Bible Classes
 11:30 Potluck Lunch Served Outside Under Tents
 12:15 Singing/ A Walk Down Memory Lane
 Memories of 150 Years & Afternoon Devotional
 Speakers: Todd Parsley and Matthew Dotson
 12:45 Time Capsule Ceremony
 Speaker: Carter Hoover

No 5 P.M. Worship



Life-Line Daily Updates & Devotional Message

Prayer Week Of August 22: <u>S.M.W.</u> Jeremy Qualls <u>S.M.D.</u> Shaun Lawson <u>S.E.W.</u> John Bradley <u>S.E.D.</u> Joey Hunt <u>W.E.B.S.</u> John Jacobs <u>W.E.D.</u> Houston Hudgins	Elder's Prayer August 22: Craig Shelton Preside August 22: Caleb Odom Read Scripture August 22: Sam Chessor
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