

OVER A HALF CENTURY OF DEVOTION TO GOD AND COMMUNITY: A CHURCH HONORS ITS LONG TIME PASTOR



In early November, the congregation of Collinsville Covenant Brethren Church in Collinsville, Virginia came together and staged a ceremony to honor their pastor. Pastor Roy McVey and his wife Carolyn have faithfully served the Collinsville Congregation for 50 years. In a telephone interview, Pastor Roy described the experience as heartwarming and humbling. He said there was food from one end of the fellowship hall to the other, there were cards and gifts, along with many from the congregation voicing expressions of love and appreciation.

About a year and a half ago the Collinsville Congregation voted to become part of Covenant Brethren Church. Talking about his congregation, he says that they are great. "When the time came for a yes or no vote, the entire congregation was united in their desire to become part of CBC. They consistently display unanimity in congregational votes. The congregation is about as unified as any group that I know of."

Born in 1950 in Beckley, West Virginia, he says he accepted Jesus as his personal savior at the age of twelve. Later on, he got away from church and religion for about a year and a half. He explains, "I got a job and a car, he says, "and at that point in my life church and religion just became secondary".

Reflecting on how he finally realized that he needed to return to church, he explains it as one of the many examples of God's plan for his life. He says, "I was working in a store and one evening a local couple, who happened to be leaders of the Crab Orchard Church of the Brethren youth group, where I had been baptized years earlier, came into the store and struck up a conversation. During that conversation they encouraged me to come to the next youth meeting." He says, "I thought long and hard about whether or

not to attend, even to the point that I hoped I would be sick.” However, he forced himself to attend the meeting. And as it turned out, the meeting was scheduled for the election of officers. To his surprise, he (who had never attended a youth meeting) and another candidate were nominated and asked to leave the room while the voting took place. To his astonishment he was voted group president. From that point on his future was without question.

Upon reflection, he says, over the years it was clear that God wanted him to be a pastor. He remembers being conflicted about pursuing a career in ministry. “I remember talking with my aunt Minnie, a woman of strong faith, about the decision I was wrestling with, and her response was, ‘What business is it of mine what God calls you to do? You need to ask God, not me, what He wants you to do with your life!’” He then continued to pray and ask God what he should do. The answer to that question, and his subsequent decision has been an enduring one: a career of relentless devotion to God and the ministry.

On December 1, 1968, at the age of 18, Roy was licensed to the ministry in his home congregation in Crab Orchard, West Virginia. He has pastored churches in Princeton, West Virginia, Troutville, and Collinsville, Virginia.

He describes his tenure at Collinsville as a wonderful, learning and growing experience. Only once, about 13 years into his service, did he consider leaving, but changed his mind when he and Carolyn decided that God did not want him to leave.

When asked what has been the most rewarding for him over the years, he doesn’t hesitate in pointing out that it has been the many individuals who have given their lives to Christ.

Collinsville CBC Board chairman and good friend, Clinton Wright, says of Pastor Roy, “He is not just a preacher, he is also a pastor.” He consistently gets a lot out of the congregation because they believe in him and it is evident that they have a deep abiding affection for him. The church has undergone extensive renovations and has grown under his leadership and shepherding.”

Brother Roy’s expansive ministry has allowed him to experience and share many different happenings. In addition to the many changes in his own

church, Pastor Roy has, over the years, preached in or held revival in 79 Brethren churches.

This steadfast servant of God truly has been the spiritual soundtrack across generations, his longevity and accomplishments are quite an achievement when you consider that preachers on the average stay about seven years in a church.

Through the years, Pastor Roy has consistently demonstrated a clear eye and an open heart to his congregation and his beloved God, and for 50 years the people of Collinsville CBC have entrusted him with their time and their hearts.

All of this, raises the inevitable question: How many more years of service to his flock and to God? He is quick to respond “I don’t know, but I would be fearful of walking away from something God wanted me to do.”

Pastor Roy McVey: a legacy of obedience to God and an abiding love of God’s people; and certainly another example of the many wonderful things happening in our CBC churches.

To Almighty God be the glory!

Submitted by Steve Jennings, Editor