

The following is the Life of the Church Report given by David Hawkins at the 10:00 a.m. service on August 3, 2008. It was titled "Legacies of the Church". The stories are so charming that they beg to be shared with those who were not present. Most of the story is told exactly as David spoke it and some is paraphrased for print purposes. Enjoy.

David Brainard McClung, owner of Andre Studios, and his wife Mary Francis, were long time members of LPC. This year we learned that Brainard's will, upon the death of Mary Francis, provided for distribution of 10% of his residual estate and trusts to this church. We have now received three distributions totaling approximately \$123,500 from that estate. There will be some additional payments, based on the information we now have available, though the amounts are not known. This bequest was not restricted by the McClungs. The Session was advised of this bequest at its last meeting, but has not taken any action to designate a use for these funds.

David Hawkins states that he knew the McClungs simply as good neighbors - unremarkable, understated folks. They must have been good Presbyterians. In a sermon back in the spring, our pastor described good Presbyterians as "not much into arm waving." You know the type. But in this case, with their passing, the McClungs expressed in the loudest terms that they wanted the witness of this church to continue. What a marvelous gift!

The second story is also very good but most unusual. In mid-April of this year, our Church received a letter from a San Antonio attorney notifying us that a Mrs. Clara Virginia Miller Fotis included in her will a bequest of 2% of her residual estate to the "Presbyterian Church, Main Street, Lexington, Virginia." The will further provides that if certain other individual named beneficiaries are no longer living, their share will also be assigned to the church.

The attorney had a problem. He found that there are three churches fitting this description, so he had addressed his letter to all three. The attorney and the executrix, a sister-in-law from Tucson, believe that Clara Virginia Miller left Lexington during World War II. With internet searching, David found that she was born in June 1922.

Lila Rogers remembered this family, some of whom still reside in Buena Vista. She searched the church records and we were able to send the attorney a copy of the page from our church register showing that this lady joined Lexington Presbyterian on April 21, 1935. She would have been 12, soon to be 13 years old. Clara Virginia Miller was placed on the inactive roll on February 5, 1946, at the age of 24.

Regardless of our documentation, the attorney called again in mid-June and requested that church Treasurer, Rae Carpenter, send to him the name of a contact in each of the other two churches so that he might solicit a disclaimer from the Lauderdale and Grace churches that neither of them laid claim to this

bequest. We do not have any further information about the total amount of this bequest. Mrs. Fotis died on January 16 of this year....sixty five years after she left Lexington. Her will was written in February 1993.....fifty years after she left Lexington.

What in the world did our church do in the late 1930s that left such a lasting impression on a young Mrs. Fotis? Why did our church mean so much to her that she wanted to be remembered fifty years later when she wrote her will? What are we doing today that will stay with the youth of our church for a lifetime? Is your witness and my witness to the love of God compelling enough that it will bear fruit 65 years from now?

We are a historic church. Many have gone before us. These are our legacies. Thanks be to God. Amen.