

**Our Pastors Remember: A Talk at GPC Issues Class, Dec. 4, 2011**

Take: Envelope with Sales forms

Book

Magic Marker, tape

Before class: Write on easel paper or tape: **Our Pastors Remember**

Interviews with:

Richard Austin

John Ackerman

Richard Oman

Robert McClure

Campbell Gillon

Dana English

Simmons Gardner

Merritt Schatz

Clarence Ammons

**START**

**“The wise mind will know the time and the way. For every matter has its time and its way.”**

**Ecclesiastes 8:5.**

“You became an example to all the believers... For the Word of the Lord has sounded forth from you....” I Thessalonians 1:7

“He must have a firm grasp of the word that is trustworthy in accordance with the teaching, so that he maybe able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those that contradict it.” Titus 1: 9

“...Proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.” Psalm 89:1

“Let me hear joy and gladness...” Psalm 51:8

“God has appointed in the church first apostles, seconds prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership... Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts...? Strive for the greater gifts, and I will show you a still more excellent way.” I Corinthians 12:28-31

“Let them praise His name with dancing, making melody to Him with tambourine and lyre.” Psalm 149:3

**Our pastors in this book remember a time and a way that they hope will inform our generation and generations to come. As our current pastor, Camille Cook, has written in the introduction to this book, “Georgetown Presbyterian Church is a place that has endured the test of time and has a rich history as a consequence.”**

In bringing this project to fruition, mine was a minor role. I worked behind the scenes and after the fact. I had the fun part: Putting the manuscript into book format. Setting margins, adding headers, table of contents, deciding on typefaces and sizes, adding pictures and callouts. Once the settings were made,

and the pictures and other objects were placed, it was just a matter of flowing the text from MS Word into the MS Publisher template, tweaking it a bit, making a PDF, and burning a DVD. It **was** really fun.

Best of all, I got to read the wonderful stories of nine very-different pastors who served at GPC.

Although they held the same position, more or less, the approach of each was quite different. These are real people who revealed, knowingly or unknowingly, their genius, their compassion, their creativity, and a few of their warts. All were eager to make a difference.

Who knew that church rules could be bent a little? For instance, a seminarian who somehow became assistant minister for a summer? That was Richard Austin.

A pastor didn't particularly like to lead Ash Wednesday services and left them to his Associate? That was Campbell Gillon.

A pastor who describes slightly devious, though charming, means to get things done? Merritt Schatz. Our pastors are very human people on a divine mission.

All praise for this book is due to Phil Fleming who patiently guided, encouraged, and advised us in this project from beginning to end. Praise to the interviewers, Phil Fleming and Susan Page and to the nine pastors themselves who spoke so candidly about themselves, their successes, and their difficulties.

About how they came to Georgetown Presbyterian Church, and how they left. How they got along with their associates, and how they didn't.

Kudos to the transcribers, who listened to tapes, pausing to type what they heard, for hours and hours. They were the late Barbara Bowersox and a team put together by Peggy Garrett.

A special word of praise for Susan Page who boiled down what might have been a hefty 500-page book, into a manageable capsule of memories of fewer than 200 pages. She did it with a skill that retains the voice and personality of each pastor, edited for smooth reading. She did it so well that the proofreaders found very little that needed changing. The praise-worthy proofreaders, by the way, were Jill Fri, Judy Hopkins, Peggy Garrett, and Charlie Alexander, and other committee members.

I'm especially fond of Charlie's proofreading. He pointed out several improvements. The final proof was ready to be locked into a PDF and burned onto a DVD when I got an email from Charlie. "It's probably too late, but..." He found a couple of typos. I assured him it wasn't too late, made the changes, and was grateful for them. As a matter of fact, it's never too late to make corrections or improvements, even after a book is printed. There is always the possibility of a next edition. I've already started an errata file. So please don't be shy about reporting errors or suggesting improvements.

About the pictures: Jill Fri was able to assemble portrait photos of each of the pastors, and many other pictures. Ann Hunt produced a disk with many historical photos. Quite a few are from Stan and Diane Whatley. Tracey Price offered much-needed design advice. Jill also provided advice and assistance all along the way, even about the wording of the stone representation of the church seal on the back cover.

Jill also was instrumental in finding our printer, Rachid Gana. Rachid has his own letterpress, trimmer, and hot-adhesive perfect binding machine, and several other machines in a print shop on the grounds of St. Columba's Episcopal Church on Albemarle Street. He does all or most of the printing jobs for St.

Columba's, and in his spare time, takes on jobs for other churches, one of which is Chevy Chase Presbyterian.

Our own printer/copier here at GPC is quite good with printing, collating, folding, stapling, and stacking small booklets, but for book-size works that require a spine and binding, specialized equipment is necessary. Rachid was able to produce a book that comes close to what we had envisioned, less expensively than any of the ten or so other printer/binders I contacted, and Rachid is a pleasure to work with.

The price we are charging for the book goes toward defraying a portion of the expense of printing and binding. The time and effort that we contributed is freely and happily given. We're even buying our own books.

Let me ask you a question: Do any of you know all nine pastors? \_\_\_\_ Wow! I know only two, and recently met a third. I wish I knew them all. They are interesting people! How many know more than two? \_\_\_\_\_.

So, could you identify the pastors by what they said? I see if you know who said it. Shall we try?

**Who said "I sang in the choir. When you sing, it really digs into your soul." Richard Austin. p.8**

**Who said "As Christians we should treat everyone in precisely the same way. We should be kind and loving." Campbell Gillon. p. 100**

**Who said “We had a Wild West service with a kneeling bench...” Richard Oman. p.46**

Who said “...at Christmas time ... she had her troupe of dancers come down.” Robert McClure. p. 67

Who said “There was plenty of room for me to learn and grow in ministry during those four and a quarter years.” Dana English. P. 107.

**Who said “We worship in the chapel before we go into the meeting.” Merritt Schatz. P.158**

Who said “There was no central aisle, but the pews that went from the side aisles to the walls were pretty long.” Richard Austin. P.29

Who said “...everyone has a different learning style....You cannot say one size fits all. And certainly, serving Georgetown made that doubly apparent.” John Ackerman. P 38

**Who said “...if you live your history and recycle that, it becomes a limitation. But if your history empowers you to become a repository of wisdom and experience and a place of learning, then that is something unique to Georgetown.” Simmons Gardner. P. 137.**

**Thank you.**