

## **NECROLOGY REPORT - 2018**

Whenever we gather as the church militant we do so under the larger panoply of the church triumphant.

Listed below are the names of clergy and specific lay leaders from our congregations who died in this past year. We remember with gratitude their witness and their service in the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Those listed, along with their countless unnamed colleagues, our brothers and sisters in Christ, are remembered in special prayers at our Annual Meeting. We commend them to your memory and offer our prayer:

*Oh God, our strength and our redeemer, giver of life and conqueror of death, we approach you in this moment with humbled hearts. With faith in your perfect mercy and wisdom, we commit your servants to your keeping. We praise you for your loving kindness to them throughout the days of their earthly life and for all they were, by nature and grace, to those who loved them and to the Church of Jesus Christ. We thank you that for them all sickness and sorrow are ended and death itself is past, and they have entered into the rest that remains for your people. Keep us in fellowship with your church triumphant, that we may rejoice together in your presence both now and ever more. Amen.*

### **Deceased Lay Leaders**

**Edward R. Fisher (1939 - 2017)** Edward R. Fisher, 78, of Hummelstown UCC passed away Friday, August 4, 2017 in the M.S. Hershey Medical Center.

After various trades and owning Fisher's Garage in Middletown, Ed was a real estate agent, landlord, and lay pastor. He was a U.S. Army veteran, enjoyed airplanes, member of Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and the Hummelstown UCC.

**Robert W. "Bob" Gohrs** Died March 12, 2018 at age 80. Bob was only a member of New Covenant, Williamsport, for a short time, following the closing of the historic First Baptist Church of Williamsport; however, his contributions to the church were outstanding. Life-long choir member and for decades led the youth ministry. Held every position in the church: deacon, trustee, pastoral search chair, etc. at one time or another.

**Benjamin K. "Ben" Keller** passed away September 4, 2017 at age 89. Not only was Ben a charter member of New Covenant, Williamsport, but as an elder in one of our predecessor congregations, he helped negotiate the unification. He served as a Sunday School teacher, youth leader, Association, Conference, and General Synod delegates; participated in several mission trips. In the community, Ben assisted with the development of Rider Park and was instrumental in establishing the Williamsport/Lycoming County Chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

**Mildred L. "Millie" Lay** died November 17, 2017 at age 83. She served at New Covenant, Williamsport as a Sunday School Teacher for more than 30 years, and was a charter member of New Covenant.

**Andrew William Nagy, Sr.**, of New Covenant, Williamsport, died May 21, 2017 at age 97. He was a charter member of the church and long-time lay leader serving in a variety of roles. Along with his wife, Jean, he helped settle a refugee family following World War II.

**E. Jean Nagy** a New Covenant, Williamsport charter member, died 1/6/18 at age 93. She chaired the annual Sauerkraut Dinner fundraiser for more than a decade, organized fund raisers to pay for the installation of the sanctuary's Christ Head window, and along with her husband, helped to settle a refugee family following World War II.

**June Price**, a member of Trinity, East Petersburg, died November 20, 2017 at age 83. June served her church faithfully as an elder, deacon, trustee, Women's Group Leader, Sunday School Leader, and member of the kitchen committee.

**Dot Snead**, a member of Dover UCC, died November 4, 2017. She had served with her husband, Paul Snead, churches in Ephrata and Dover. Her outreach was to work in health care mission projects in the Honduras.

**Louis M. Waleff, Jr.**, 55, Member of Faith UCC, Grantville, passed away unexpectedly 9/23/17 in Corning, NY. He was a 1979 graduate of Elizabethtown High School and received his Bachelor's Degree from Edinboro University. He worked at WPDC; was Dusty Roads at Z107 and worked for the Blind Association, reading the newspaper from cover to cover on Saturdays. Lou then worked for the State; as a Media Technician at the Museum and then as the Communication Specialist for the House of Representatives and Democratic Caucus. He was a member of Faith UCC, Grantville, where he was involved with the church Consistory. Lou was a member of Perseverance Lodge, F&AM and the Tall Cedars of Lebanon, Forest 43. He was the President of the Haps Boyer Baseball Tournament, Vice President of the Central Dauphin HS PTSO and was extremely active with the CDHS Ice Hockey team. Lou loved his Oakland Raiders, the Boston Red Sox, golf, and 70s music. Mostly, he loved his family and friends. He was, as his friends stated, "Never without a smile." His beloved wife, Brenda Boyer Waleff, passed away in August of 2016.

**Alden Watrous "Al" Wilcox** passed away June 17, 2017 at age 88. At New Covenant, Williamsport, he was a long time choir member, adult Sunday School class discussion leader, and lay leader including chair of the Social Awareness Committee and a pastoral search committee.

### **Deceased Clergy**

† The **Rev Leatha Archer** (Deceased April 14, 2018) was born an only child to Lloyd and Hannah Arnold on July 5, 1938, in Lewistown, PA. While attending Heidelberg College in Ohio, she met Jack whom she married on November 1, 1958. Leatha and Jack attended the Lancaster Theological Seminary where she pursued a post-secondary degree. She was

bestowed with a Master of Divinity in 1976.

In 1977, she was recognized co-pastor of the Nittany Valley Charge, which was part of the Northern Association of the UCC - Penn Central Conference.

During her tenure as a Pastor, she held elected positions at the Association, Conference, and National levels. During the 1983 and '85 General Synods, she served as a delegate on committees that focused on Christian Education.

Some the organizations to which she has belonged were, the Howard and Pleasant Gap Women's Clubs, The Red Hat Club of Bald Eagle and Nittany Valleys, and finally, the Golden Girls of Colby Circle.

Leatha was very proud of, and enjoyed, being around her family. She is survived by daughter Tami of Nashville, son Tim and his wife Georgie of Millheim, and Todd and his wife Megan of Harrisburg. Grandchildren include Katrina, Katelyn, Luke, Marley, Addie, and Nikki. Great-grandchildren include Sadie, Kensley, Liam, Lilly, Ellie, Bailey, and Callie.

Late-in-life, Leatha became a short-story author writing several mysteries and a novel about a time-travel trip that she takes with grandsons Luke and Liam.

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<http://www.statecollege.com/obituary/detail/obituary-of-leatha--arnold--archer,5856/>

† **Rev. Harold Jack Ballard**, 87, born Nov. 17, 1929, passed away with family by his side, Nov. 6, 2017 at the VA Medical Center in Martinsburg, WV.

Harold Jack Ballard was a military veteran of the U.S. [Army](#) as an E-6 Staff Sgt.(P). He was first a Distillery MP in post [WWII](#) Europe; he was wounded in the Korean War; Military Advisor in Vietnam and retired as a Drill Sgt. in Ft. Knox, KY in 1967. He had a fantastic voice and performed on his own radio show in Europe. When he retired from the Army, he worked for the Erie Lackawanna Railroad Company and ten years as a Probation Officer in Cleveland, OH.

At the age of 55, Jack took a different career path. He received his Ordination as a pastor from the Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, where he received a Master's Degree of Divinity. He was a pastor for the United Church of Christ for over ten years and during this time, the pastor of Grace United Church of Christ in Buffalo, NY. When Jack retired as a pastor, he returned to his hometown of York, to take care of his mother. As a member of the Mt. Zion United Church of Christ of York, he continued preaching as a guest pastor and serving the people of his community.

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<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/york/obituary.aspx?n=harold-ballard&pid=187205223&fhid=28190>

† **Pastor Charles Allen Fitzgerald** passed away July 30, 2017. On June 25, 1972, in Rockdale, Md. (during Hurricane Agnes, of course) Charles and Jill Lynn Grahl were united in marriage at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. Charles began his degree work for a Master of Divinity at the Wesley Theological Seminary of the United Methodist Church in Washington DC.

Charles had served his first church, at Fairbrook near State College, when he was 20 years old and a senior at Penn State. After graduation from their respective schools, their first home and parish was in Dudley. From that home, they served the Hopewell and Dudley United Methodist Churches from 1974-1977. Other Pennsylvania churches along the journey included: The Fairbrook-Spruce Creek UMC, The Williamsburg-Cove Forge UMC, The United Methodist Church of St. Thomas near Chambersburg, Zion UMC in York, the Wesley UMC in Tyrone and, finally, after a change in denominational assignment, St. Peter's United Church of Christ in State College for 12 years.

Pastor and Jill were co-pastors in every sense of the word and memories of our times together in churches are worth more than gold. Sadly and unexpectedly, lung cancer brought a swift and surprising end to it all beginning in January of 2017. A lifelong fitness walker (34 years of walking 3-5 miles most days) and a person very aware of what a healthy life should look like (because he learned so much from visiting in hospitals), the final illness was a cruel surprise with no clear cause at all. It just happened.

Pastor Fitzgerald served the church in many ways. He was a longtime member of United Methodist Communications and often photographed and printed in a home darkroom all the photographs used in local denominational publications. He was an officer in many ministeriums. He served on local Boards of Ministry. He was a Lay Speaker teacher for years. He was an umpire for many softball leagues. He was proudly the tennis coach for the ladies tennis team at Tyrone Area High School for 10 years.

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/centredaily/obituary.aspx?n=charles-a-fitzgerald&pid=186261972&fhid=15341>

† **Rev. Sharon Banks Freudenberger** passed away on Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at Genesis-The Pines in Easton. She was 75. Sharon was born on March 15, 1942 in Baltimore, MD.

Rev. Freudenberger received her B.A. in Library Science from West Virginia Wesleyan and her Masters of Divinity from Lancaster Theological Seminary. She served in several local churches in the Lancaster area. She was married to Rev. John G. Freudenberger, who passed away in 1992.

<http://www.fhnfuneralhome.com/obituaries/Sharon-Freudenberger#!/Obituary>

† **Rev. Allan Everett Kroehler** (Died 2/3/18)

The Reverend Allen Everett Kroehler, 91, died Saturday, February 3, 2018, in Ithaca, NY. Allen was born April 10, 1926, in Henderson, MN. He married Dorothy Louise Edmund on September 3, 1948, in Ottumwa, IA, and relished his 60 years with her.

Among the chief delights of his life were his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, whom he enjoyed watching play, grow, and mature. Allen moved recently from his home in Blacksburg, VA, to Ithaca, NY, where his great grandsons, Eli Brown (4) and Allen Brown (3), had the pleasure of living just a few miles from their "Great" for the last several months of his life.

Allen's journey as a life-long scholar began in a one-room schoolhouse and continued through his ordination as a minister in the United Church of Christ and his 30 year career teaching at Lancaster Theological Seminary. He devoted much of his professional and personal life to service work, and his philosophy of equality and care for all persons manifested in many ways, including his work with children, marching for civil rights in Washington, and founding the Laboratory for Leadership and Learning. His family will long remember his quick retorts, his delight in singing a hymn before a holiday meal, his Ovaltine mug, and his jigsaw puzzle mastery. [http://lancasteronline.com/obituaries/allen-everett-kroehler/article\\_afddbdee-a551-519d-8ce3-a7a45c7637d3.html?utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_campaign=user-share](http://lancasteronline.com/obituaries/allen-everett-kroehler/article_afddbdee-a551-519d-8ce3-a7a45c7637d3.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=user-share)

† **Rev. Earl Royer Marks**, formerly of Schnecksville, was born May 8, 1927 in Reistville, Lebanon County. He died on November 15, 2017. He graduated from Richland High School, Lebanon Valley College, and Lancaster Theological Seminary and was ordained in 1950. His first church was the Lykens Valley Charge from 1950-1959. After that, he served the Heidelberg Charge in New Tripoli, PA from 1959-1964. Earl served as Assistant Conference Minister of the Penn Northeast Conference from 1964-1987. He also served as Interim Pastor with several congregations. <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/eveningsun/obituary.aspx?n=earl-marks&pid=187274731>

† **The Rev. Warren C. "Rocky" Riedel**, 90, died Friday, March 9, 2018 at his Pequea Twp. home. He was born in Lancaster to the late Clinton and Mildred (Storm) Riedel and was married to Marian M. (Brown) Riedel for almost 70 years.

His parents had to receive his diploma from Upper Leacock High School in 1945 because he joined the Navy at age 17 to serve as a hospital corpsman during [WWII](#). Following the War, he made magic tricks for his father, "Riedel The Magician". He also worked for WGAL Channel 8 doing the evening "Pioneer Playhouse" and the Saturday morning "Covered Wagon Theater" from 1957-1958.

Over the years he worked for RCA, General Cigar, drove a bakery truck and was a Fuller Brush man. He had a band, "Rocky Riedel and his Raiders" and later joined the "101 Ranch Boys". He also was a stunt rider for the "Cisco Kid" television show.

Called to the ministry, he graduated from Franklin & Marshall College (1959), completed his masters at Lancaster Theological Seminary (1963) and took night courses at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Rev. Riedel served churches until 1992 and then became a supply pastor until his death. He was also a tour guide at the Amish Farm and House until this past February and taught at a Bible College in Sunbury for 23 years for Teen Challenge. When younger, Rev. Riedel love to travel having visited most of the U.S. and many other countries. He enjoyed reading about History and visiting historical places with his family. He liked to plant flowers, read, paint, watch old TV shows and movies and attend Scottish Games. Published in Lebanon Daily News on Mar. 11, 2018

† **Rev. William Henry Sherman**, 86, of Lebanon went home to be with his Lord and be reunited with his wife Ruth Metz Sherman who passed away in 1984 and son Gary who passed away in 1998, on Tuesday, November 21, 2017 at the Reading Medical Center. He was born in Ono on November 19, 1931.

Bill was a 1950 Honors graduate of Jonestown High School. He attended Lebanon Business College and later Lebanon Valley College and Elizabethtown College. He became bookkeeper at Perry B. Reifsnnyder Piano and was later employed for over 20 years at Bogene, Inc. In 1973 he entered the Evangelical School of Theology in Myerstown, while assisting Rev. George D. Zimmerman at Calvary Church, Lebanon. After graduation in 1976 he was ordained June 23, 1976 as a pastor in the United Church of Christ denomination. Bill then served St. John's UCC, Lebanon for over 10 years, St. John's UCC, Shamokin over 15 years and was currently serving as Supply Pastor since 2004 at St. Paul's UCC in Millbach

Bill enjoyed playing guitar, collecting Southern Gospel recordings and videos and was a strong fan of Philadelphia sport teams. He spent many hours in Bible study and enjoyed listening to Rev. Charles Stanley, Rev. David Jeremiah and deceased radio pastors Charles Fuller and Oliver Greene.

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/ldnews/obituary.aspx?n=william-sherman&pid=187330934&fhid=22854>