



*Dr. Donald Patchel*

**Sept. 14, 1931 - Sept. 8, 2018**

Dr. Donald Patchel, humble servant of his Lord, Jesus Christ, passed into eternal life with his Savior on September 8, 2018 at age 86. "Patch," as he was known by most, "Rev" as he was known by some, and "Don" as he was known by a few, was born in 1931 to Leon and Beatrice Patchel in Clearfield, Pa. His childhood was in Buffalo, NY where he graduated from Seneca Vocational High School. He graduated from Westminster College in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania in 1956 where he felt God calling him into ministry. He graduated from Pittsburgh-Xenia Theological Seminary in 1959. His first call was as Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio for two years. He served as pastor of Hoboken Presbyterian Church in Blawnox, Pa for 10 years, and Calvary Presbyterian Church in McDonald, Pa for 25 years. He received an honorary doctorate from Westminster College and received the Distinguished Alumnus Award for his work in mission from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

But always, his heart and his volunteer time was devoted to the New Wilmington Missionary Conference where he served this summer conference for 58 years in various capacities including leading the Summer Service Mission Team to Egypt one summer. He was the Director of the Conference for 20 years and was instrumental in growing and changing the conference to adapt to a changing world. He appreciated

and invited missionaries and speakers from around the world to return to the conference and tell their stories of service, thus encouraging thousands of young people to commit their lives to Jesus Christ and to consider full-time service as pastors and missionaries. Patch was considered a "Pastor to pastors." The legacy he leaves in the conference and the churches he served is rich and long.

Patch, a bachelor for most of his life, was a foster father of 4 boys: Jimmy, Scotty, Mark, and Gary. Patch had a wonderful witty sense of humor and enjoyed pranks, even when played on him. Friends were always trying to fix him up with a blind date. One time at conference he found an anonymous note left for him at the podium saying: "Patch, I love you and want to meet you tonight at the picnic. I will have a pink flower in my hair so you will recognize me." When Patch arrived at the picnic, hundreds of women and girls of all ages were wearing a pink flower in their hair! No one laughed more than Patch.

But in God's perfect timing at age 57, he met the woman God had selected for him, Marla Friend. They were soulmates and enjoyed 26 years of marriage together. Patch loved reading and classical music, the Pittsburgh Steelers, Buffalo Bills and the Pittsburgh Penguins. Most of all he loved people and sharing his faith with them. In his retirement, Patch and Marla served as interim pastor and wife in numerous churches in North Carolina, including Hephzibah Presbyterian Church in Bessemer City, Pineola Presbyterian Church in Pineola, New Hope Presbyterian Church in Gastonia, and Green Street Presbyterian Church in Morganton. As Patch developed dementia, Marla took over many of the church duties.

Patch is preceded in death by his parents, Robert O. and Beatrice M. Patchel and the "best big brother anyone could ever have," Robert L. Patchel.

Patch leaves behind his loving wife, Marla, and several nieces and nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews, and numerous friends.

The family will receive friends from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Thursday, September 13, 2018 at Green Street Presbyterian Church. The funeral will be held at 1 p.m., Friday, September 14 at First Presbyterian Church with Rev. Dr. Roger P. Richardson and Rev. Bobbi White officiating. Burial will be held in Burke Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Green Street Presbyterian

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Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

# Tribute Wall

No tributes added yet.