



Rev. Dr. Betts Huntley

July 9, 1936 - June 26, 2017

The Rev. Dr. Charles Betts Huntley - our beloved Betts - passed away Monday, June 26, 2017, after a catastrophic 11-day illness. A Presbyterian missionary in Korea, he and his wife always preferred the Korean phrase, "He went back (home)."

Betts was born July 9, 1936, the third of four sons, in Charlotte NC. At 14, he was the Charlotte winner and a national finalist in the Soapbox Derby; at age 16 he had a pilot's license and was flying before he got his driver's license.

He graduated from Duke University (including a year at the University of Munich) with a history degree, then from Union Theological Seminary, and was ordained a PCUS pastor in 1961, and became pastor of Turner Presbyterian Church in Union County, NC. He and his wife of 55 years, Martha, embarked on their remarkable 20-year journey in Korea beginning in Seoul for two years of language study, followed by an intern year in Soonchun. He received the Master of Divinity degree from Union Seminary the following year, and the family returned to Kwangju, Korea where he taught German and Pastoral Counseling at Honam Theological Seminary, was a hospital chaplain at Kwangju Christian Hospital, and worked with country churches until 1985. The Huntleys also fostered a number of Korean orphans being adopted by American families and were a part of about 50 adoptions in some way. Betts was also an auxiliary chaplain at the US Air Force base

nearby for several years.

After 20 years in Korea, the family returned to the States where Betts received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Columbia Theological Seminary. He was called as the pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Safety Harbor, FL, where he served for more than a decade. The couple lived in Clearwater, FL, before moving to Cary, NC in 2014.

Betts loved hunting, singing, running, scuba diving, cruises, Bible study, meeting new people, sweet iced tea, but most of all the Lord, his family, and the friends he continued to make every day. He spoke three languages fluently and was an accomplished photographer.

Betts is survived, in addition to his wife Martha, by four children—Mary (and Chris) Wagner and their children David and Laura Wagner; Susan (and Ron) Crow; Michael Huntley; and Jennifer (and Jeremy) Mario and their children Gretchen, Reid, and Charlie—as well as his brothers Dr. William (and Helen) and Dr. Reid Huntley and their children, Heather, Kimberley, David, and Maria. He is predeceased by his parents William Barney and Mary Betts Huntley, and by his brother John.

The memorial service location has changed and now will be held at Triangle Presbyterian Church, 5001 Tudor Place, Durham, at 3 pm on Sunday, July 2 (services will also be held at First Presbyterian Church, Safety Harbor, FL, and in Kwangju, Korea at later dates).

In lieu of flowers, be good to one another, love as Jesus loves, and remember Betts' warmth and goodness. A donation of thanksgiving for his life can be made to the Presbyterian Mission Agency, 100 Witherspoon, Louisville, KY 40202.

Previous Events

Celebration of Life Service

JUL 2. 3:00 PM (ET)

Triangle Presbyterian Church
5001 Tudor Place
Durham, NC 27713

Tribute Wall

JU

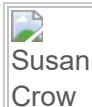
“ As a Korean naturalized American, my deepest respect and appreciation is given to him for his time in Korea and especially the risk and sacrifice he made to make the 5/18 massacre known to the world. I believe his bravery came from his belief in God. Many Korean people remember him and the local school and some organizations are having prayer meeting in memory of him. May he rest in eternal peace of God!

June - July 07, 2017 at 01:46 PM

JL

“ I ll always remember Betts.....He was such a caring man and so genuine in his feelings for those fortunate to be in his large circle of Friends. God Bless and Keep Betts ! We will see him again. I remember when my Mom passed away at home back on June 15, 1990.....Betts and Eleanor Diehl were with Dad and myself giving us great comfort ,and when she went to be with the Lord that afternoon, Betts had us gather around her bed and holding hands we formed a circle and recited the Lord's Prayer.....It was a moment of such Peace and Blessed Assurance! I think of that day quite often

John Ludlow - July 04, 2017 at 06:49 AM

 Susan Crow

Thank you, John! I remember so well how you came to visit my dad when he was in the hospital for both of his heart surgeries. You made Jenny and me laugh when we were scared. My dad also had the gift to make people laugh and wanted to share jokes with us until the very end. You are a good friend to him and to us.

Susan Crow - July 04, 2017 at 02:49 PM

DC

“ In the past three years, my daughter and I had a privilege to go Bible Study Fellowship (BSF) together with Betts every Monday night. On our way to BSF, we talked everything, we laughed, and listened to Betts tell us his stories in Korea. He is such a wonderful friend and mentor in my life. Couple weeks ago, we still talked about to study Romans together the next semester, but now I know you are in heaven seeing us to study God words. We love you and will miss you forever.



David Chen - July 02, 2017 at 09:52 PM

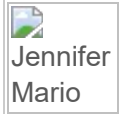
“ When I was a junior in high school, the Huntley family moved to Safety Harbor and their daughter Jenny was in a number of my classes. We became friends and I would take her home everyday after school and hang out at her house. We would watch General Hospital and have ramen noodles, which I had never had until I met her. Betts would often come in from a run and sit with us for awhile. Often times I would be invited for dinner and they always had the most amazing sweet tea, that as of yet I have never found the equal to. In addition there was always rice and some strange scary looking thing in a large glass jar that they called "Kim Chi", I never had the guts to try it, but they all loved it!

I look back on that time often and marvel at how blessed I was to have been a part of their family so many years ago. About 8 years ago, as I was going through a difficult divorce, I returned to Florida and was again blessed to spend time with Susan and Ron who offered me a place to stay. I remember thinking that Betts and Martha would be disappointed in me for getting a divorce. Nothing could be further from the truth. They both covered me with the grace of God and love that I have rarely felt in my life.

In so many ways the Huntley family gave to me and I am the person I am today, in part because I was honored to have known them and learn from them. As much as I hate to see that Betts has passed, I know that he is at peace now. To you all, please know that I am praying for you and thinking of you often, If I could make it for the service I would be there, but my thoughts are always with you!

Carol "LeChien" Podbielski

Carol LeChien Podbielski - July 01, 2017 at 12:17 PM



Jennifer Mario

Thank you, Carol. Those were fun days, watching GH and eating ramen. And drinking that sweet tea, of course (as long as it wasn't corn tea). Love you and miss you--Jenny

Jennifer Mario - July 02, 2017 at 11:46 PM



MH

Memories

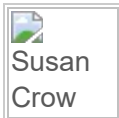
michael huntley - July 03, 2017 at 06:02 AM



CP

*Love you too!! I wish I could have been there yesterday.. Been thinking so much of all of you.. It seems like just yesterday, then I look in the mirror and realize that I don't quite look the same as when I was 16! I was just telling the girls about my 18th surprise birthday/ car cash party the other day.. Apparently, according to them I haven't improved much in the driving department.
One of these days I have to bring the new husband and our six kids down to visit!*

Carol LeChien Podbielski - July 03, 2017 at 04:16 PM



Susan Crow

Thank you, Carol!

Susan Crow - July 04, 2017 at 02:45 PM



Carol, we always loved you. I loved that you were one of the kids in our house! So glad you and Jenny were good friends!

Martha Huntley - July 05, 2017 at 08:11 PM



WS

*“ Reid, I was sad to read of Betts passing. It was good to see the story of his life.
Let his MPHS class know also.
Blessings,
Winborne Springs MPHS of 1955*

Winborne Springs - June 30, 2017 at 03:30 PM

CJ

“ *Martha the Lord be with you. Y'ALL were one of the younger ones when I was there. Though short in have good memories of you and Betts. Glad we kept in touch a little. was hoping I might see y'all in Lake Junaluska but a greater reunion is to come in Christ's Kingdom. I didn't know Betts and I had flying in common. Wish I was closer to Durham.*

Cody U Watson jr - June 30, 2017 at 11:55 AM



Thank you, Cody, and also for your card. Be blessed at Lake Junaluska! Don't be surprised if you feel Betts' presence there - he had so looked forward to attending and seeing all the folks!

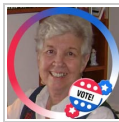
Martha Huntley - July 05, 2017 at 08:10 PM

LB

“ *We are keeping you all close in our thoughts and prayers. Betts was such a joy to be with and we will miss him. Sending our sincere sympathy and love.*

*Linda and Carl Beaver
Ruby Robinson
Jennifer and Brad Lamont
Carrie and Jason Lawson*

Linda Beaver - June 30, 2017 at 11:37 AM



Thank you, Linda and all, and for the beautiful card and note as well.

Martha Huntley - July 05, 2017 at 08:10 PM

FS

“ Frank Harrington, Peggy & Betty Sisters. lit a candle in memory of Rev. Dr. Betts Huntley



Frank Harrington, Peggy & Betty sisters. - June 30, 2017 at 09:52 AM

FP

Should read Frank, sisters Peggy & Betty.

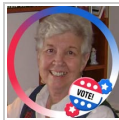
Frank Harrington, Peggy - June 30, 2017 at 09:53 AM

FH

“ When I was a young boy growing up in Anson County-Polkton area Dr. Huntley served our small church, Unity Chapel. He and Martha had not been married for long and while he served the chapel their first child Michael was born. Every individual in our very small congregation adored Dr. Huntley and he loved our small church. From time to time when I reflect on my childhood, I remember Betts and Martha as some of the nicest people I have known. My deepest condolences go out to Martha and the family. Betts made his mark in this world, now he deserves the opportunity to rest in peace with his Savior. God bless the family and Betts' legacy. Frank Harrington-Charlotte



Frank Harrington - June 30, 2017 at 09:49 AM



Thank you, Frank. Betts truly loved Unity Chapel and the folks there. He drove to and preached at several congregations each Sunday those years, and I well remember how some of the parishioners would give us a delicious lunch and then let us lie down on their bed and take a nap!

Martha Huntley - July 05, 2017 at 08:15 PM

RW

“ Roy Wagner purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Rev. Dr. Betts Huntley.



Roy Wagner - June 30, 2017 at 12:24 AM

SS

“ I know Betts from my neighborhood growing up. By strongest memory of him is that he was such a regular swimmer and had a great deal of endurance; I admired his discipline. I will endeavour to be a more diligent person in memory of him.

Sorcha Sills - June 29, 2017 at 11:59 PM

SS

Sorry for the typo.

Sorcha Sills - June 30, 2017 at 12:00 AM



Thank you, Sorcha. Your comment was and you are so special!

Martha Huntley - July 05, 2017 at 08:17 PM

Beth Dahlvik

“ Beth Dahlvik lit a candle in memory of Rev. Dr. Betts Huntley



Beth Dahlvik - June 29, 2017 at 09:05 PM

 Beth
Dahlvik

“ 1 file added to the album *Memories Album*



Beth Dahlvik - June 29, 2017 at 08:59 PM

 Beth
Dahlvik

Picture from Len and Beth Dahlvik in Largo, Florida

Beth Dahlvik - June 29, 2017 at 09:11 PM

KS

“ Dear Martha and family,

It is with a heavy heart that I write this condolence note. Betts was one of the bright and shining lights in the presbytery for decades. His smiling face always brought a smile to mine. He was a gracious and kind brother and always had a warm greeting for me. I don't know anybody who didn't like him despite differences in theology. I admire anyone who serves the Lord in foreign mission and so when I heard that about Betts' biography, I was immediately impressed.

He was a fellow lover of Cedarkirk and we talked many times about what a fine place it was.

I will also remember Betts walking into presbytery committee meetings with his 3 quart jug of water. (He was a real devotee of the 8 glasses of water a day regimen.) He challenged me to join that club but I didn't do as well as he did.

My prayers are for you and the family for the gracious healing spirit of our Lord JEsus Christ to fill you with all comfort. I'll look forward to seeing him in heaven.

Love,

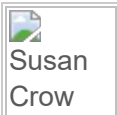
Ken Shick

Ken Shick - June 29, 2017 at 03:41 PM



That was probably sweet iced tea in that jug!

Martha Huntley - June 29, 2017 at 07:44 PM



Definitely iced tea. :-)

Susan Crow - June 30, 2017 at 05:42 AM

CL

“ *Beloved Huntley Family and Friends. There are too many things to say about this wonderful man and how he touched myself and my children's lives. He will be forever missed. Although so deeply saddened I know Betts and I know he is rejoicing. The love he showed to countless others will never be forgotten. Betts, live on in the Home you have longed to see.
Love you forever..
Christine (Wightman) Likens*



Christine Linkens - June 29, 2017 at 09:31 AM



Thank you Christine. You were always special to us at First Pres, Safety Harbor, and you still are!

Martha Huntley - June 29, 2017 at 07:44 PM

PH

*Martha, you two have been a personification of God's love. The love that you shared for each other inspired others and made me believe in true love.
Betts always engaged me in meaningful conversations about humanity...never a boring moment.
May God continue to guide and bless you Martha....I know Betts is dancing and singing with the angels.*

Pat Hazell - June 29, 2017 at 08:16 PM



Norman
Hatter

Dear Martha,

We will always remember the joyous times shared with you and Betts, whether at your home, our home or in a restaurant. Hmmm, it seems food was a part of those moments and as good Presbyterians, we certainly "broke bread" well. However, we particularly recall the periods of uncertainty when God's presence comforted and guided us all through individual times of need. And, we will also never forget being introduced to "Mexican Train" dominoes, which we still play, fondly thinking of you.

May God continue to hold you "real good" during this trying time.

Norm & Phyllis

Norman Hatter - June 30, 2017 at 06:14 AM



FH

When I was a young boy growing up in Anson County-Polkton area Dr. Huntley served our small church, Unity Chapel. He and Martha had not been married for long and while he served the chapel their first child Michael was born. Every individual in our very small congregation adored Dr. Huntley and he loved our small church. From time to time when I reflect on my childhood, I remember Betts and Martha as some of the nicest people I have known. My deepest condolences go out to Martha and the family. Betts made his mark in this world, now he deserves the opportunity to rest in peace with his Savior. God bless the family and Betts' legacy. Frank Harrington-Charlotte

Frank Harrington - June 30, 2017 at 09:47 AM



YK

I just accidentally stumbled onto Rev. Betts' obit. I was in his English Bible study group at his home in Yeonhuidong, Seoul, in 1967 when I was a senior at college. I also just learned that Rev. Betts was at Columbia for his DMin. I have been living in Atlanta since 1982 and I am sorely sorry I missed him when he was here. I did go to see him at Safety Harbor one year but he was preaching at another church. It was a pleasure to see Mrs. Martha after so many years though. Farewell, Rev. Betts! Please say hello to my mother who went there four years ago. Mrs. Martha, I still remember the aroma of the coffee you served the bible study group. Please let me know if you happen to be in Atlanta area.

Young Won Kim - October 18, 2020 at 12:45 PM