

James R. Reed, November 10, 1927 to September 1, 2008

The Rev. Dr. James R. Reed, president emeritus of Christian Church Foundation (Disciples of Christ), died September 1, 2008, in Indianapolis, Indiana after a long battle with lung and heart disease. An esteemed church leader, eminent fund raiser, congregational pastor, and beloved husband, father, and grandfather, he was 80 years old.

Dr. Reed was the inspiration behind the Christian Church Foundation, a general ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In 1964 at the age of 37, he heeded the call of church leaders to envision an organization that would enable members of the denomination to fund ministry effectively for years to come. As the Foundation's first employee and then its first president, he grew the Foundation's assets from \$119,000 in 1969 to over \$40 million in 1991 when he retired.

Gary W. Kidwell, current president of the Foundation said of Dr. Reed, "He served God and the church well, leading with vision, caring for people, and striving for excellence. He was my mentor, my friend, even my surrogate father. The church has lost one of its most gifted leaders, but he leaves behind a tremendous legacy that will continue to inspire us all."

Dr. Reed was an exemplary fundraiser, committed to helping donors discover the ministries they felt called to support with gifts. In 1990, he was named Fund Raiser of the Year for the State of Indiana by the National Society of Fund Raising Executives. The same year, he received the Sagamore of the Wabash Award from then Governor Evan Bayh, the highest award given by the Indiana governor, for service to the community.

After serving in the United States Navy from 1945 to 1946, he attended and graduated from Phillips University and Phillips Theological Seminary in Enid, Okla. He was ordained a minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in 1949, and pastored congregations in Ames, Okla., Enid, Okla., and Denton, Texas where he helped the congregation construct a new building that received national recognition for its architecture.

Upon his retirement after 26 years with the Foundation, Dr. Reed returned to pastoral ministry serving North Christian Church in Columbus, Ind., and First Christian Church in Madison, Ind. From 1997 to 1998 he served as interim minister of National City Christian Church in Washington, D.C., a congregation that serves the denomination as a witness in the nation's capital.

In retirement, Dr. Reed continued to serve his church and community with creativity and energy. In 2002, when the Disciples' Christian Board of Publication closed down the denomination's last general interest news and information magazine, he joined friends and colleagues James Suggs, Robert Friedly, and Joe Stalcup, to conceive and launch a new magazine, *DisciplesWorld*. Within six years it became an award-winning publication. He served as the magazine's founding board chairman, providing exemplary leadership and befriending and mentoring its staff and volunteers.

Dr. Reed also served on the boards of Disciples of Christ Historical Society, Phillips University Legacy Foundation, Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago, National City Christian Church Corporation, Commission on Stewardship of the National Council of Churches, National Association of Fund Raising Executives, Oklahoma Christian Home in Edmond, Okla., Indianapolis Symphonic Choir, and the American Church in Paris. He was an active member and leader at Downey Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Indianapolis' historic Irvington neighborhood.

James R. Reed was born November 10, 1927 in York, Nebraska to James C. and Mildred Lankin Reed. He was preceded in death by his parents; his brother Joe Wayne Reed; and three granddaughters. He is survived by his wife, Lucille Boatman Reed, whom he married July 21, 1971; four daughters and their families, Bethel J. Wentz (David) of Augusta, Kan., Carol E. Sircoulomb (Wayne) of Wichita, Kan., Georgann Adams (Dan) of Indianapolis, and Laura S. Gelarden (Tim) of Indianapolis; three stepchildren and their families, Rebecca L. Brite of Paris, France, Robert N. Brite of Minneapolis, Minn., and Stephen P. Brite (Lisa) of Colorado Springs, Colo.; thirteen grandchildren; four great grandchildren; and his former wife and friend, Dorothy M. Reed of Indianapolis.

Dr. Reed was exceedingly proud of his family and reveled in their accomplishments as deeply as he shared their struggles. From Paris, France, to Augusta, Kansas, he followed their daily trials and joys, regaling friends at his home in Robin Run Village in Indianapolis with stories of band concerts, farm houses, and life in the ministry. He and his wife opened their home to their children during times of need and traveled widely to share in their celebrations.

Dr. Reed is also survived by innumerable friends and colleagues who regarded him as a teacher and mentor. In February, he was honored with a lectureship established in his name at the Joe and Nancy Stalcup School of Theology for the Laity at Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas. Colleague Deborah Wray introduced the lecture by describing Dr. Reed as "a blessing to the church, to donors, and to the world." She lauded his generous management philosophy: "The achievements of Jim Reed's successors (at the Foundation), James P. Johnson and Gary W. Kidwell, are one of Jim Reed's great joys. Jim Reed set the tone where generous professionals support one another." She concluded, "The greatest blessing of his ministry, I believe, has been his steadfast commitment to helping others discover within their hearts God's call for them."

A memorial service will be held at Downey Avenue Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) on Friday, September 5, 2008, at 11:00 am with special music beginning at 10:30 am. A reception will follow, also at the church, at 111 S. Downey Avenue. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to the Christian Church Foundation, PO Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46204, and noted for the James R. and Lucille B. Reed Fund. Flanner and Buchanan Washington Park North Funeral Center assisted with arrangements.

— Verity A. Jones
DisciplesWorld