



Trinity Presbyterian Women Celebrate Special Tradition

On May 28, 2017, Sue Davis presented our mystery honoree with the Presbyterian Women 2017 Honorary Life Membership Award. Sue, recipient of the 2016 Life Membership award, delivered the speech shown below during worship services:

Presbyterian Women play a unique role at Trinity Presbyterian Church. At the national level, our group includes over 300,000 women, with a rich history of service, outreach and Christian education dating back to the 1800's. But along with our commitment to serve others, we also celebrate our faith with a variety of faith-based gatherings that enrich our lives, and the lives of others.

One of our special traditions is the selection of an annual recipient of the Presbyterian Women Honorary Life Membership award. The honoree is chosen based on her outstanding service to church and community. Last year, I was deeply honored to receive this award, and today it is my pleasure to introduce our 2017 recipient. Maybe you will recognize her when I offer some background.

She was born in Mississippi, in the heart of the Bible belt. Pensacola became her hometown when her mother settled her young family not far from First Baptist Church. Her mother worked long hours to provide for her girls, and although funds were few to provide for basic necessities, the family of three never lacked for generous amounts of loving guidance. This included compelling our honoree *to return to first grade after the first week*, because this confident six year old was convinced she had already learned all she needed to know. Well, as you will see, continue to learn, she did.

She attended local schools, at all levels, eventually graduating, with her life and faith further nurtured by her extended family at First Baptist Church. Without a doubt, God had plans for her in the decades ahead.

Her life's journey took her to California, where she earned a Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education, and soon began a lifelong teaching career. While teaching in San Diego, she met her future husband, and they were married in a Presbyterian Church. Time passed, and with their two small sons in tow, the young family settled in Pensacola. They soon found a church home, and joined Trinity Presbyterian Church in 1969. Not surprisingly, they shared their God-given gifts and became involved in the life of Trinity and their community.

She taught Sunday school, and served as an Elder for several terms, leading the Christian Education Committee, and in her spare time, over the years, completed studies for a Master's degree in Early Childhood Education at the University of West Florida. She served on the Trinity Learning Center board, and her expertise helped TLC become one of the most valued programs for youngsters in our area. Not to be forgotten, she was a working mom, and spent many years shaping the lives of young children as a school teacher in public and private schools.

Needless to say, she was an unusually busy lady. However, as her family notes, "All work and no play makes Jill a dull girl," and that is not the case for our honoree. She brings a cheerful attitude to all areas of her life. This was especially evident when she faced cancer with the courage of a survivor. Her faith in God, her loving family, Christian friends and skilled medical team helped her through her trials, and left her with a commitment to value life, and live in the moment.

She appreciates life's simplicity, and treasures long walks on the beach, and times spent with family and friends. Now in her retirement years, today she serves our church as a board member and past historian for Trinity Presbyterian Women. She enriches her life with travels abroad with her husband, and at home, continues her favored role with service to others.

Among her service projects: She cooks with residents in the memory unit at Azalea Trace, just steps away from her present home. She provides children attending Vacation Bible School at Trinity, with tempting treats from the kitchen, as well, to nourish young souls and spirits. She also is a seamstress at heart, and she has made countless pieces of cross-stitch work for friends and family. Among her other selfless acts: of service: She and her husband volunteer at Manna Food Bank and deliver Meals on Wheels.

When her family is asked how they would describe this special lady, they answer without hesitation. "She is a loving, caring, thoughtful friend in Christ, a generous wife, mother and grandmother." Those are our thoughts as well.

Today, we are blessed to have Freddie Prettyman in our presence at Trinity Presbyterian Church. Please come forward Freddie, so we may present you with the 2017 Presbyterian Women Life Membership award. Congratulations.

With special thanks to Freddie's fine son, Stephen Prettyman, for providing essential information to prepare this speech.

