

## **Biography: David D. Winters**

I grew up in First Presbyterian Church of Murphysboro, Illinois, and was active in the old Westminster Fellowship at local, presbytery, synod and national levels. After a brief stab at engineering at Northwestern University, I graduated in 1959 from Southern Illinois University with a B.A., then from McCormick Theological Seminary with an M.Div. in 1962. I completed a D.Min at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 1979.

Ordination was by Southern Illinois Presbytery in 1962 to serve as Pastor at Flora Presbyterian Church in Flora, Ill. They taught me well. In 1967 I moved to Asst. Pastor at First Presbyterian Church of St. Louis in University City.

In July of 1969 I was called as Pastor of the Parkville Presbyterian Church. Then COM Chair of Kansas City Presbytery, Jim Bernard, called me in St. Louis the next morning and insisted that I fly over the following day for a hastily-called meeting of their COM. Parkville Presbyterian had been bitterly divided over the former pastor, with COM eventually dissolving the Session and installing an administrative commission that had run the church for a year. They were being extremely careful, but apparently decided that I fit their needs and those of the congregation.

At that point the Parkville congregation had around 200 active members, most of whom were deeply wounded, hurt, and angry. The remainder had been largely disinterested and uninvolved. Most of the newly-elected officers were dragged in from the latter group.

For the first few years we tip-toed and listened gently and bandaged and recruited and trained and encouraged. Fortunately, the area was growing and we grew with it. We became a congregation that was diverse and gifted. We encouraged people to find their means of ministry. Our people were instrumental in forming a community center for young people, an emergency food and assistance program, Synergy House for run-away youth, a senior service center and meals-on-wheels program. We built up our church school, youth, and music programs. We got our giving to Presbyterian mission above 25% of our budget. When I left Parkville we had about 450 members, strong, well-trained officers, many of whom continue to serve Heartland Presbytery (such as Moderator Jack Schrimsher) and a lot of other people involved in many kinds of mission.

In 1987 I was called as Pastor of Westport Presbyterian Church, a fast-fading congregation with many elderly members and a large and expensive building. Westport was struggling to discover its mission in a unique setting. We continued to struggle, to reach out, to experiment with mixed results.

During this period I served Kansas City/Heartland Presbytery in a variety of ways, including as Moderator and Chair of its Council. A number of us started the Central American Task Force, which eventually became the International Partnership Committee. I served as Chair of the Synod's long-range planning committee, Chair of its Higher Education Committee, and Chair of the Ecumenical Commission on Campus Christian Ministries. Nationally I served on the Program Agency's Training

Resource Task Force, doing stewardship training events across the Church, and on the National Committee of Self-Development of People (SDOP) and Chair of its International Task Force.

Having married a long-time PC(USA) Mission Co-worker in Guatemala, in 1993 we left Westport for Guatemala where I, too, became a Mission Co-Worker, working on development projects.

In 1996 I moved to Los Angeles to become a Development Officer for the Presbyterian Foundation, which necessitated moving my membership to Pacific Presbytery. I was granted honorable retirement there on August 15, 2003. Flunking retirement, I then worked for a year as an Associate Director of the GA's *Mission Initiative: Joining hearts and Hands*.

After a sojourn at Lake of the Ozarks, we have finally landed back in Heartland Presbytery where I look forward to once again being an active member.

## **Statement of Faith: David Winters**

### *Credo*

Forty-seven years ago I answered the constitutional questions that led up to my ordination. I continue to affirm those answers.

Personally, I remain especially resonant with the opening paragraph of "*The Confession of 1967*:"

*"In Jesus Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself. Jesus Christ is God with humankind. He is the eternal Son of the Father, who became human and lived among us to fulfill the work of reconciliation. He is present in the church by the power of the Holy Spirit to continue and complete his mission. This work of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is the foundation of all confessional statements about God, humankind, and the world. Therefore, the church calls all people to be reconciled to God and to one another."* (With some slight editorial changes for inclusive language.)