



From the Director's Chair

If you have ever heard me speak, you know I love to tell stories about the donors whose gifts we help plan and/or steward. This column will be no exception. I want to tell you about Lillian, whose health was rapidly failing. Life seemed to hover between physician and hospital visits from her long-term care facility "home". Lillian grew up in the Bronx, New York and was born to parents who immigrated to America with their parents in the 1880's. Lillian's mother was a practicing Christian Scientist and her dad a Lutheran. At age 92, she did not remember a lot about attending church with her family as a child, but she got very talkative and excited telling stories about the plays and programs and fun she had sneaking off to participate in the Epworth League, the youth program at a nearby Methodist church.



Lillian Redding in her youth.

As she told the story, she had a moment of realization that "that participation" had a large part in shaping her Christian values as an adult and influenced not only her children, but her grandchildren as well. How ironic it was that her grandchildren grew up in the United Methodist Church and that her own church participation in recent years had been to attend Christmas Eve, Easter, and other special services at a United Methodist Church.

Lillian soon thereafter decided that she wanted her estate plan to do something special to show her appreciation to the church that had been

there for her and her family. We talked further and she decided to tithe her investment account (10%) to support youth programs in the United Methodist Church through a special permanent fund to be created and stewarded in the Holston Conference Foundation. Months went by and on February 13, 2008, Lillian Bates Redding died peacefully in her sleep at Colonial Hills Nursing Home in Maryville. She was my mother. Fourteen hours later came a call that my mother-in-law, Ruth Alyce Rather had passed away in Paducah, Kentucky. Suddenly the whole world changed.

Rebecca and I still have not had time to fully grieve these great losses. We made it through the services in Paducah and Knoxville and were surrounded by food, cards, plants, and memorial gifts from our Sunday school class, neighbors, co-workers, friends, and family. The services were beautiful and meaningful, but there is a hole in our hearts that only memories and the knowledge that their lives were well lived can fill. Both of these wonderful Christian ladies blessed us with their unselfish love, undying grace, and generosity. Both had their affairs in order, including wills and powers of attorney for finance and healthcare. The lessons they left us will no doubt occur to us from time to time.

My mother's gift is a gift, not just to the church, but to me and my family. She left a lasting legacy, one which will last for my lifetime and beyond.

— Roger Redding
Executive Director



Mother is the name of God in the lips and hearts of little children..... WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY
God could not be everywhere, so he created mothers JEWISH PROVERB
An ounce of mother is worth of a pound of clergy..... SPANISH PROVERB
I remember my mother's prayers and they have followed me..... ABRAHAM LINCOLN