

**WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
MEMORIAL CENTER**

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**JOURNAL**

*of the*

**THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION**

*of the*

**WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA  
ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

*of*

**THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

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- North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church (1828)
- North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (1869)
- Blue Ridge-Atlantic Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church (1879)
- Western North Carolina Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South (1890)
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## F. MEMOIRS OF DECEASED CLERGY

## SHERRILL BOST BIGGERS

July 7, 1915 – February 15, 2001



Customarily, when a minister in the Western North Carolina Conference dies, the family requests either the bishop or the district superintendent to participate in the funeral or memorial service. When Sherrill Biggers died, his family asked Russell Rogers, a faithful layman and a former parishioner of Sherrill's, to deliver the funeral message. Julian M. Aldridge, Jr., pastor of Myers Park United Methodist Church, Charlotte, where Sherrill worshipped during his retirement, read scripture and offered prayer, but Dr. Rogers, a local retired dentist and personal friend, "preached the sermon," or, more specifically, delivered the eulogy.

In his message, Dr. Rogers stated that when he was a pre-teen, Sherrill became his pastor at Kilgo Church in Charlotte. Sherrill influenced him to become a member and also convinced his parents to become more interested and active in the church. Since that time, Sherrill has been a personal friend and advisor. He said that after Sherrill retired from the active ministry and moved to his "little farm" near Matthews, his chief hobby was working

with God in raising vegetables in his garden and delivering the produce to nearby friends and family members. Sherrill bought a blue Honda automobile, and whenever you saw the little blue Honda parked in front of a house in the neighborhood, you knew that someone else was receiving a gift of tomatoes, corn, beans, turnips, or something else from God and Sherrill.

Sherrill Bost Biggers was born on July 7, 1915, in Cabarrus County, North Carolina, a son of the late William and Minnie Bost Biggers. He was admitted to the Western North Carolina Conference as a probationary member on October 25, 1940, admitted to full connection and ordained deacon in 1942, and ordained elder in 1943. On October 16, 1943, he married Eleanor Glenn Lazenby, and they became the parents of three children: Sherrill Bost, Jr., on September 4, 1944; Barbara Glynn, on June 11, 1948; and John Mark, on February 25, 1957. As a member of the Western North Carolina Conference, Sherrill served the following appointments: Tabernacle (Albemarle District), 1940-42; Charlotte: Myers Park Associate, 1942-43; Chaplain, U.S. Army, 1943-46; Student, Yale, 1946-47; Charlotte: Morris Field, briefly in 1947; Charlotte: Kilgo, 1947-52; Randleman, 1952-56; Kernersville: Main Street, 1956-60; Spindale, 1960-65; Asheville: Groce, 1965-69; Mount Holly: First, 1969-73; Gastonia: Bradley Memorial, 1973-76; and Charlotte: Thrift, 1976-77. He was a graduate of Emory University (B.Ph. 1937), received a master of divinity degree from Duke University in 1941, and spent two years as a student at Yale University. A chaplain in the U.S. Army during World War II, he retired as a colonel in the U.S. Army Reserves after 30 years of service. Having been seriously injured in an automobile accident, he was granted disability leave on May 1, 1977, and remained on disability until he officially retired in June 1980. Even in retirement, he served as associate pastor at Matthews United Methodist Church from 1982 to 1985.

He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Eleanor; his three children, Dr. Sherrill B. Biggers, Jr., and his wife, Sherry, of Clemson, South Carolina, Dr. Barbara B. Ellis and her husband, Dr. Herbert Kimmel, of Houston, Texas, and John Mark Biggers, of Charlotte; and three grandchildren, Lindsay Biggers, Leigh Biggers, and Allen Biggers.

After several months of failing health and weeks of suffering, Sherrill died on February 15, 2001. A memorial service was held on February 19 at Myers Park United Methodist Church, Charlotte. His family and a multitude of friends will remember him as a faithful servant of God and the church. Thanks be to God for his ministry.

John R. Sills

## FOY LEE BROOKS

September 17, 1916 – August 26, 2000

Foy Lee Brooks was born on September 17, 1916, in Union County, North Carolina, to William Lee and Minnie Goodman Brooks. He was the third of nine children, which included seven boys and two girls.

He married Beulah Mae Hathcock on April 11, 1936, and they had two children. Their daughter, Mildred Jean, was born on January 14, 1937. Their son, Foy Lee, Jr., was born on July 19, 1938, and preceded his father in death on September 18, 1998.

The young family made their home in Stanly County, North Carolina, and Foy spent the early years of

Foy briefly played professional baseball as a catcher to support his family. He remained an avid baseball fan throughout his life and seldom missed a televised Braves game.



grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild survive him.

Cyndy Brooks

## CHARLES ERVIN BRUCE

May 26, 1923 – March 7, 2001



Charles Ervin Bruce was pastor of my home church, Fairgrove, at Conover, on the threshold of my entry into ministry. This kind and gentle man touched my life in quiet and powerful ways that have had a lasting impact on both my life and ministry. As he lived, so also he died, an embodiment of the power of love known only through Jesus the Christ, whom he served with all that he was without restraint, limit, or condition.

He was born in Landrum, South Carolina, on May 26, 1923, to Oliver P. and Mary Louise Garrett Bruce. On May 18, 1946, he married Mary Elizabeth Miller, whose love enriched his life immeasurably for almost 55 years. Their marriage was blessed with the birth of a daughter, Rebecca Charmaine (now Mrs. David Crawford), on February 13, 1953.

He received an A.B. degree from Wofford College in 1949 and was a graduate of the Course of Study School at Duke University. Charles was licensed to preach in 1955, admitted that same year to the Western North Carolina Conference on trial, and ordained deacon in 1958. He was admitted into full connection

and ordained elder in 1960. He was a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II, a former Gideon, and a former member of the Lions Club.

Charles served effectively and faithfully throughout his pastoral ministry in western North Carolina. His places of service included the Statesville Circuit, 1955-56; West Iredell (Chapel Hill, Bethlehem, Marvin, and Bethel), 1956-60; Fairgrove, 1960-66; Catawba, 1966-71; Troutman, 1971-76; Hickory: Highland, 1976-82; and Gastonia: Maylo, 1982-85. He served on various district and conference committees, including the Statesville District Camp Committee. During his ministry in the Statesville District, he served as district secretary of evangelism. In 1985, he retired from the active ministry, moving first to Spartanburg, South Carolina, and then, in 1990, to Connelly Springs, North Carolina. At the time of his death, Charles was serving as pastor emeritus at First United Methodist Church, Valdese.

As his health deteriorated and he was faced with both renal failure and congestive heart failure, Charles never retreated from his trust in a God of love. His days were punctuated by the same spirit of quiet and transforming love that had marked his witness throughout a life of loyalty and service to his church and the Lord of the church. While a patient at Caldwell County Hospice in Lenoir, he moved quietly into the Church Triumphant on March 7, 2001. Survivors include his wife, Mary E. Miller Bruce; a daughter and son-in-law, Becky B. and David Crawford, of Lenoir; a brother, John Bruce, of Taylors, South Carolina; and a sister, Nellie High, of Lyman, South Carolina.

Services of death and resurrection were held at Bethlehem United Methodist Church in Statesville by John E. Davis, Jr., Olin B. Isenhour, and John W. Fowler on March 10, 2001. Burial followed in the church