

Minute for Mission

Navigating the Road to Retirement

When the Apostle Paul wrote about the varieties of God-given abilities conferred by the Spirit, the Rev. Peggy Krong would be the first to admit that she likely missed out on the gift of financial expertise.

Peggy, an active Presbyterian for more than 50 years, had always sensed a call to ministry. She was advised by nearly everyone that attending seminary and making a career change to ministry was not a good idea — for financial reasons.

But God's call proved irresistible, and she entered seminary in 1992. After earning her degree and being ordained in 1996, she served Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church in San Antonio and Westwood Presbyterian Church in Los Angeles. She retired in 2012 after ministering for a combined total of nearly 16 years. However, her decision to change her career and follow her call left her with minimal resources for retirement.

Facing this financial challenge, she was blessed to find the support she needed through the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions. The Assistance Program helped immediately with the required entrance fee for the retirement home where she now lives and set her up with an ongoing Housing Supplement to help manage monthly fees.

The support Peggy receives is made possible, in part, by the PC(USA)'s Christmas Joy Offering, which distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

The Assistance Program provides need-based grants to help active and retired ministers and church workers and their families in times of critical financial need.

"A life committed to the work of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is one of selflessness and generosity," said Lucas McCool, director, Member Services, for the Board of Pensions. "Because Peggy has brought her gifts of valuing community above all — and at times even herself — I am grateful that she reached out to us for assistance in her time of need."

"We're all children of God, and we all struggle," said Peggy. "Thanks to the Board of Pensions and the Christmas Joy Offering, I can now be of more service to the church than I would otherwise have been. I just can't express enough how grateful I am."

Through our gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering, we honor and celebrate leaders — past, present and future. Our gifts restore hope and stability. Please give whatever you can; for when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

Let us pray~

*Gracious and loving God, we thank you for those who serve your church, in all times and places. Be present with them, especially when they face real need. As we give to the Christmas Joy Offering, may they know of our support and care, and sense the important ways their ministry makes a difference. We pray in the name of Christ our Lord. **Amen.***