

MINUTE FOR MISSION

A LOVE STORY

Rev. Ken Tracy has spent much of his more than 30 years with the PC(USA) helping congregations work through conflict and revitalize their membership — a mission grounded in love.

If you have the opportunity to talk with Rev. Tracy for even a few minutes, it's easy to understand why he would be really good at tackling difficult conversations and helping others heal — he laughs easily and has an infectious personality that quickly draws you in.

Along the way, he's built a legacy of love and faith with a focus on ministry and service within the church. His wife Carol has been by his side throughout all these years.

His first call was at the Pleasantville, Pennsylvania, Presbyterian Church. He then went on to work within Boulder Presbytery, now known the Presbytery of Plains and Peaks, and serve for seven years as the executive of Utah Presbytery and then as the pastor at St. James Presbyterian Church in Tarzana, California, following the Northridge earthquake in 1994 that damaged the St. James sanctuary. He went on to lead a congregation in the Alaskan village of Hydaburg, taking him and Carol to the smaller churches he loved to serve. It was in Alaska that Carol got very sick.

“We made three trips to Seattle to see doctors, and the shared grants handled by the Board of Pensions picked up 100 percent of our expenses,” he says. “They paid for our flights, hotel, meals, rental car, whatever we needed.”

The doctors discovered that Carol had significant damage to her lungs due to an exposure to black mold; so they turned again for help to the Board of Pensions, which is funded in part by the Christmas Joy Offering. Now they live in Monte Vista Grove Homes in Pasadena, a retirement community for retired pastors, church workers and missionaries. “Carol now lives in skilled nursing, and I live in independent living. Her room is about 30 feet from me,” Rev. Tracy explains. “I'd never heard of a shared

grant until I was the executive at the Utah Presbytery and a member needed some support. I didn't realize then that years later it would also help my family.”

This is a love story. Not just about Ken and Carol's love for each other and love for the mission they have served side by side for so many years, but also about God's love and the love we show with our gifts. Half of the Christmas Joy Offering goes to the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions to help current and past church workers and their families in their time of need critical financial need. The other half supports education and leadership development at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Please give generously, for when we all do a little — it adds up to a lot.

Let Us Pray ~

*In our passionate leaders,
we see the echo of your
passionate love for us, O God.*

*Thank you for the gift they are,
and receive our gifts
to support church leaders,
past, present and future.*

Amen