

## Minute for Mission

### Where the Heart Is

If home is where the heart is, then Sue Anne Fairman’s heart is blessed to call several places home. For Sue Anne, a deacon and ruling elder, home is New Wilmington, Pennsylvania. It is also home to the New Wilmington Presbyterian Church, which supported her family during many years as international mission workers.

But home, too, will always be Kenya, where the family lived and worked among the Maasai people. It was there that Sue Anne raised her two daughters and spent 14 of her nearly 25 years in mission service volunteering at Mother Teresa’s Orphanage in Nairobi.

She recalls, “Our family’s years in southwestern Kenya were the most difficult. I think this was the most formative time of my life.”

But as we age, things change — and home may come to mean someplace else. For Sue Anne, that place is Shenango on the Green, a Presbyterian continuing care community.

When initially faced with the financial realities of moving, she was feeling “more than a bit stressed.” She said, “I had lunch with my friend Dave (David Dawson, former executive presbyter of Shenango Presbytery), who said, ‘Why don’t you apply to the Board of Pensions for income and housing assistance.’ He explained that the Board of Pensions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is there for retired pastors and mission workers facing financial need.”

Sue Anne made the call, and good news was soon to follow.

The support that she receives is made possible, in part, by the annual Christmas Joy Offering, which distributes gifts equally to the Assistance Program of the Board Of Pensions and to Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

Most of Sue Anne’s years of service as a pastor’s wife and missionary in Kenya were not covered by the Board of Pensions, because her ex-husband was the one who was called into ministry. This meant she wasn’t afforded full benefits by the Board of Pensions. This meant she wasn’t afforded full benefits by the Board of Pensions until 1998.

But, with the Board’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, the Assistance Program expanded access to existing programs and created new ones. Now pensioners, like Sue Anne, who served the church for many years without full benefits, may be eligible to receive support.

Sue Anne shares, “Church workers who have served long and well deserve to be recognized for their efforts. There are many today who are struggling financially because of inflation and other challenges. Your gifts validate their life and their ministry.”

Please support the Christmas Joy Offering. For as we always say ... when we all do a little, it adds up to a lot.

*Let us pray~*

*Loving and welcoming God, we thank you for those who serve, in places nearby or across the globe. When they face need, be present with them. Bless our giving to the Christmas Joy Offering, supporting those who serve, that they may know your deep hospitality and love. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.*