

MEMORIAL FOR THE REV. ROBERT D. SMITH

The Reverend Robert D. Smith, Honorably Retired member of Albany Presbytery, passed away on Friday, April 26, 2019, in Elmira, NY, after a courageous 17-year battle with Parkinson's Disease.

Robert was born in Germantown, MD, to the late Ray and Glenna (DuVall) Smith. He met his wife, Julia, while attending Maryville College in Tennessee. Knowing he had been called to be a Presbyterian minister, Robert continued on to the Western Theological Seminary in Pittsburgh. After graduating from seminary, he began his early ministry by living the gospel as a community organizer in the inner cities of Detroit, Chicago, and Washington, D.C.

In 1970, Robert and his family moved to Schoharie, where he began his 17-year ministry as pastor of the Schoharie Presbyterian Church larger parish which was composed of Carlisle, Esperance, Breakabeen, and North Blenheim churches.

At the conclusion of his time in Schoharie, Robert spent one year in Scotland participating in a pulpit exchange before living in the "stone house on the hill" that he had hand built while serving the churches in the Schoharie larger parish. Several years later, Robert returned to his calling, which was his passion for revitalizing urban congregations, such as the ones at the Schenectady State Street Presbyterian Church and the Vale Community. In addition, he enjoyed serving the congregation at Christ Church of the Hills in Rotterdam. Later, he was given the honorary title of Pastor Emeritus of the Schoharie United Presbyterian Church.

He is survived by his children: David, Mark, Jonathan, and Amy Finnerty; his daughters-in-law, Susanne and Denise; his sister, Patricia Watkins; his grandchildren Hayden, Harrison, Emma, Zackary, Alexander, Andrew, Patrick, and Alisaundre; along with many cousins, nieces, and nephews.

A memorial service for Robert was held on Saturday, May 11th at 1pm, at the Schoharie United Presbyterian Church.