



## 1 FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT November 28, 2021

### John and Anne McKinstry – “Veterans of the Cross”

In the United Church of Christ, through the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance, we take care to express our love and gratitude for our retired ministers. One of the ways we do that is through the Annuitant Visitors’ Program, which coordinates visits by often younger retired UCC clergy to older retired ministers (annuitants) across the country. The purpose of these visits is to check in, see how they’re doing, find out if they have any needs that can be addressed, and thank them for their “years of service to a grateful church.”

One such visitor, now retired, is the Rev. Richard L. (Rick) Floyd, of Pittsfield, MA, who wrote of a visit to the Rev. John and Anne McKinstry of Great Barrington, MA, who are, in Rick’s words: “indeed Veterans of the Cross, having served small country congregations throughout their ministry (and they really did share the ministry as ‘old school’ minister and spouse).”

John McKinstry’s last pastorate ended with an unfortunate forced resignation from a church that was leaving the United Church of Christ. This left John and Anne—close to retirement age—with neither home nor equity, having lived in parsonages their entire adult lives.

That was over 20 years ago. Since then, the McKinstry’s have been able to manage with generosity from friends and with supplements and gifts from the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance through the Christmas Fund. John teaches guitar and dulcimer; Anne writes hymns (two of her hymns are in *The New Century Hymnal*, which can be found in UCC pews across the country).

“I was proud that our church, through the Christmas Fund, could help these lovely people in retirement,” Rick says. “I think it meant a lot to them that I could hear their story. When I ‘thanked them for their years of service from a grateful church,’ I thought they were going to cry.”

## THE CHRISTMAS FUND For Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund

Gifts assist U. C. C. ministers and lay church employees serving in ministry or have retired as a supplementation to small pensions or health coverage as an emergency grant to assist with an unexpected and burdensome expense throughout the year.

Over the past 18 months, the emergency financial needs of many who serve the church increased dramatically. Each December your “Thank You” gift checks help our lower-income retirees.

Many of our clergy continue to bear the consequences of lost or decreased income. These difficult times make the need for the Christmas Fund more urgent than ever.

The Christmas Fund has been caring for active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ for over 100 years, providing emergency grants, supplementation of small annuities and health premiums.

Thank you for supporting the Christmas Fund!

### In 2020, gifts to the Christmas Fund enabled:

- Monthly pension supplementation for 276 retired clergy and lay employees (\$1,180,187)
- Health benefits supplementation for 89 retired clergy and lay employees (\$274,008)
- Emergency grants for 96 individuals and families (\$214,649)
- Christmas “Thank You” gift checks to 504 retired clergy and lay employees (\$252,000)

**Designated envelopes will be available at our Christmas Eve Worship but you may donate any time.**

**TO DONATE BY CHECK** payable to **“THE CHRISTMAS FUND”**

**MAIL TO:**

The Rev. Dr. Paul L. Ramsey, Philanthropy Officer  
The Pension Boards - United Church of Christ, Inc  
475 Riverside Drive, Room 1020  
New York, New York 10115-0059

Donate through link

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**The Christmas Fund**  
For the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund