

On Sunday, January 30, 2011, Tyler Memorial United Methodist Church and Chillicothe First United Methodist Church joined together for a special worship celebration. The theme for this special worship service was: "Transforming the World through Mission and Service."

The special guest for the morning was Ms. Roberta Eddy, who is the Shawnee Valley District Administrative Assistant. She shared some of the exciting news about the important work the Shawnee Valley District is doing in the country of Vietnam to help build a Christian presence in that country. During the worship service, a special collection was taken to help cover the yearly salary of a new Vietnamese pastor (approximately \$960).

Prior to the special collection, Bob Leach, an Army veteran whose father served in the Vietnam War, challenged all present to give sacrificially toward the goal of supporting a new Vietnamese pastor for one year. Along with his sisters, Judy Leach and Ginny Mead, Bob offered to donate the difference between the collection and our goal. This was done to honor both their father, Col. Charles R. Leach, and all of the men and women who served their country.

A Word from the Leach Family

We are pleased to have been part of the love offering at a joint service of First United Methodist Church and Tyler Memorial United Methodist Church. The congregations raised one year's salary for a new Vietnamese Pastor.

Many of us lived through part or all of the Vietnam experience. In the early years America was committed to helping South Vietnam. We sent military advisors, then troops, then more troops. Meanwhile, at home citizens began to question the policy of war; some thoughtfully, some belligerently. Eventually America withdrew its forces, leaving an abandoned South Vietnam to fall in 1975. Our family lived through that time with a career Army officer who served in Vietnam, two college-age daughters and a son planning to join the military. We were torn by the conflicts.

We know we were not unique. When we shared our story we knew many in the congregations also had personal connections to Vietnam, some of them very profound.

All of our pain: The sorrow over the names on the Vietnam Wall; the grief for the soldiers who returned broken in body or mind; the anguish of those who stood firmly for their beliefs-All of that can be healed with love.

As Christians, Tyler and First took this opportunity to reverse the message of abandonment and pain with one of love, hope, and redemption. It is indeed redemptive to share the love of Christ Jesus.

The family of Col. Charles R. Leach