



Dr. Reid S. Thomas, Pastor

## Dr. Reid S. Thomas is new pastor at Chiques Methodist

Dr. Reid S. Thomas and his family have just arrived in the Mount Joy area from Philadelphia. Dr. Thomas is the new pastor of Chiques United Methodist Church in Mount Joy, having come to the area in December of 1979.

Dr. Thomas and his wife Carol have two children, Reid Jr., age 14 and Carol, age 12. Reid attends Lancaster Mennonite School and Carol is a student at Lancaster Christian School.

Dr. Thomas was born in 1935 in Philadelphia. He grew up in a Methodist family and joined the church when he was 8 or 9. "I really came to know Christ, however, when I was a teenager," Dr. Thomas tells us. "It was at a Methodist Church Camp in the Poconos. This was the real beginning of my Christian life. Coincidentally, my wife accepted Christ at the same camp about seven years later."

Dr. Thomas attended the Friends Central School, a Quaker school outside of Philadelphia. "It was a twenty mile trip each way, and I was there for five years. Sometimes I thought I couldn't continue."

"I learned much about discipline at the Quaker school, lessons that will stay with me for the remainder of

my life. My folks were fairly strict, also, and although I can remember thinking them too strict at the time, looking back, I am glad for it. I think that I needed that guiding force in my life at that time."

Dr. Thomas attended Hobart College in Geneva, New York. Hobart was one of three schools officially attached to the Episcopal faith. Dr. Thomas earned his B.A. in economics in 1957.

"The plan was for me to go into the printing business owned by my father. My older brother, as a matter of fact, is in the business today. I attended Columbia University, receiving my master's degree in business with a specialty in corporate finance."

"During this time I had drifted somewhat from the church. Although I never lost touch completely (and I thank my Christian upbringing for that) the church did not play the role it should have in my life."

Dr. Thomas had been a member of the Air Force ROTC while in college, and upon graduation he was commissioned 2nd lieutenant. He began active duty in Lincoln, Nebraska as a financial auditor in the Auditor General forces.

After less than one year in

Nebraska, he was ordered to ship out to a Turkish base.

"While in Lincoln, I had become more involved with the church, but I really dedicated my life fully to Christ while in Turkey."

"I met a fellow officer—a Christian dentist—who was helpful in directing my thoughts back to the Lord. I helped to get a Bible study program going on the base, and it was at this time that I felt the Lord calling me into the ministry."

"When I left the Air Force in 1960, I began studying at the Dallas Theological Seminary. After one year at Dallas, I transferred to Asbury Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, and graduated in 1963."

Dr. Thomas's first church was the East Allegheny United Methodist Church in Philadelphia. It was here that Dr. Thomas met his wife, Carol.

"One of the lay leaders mentioned a young woman who was 'very nice.' We were introduced, I agreed with his remarks, and it soon became apparent that the Lord wished us to marry."

Mrs. Thomas was working as a nurse when she met her husband.

The Thomas's were married June 20, 1964, and according to Dr. Thomas,

"we have spent many happy years together."

Dr. Thomas was at this first church until 1966 when he went to the Methodist Church in Crowdon, a small town north/east of Philadelphia. One year later he transferred to the Christian and Missionary Alliance, a different denomination. He helped to build a church in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, and about this time he also attended an Asbury alumni meeting.

"They were discussing the possibility of a Doctor of Ministry degree, and I became very interested in furthering my education."

Dr. Thomas decided to work for his Ph.D. rather than a D.M., not knowing just how much work was involved. For the next four years he attended school full-time at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, the "Harvard of the South." Emory is a Methodist school.

Dr. Thomas earned his Ph.D. in the History of Christianity, with a specialty in American Church History during the late 19th Century. He is now qualified to teach in a university.

"I still do not know why the Lord directed me in that area," says Thomas. "I do know, however, that the answer will be revealed to me, either later in this life or in the next."

Dr. Thomas returned to Philadelphia and Summerfield United Methodist Church, which was only one mile from his first church. He remained at Summerfield until this past December when he came to Mount Joy and Chiques United Methodist Church.

"I do know that the Lord had me prepare in various areas for a reason, for I know had I not been through all that I have, I would not have been prepared to serve at Chiques."

In discussing what he calls his "vision" of a Christian life, Dr. Thomas feels that the overall purpose of life is to glorify the Lord and to serve him; both as an individual and as a body through the church. This can be done in three different ways, he says.

First, one must share the good news of Christ with others.

Second, one must consciously want to grow more like Christ. "It is not enough to view Christ as our Saviour; we must also see him as Lord and Master and allow him to guide and direct our life. It is like a business with new management. I was the old manager who did not do such a great job, and I must now turn things over to Christ to manage and to own."

Third, one must permit Christ to work through one's own life and have an impact on society.

Dr. Thomas says he tires of hearing the argument of social over personal involvement of the church. "To me, it is not an either/or situation. The Christian life encompasses a much broad-

er scope; one which includes both the personal and the social.

"This is not only my view, but also that of John Wesley, the founder of Methodism. It is also the view and the teachings of Jesus Christ."

"We must let the love of Christ fill our lives through the Holy Spirit. This is what makes life wonderful. I will be the first to admit that I do not live up to Christ's standards 100% of the time, but it is the sincere effort to live a life like Christ that makes one different."



Rev. Elizabeth W. Iseminger

## Marietta churches to hold ecumenical service January 27

An ecumenical service of Prayer for Christian Unity will be held at Zion United Church of Christ, Marietta, on Sunday, January 27 at 7:30 pm.

Speaker for the event will be the Rev. Elizabeth W. Iseminger, Pastor of the First United Methodist Church, Marietta.

The Rev. C. Calvin Rex, Pastor of the host church will be the worship leader for the service. He will be assisted by pastors from the churches of Marietta.

A fellowship hour will be

held in the church Social Hall following the service.

The offering received from this service will be given to feed the hungry in Southeast Asia.

Churches supporting this ecumenical service include: Assumption of BVM Roman Catholic Church, First United Methodist Church, English United Presbyterian Church, St. John's Episcopal Church, Zion United Church of Christ and Zion Evangelical Lutheran.

The public is invited to attend.

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