

Devotion, Week of June 16, 2024
Rev. Jeanne Simpson

I don't think Dads get what they deserve on Father's Day – Mothers get flowers and taken to lunch and nice presents. Dads get perhaps a tie and at times have to grill out their own dinner. Tom Murphy was given the Man of the Year award by our PW this past Sunday, and the list of his services to Philadelphia just went on and on. My favorite was taking the "old rickety bus" full of teenagers to various events, and driving it at times. I was told later that the bus had holes in the floor board, so if it rained, water would slosh up inside. Can you imagine driving that thing in the rain with a bus full of teenagers? I'd rather have a root canal. But I bet Tom did it cheerfully with no complaint. That's the type of faithful servant he is – just do what needs to be done and have a good attitude about it. He had children and grandchildren there to honor him, and it was a pleasure to meet them all.

I think of my Dad when I think of people like Tom – Dad was Clerk of Session for years at Northminster Presbyterian in Hickory, NC, and he was always the calm, steady presence on the Session, as well as in our household. Children in the neighborhood would come to show Mr. Swink their new golf clubs or baseballs or tennis rackets or puppy, and ask him to come out and play with them. He was sort of the Big Daddy of our dead-end street, to about 20 kids in all. If a child's pet died, it was to Mr. Swink they came to be comforted. If a child made the Honor Roll or won a swim team medal, it was to Mr. Swink they came to show off and get a hug. For my birthdays, he always went to a very upscale gift shop and got me something highly unusual – like a paperweight full of dried flowers, or a special book. I miss him every day, and I hope that you had a father like Tom Murphy and my dad – steady as a rock, stern if necessary, but always unconditionally loving. When I think of our Heavenly Father, I think of that steadiness and love. So happy Father's Day to all!

Jeanne