



June 21, 2017

## ***HAPPINESS RESTORED***

Their parents were friends - they met as infants. It would be hard to imagine two people who came into the world more endowed with natural talent. With diligence they developed these talents, bringing beauty and healing into the lives of many. This exceptional couple has given generously to our faith community. In what seemed patently undeserved, great sorrow also came into their lives - a parent's worst nightmare - which they endured with grace, buoyed by the support of those who loved them, surviving, and emerging through it all as whole persons, still enjoying life, still serving and still blessing others.

At the age of 14, Alice made her solo debut with the North Carolina Symphony, playing the Mozart Concerto in B-flat, K.595. She had always loved the piano. She went on to earn a B.S. and an M.S. from the Julliard School of Music. She has appeared as a soloist with the Boston Pops, the Duke University Symphony, The North Shore Philharmonic, and The Triangle Symphony. She has given recitals at Carnegie Hall, The Gardner Museum, and the Donnell Library in New York City. Equally gifted with classical and modern composers, she has published CDs of Mozart to Schubert, to Debussy, to Rahbee. And she has taught at Duke University, The Longy School of Music, and at Wellesley College. Her students have won many prizes and gone on to successful careers.

Harold Wilkinson grew up in Wake Forest, NC. His father was a General Practitioner of Medicine. Though segregated at the time, Harold played with black children, and saw his father treat persons of all races, often in his home on week-ends. Harold, like his two brothers, followed their father into medicine. Harold graduated Phi Beta Kappa and *summa cum laude* from Wake Forest College, and then, in 1959, earned his M.D. from Duke University Medical School. He went on to earn a Ph.D. in Neuroanatomy, also from Duke. He interned at Duke Medical Center, and then became a resident in Neurological Surgery at Mass General in Boston.

His honors and accomplishments are too numerous to list: offices in professional associations, positions in hospitals, hundreds of publications, two complete books, and chapters in 28 other books. For many years he was Professor and Chairman of the Division of Neurological Surgery at the University of Massachusetts in Worcester where he founded and directed the Neurosurgery Residency Program. Since 1999 he has been a Clinical Associate in Neurosurgery at Mass General Hospital in Boston. Harold is an avid learner, finding joy in research, teaching and seeing how his work eases human suffering.

Another source of joy for Alice and Harold were the years spent raising their two sons, Arthur and Edward, who were, in Harold's words "wonderful, complex, challenging, intelligent, considerate

and good boys." Today Arthur lives in Greensboro, NC, with his wife, Genevieve, and their delightful young son, Cormac.

As a young adult, Edward, due to an accident, suffered a brain injury, which left him in a kind of coma. This went on for several months - almost two years- when, one day, he died. This was the most painful experience of Alice and Harold's life. During those painful months, they prayed and hoped, but, being the professional that he was, Harold knew what the probable outcome would be. That's when the outpouring of love and support from friends, church people, patients, and many others pulled them back from the pit of despair.

Alice and Harold joined the WHCC in 1979, shortly after they moved to Wellesley, when, out of the blue, The Reverend Craig Adams knocked on their door, and invited them to church. Alice sings in the choir, plays the organ for Lay-led services, and provides meals for Family Promise guests. Harold has served the church on many committees: Adult Education, Music, Property Maintenance, Outreach, and Safe Church. He ushers, and has served as a Deacon. Recently he has given three seminars on the importance of living wills, advance directives, and communication of end-of-life instructions to family and physicians.

He may give talks on how to manage one's dying, but he isn't a gloomy guy. You should ask him if he's heard any good jokes lately. This is no ordinary humorist - he's the Official Joke Teller of the Retired Men's Association, and he has published two books of humor. So do ask, and prepare yourself for a good laugh!

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. Hallelujah!

*By Elizabeth Robertson*