



October 4, 2017

FROM INDIFFERENCE TO MEANING

Early in his life, you would not have predicted that he would become a leader in Christian Education at the WHCC. He grew up in Boise, Idaho. As a young person he was indifferent to his ancestral Latter Day Saints/Presbyterian/Congregational faith, despite deep Yankee roots, going back to Abner Hosmer who died at the Battle of Concord Bridge. A pastor who advised hearers that his was not a place for "old hymns and short sermons" didn't help.

In time he came to New England to attend Yale University where he earned a Bachelor's Degree. He later received an MBA from Stanford University. At that time he was still indifferent to matters of faith.

Jack Morgan met his wife, Linda, while both were employed at Baxter-Travenol, a leading medical products firm in Chicago. Linda, a registered nurse, had been recruited from her home in New York. Linda grew up in the Congregational Church. The young couple visited a number of churches. Hell fire sermons turned them off – and attending just at Easter and Christmas did not engage them. Things changed when they landed at a Presbyterian church in Lake Forest, Illinois.

Linda and Jack found inspiration there that would make them active church members from then on. They especially liked the way Sunday services were organized. There was a less formal early service – followed by a multi/purpose block of time for Community Hour, Sunday School, and Adult Education – before a more traditional 11:00 a.m. service. Here you could be a Sunday School teacher without giving up the worship service. It enabled young families to observe the Sabbath, while leaving time for competing activities like youth sports, which, when forced into an either/or choice, often works to the disadvantage of Christian education.

Jack, who has served on the Christian Education Committee, finds teaching Sunday School to be especially rewarding - and challenging, as he takes on 7th and 8th grades. Reflecting on the difficulty we have recruiting Sunday School teachers, he would like to see us consider a model like Lake Forest's where teachers do not have to give up the worship service in order to teach.

For several years, Jack led the Hills Church Adult Education program. With a goal of five programs in the fall and five more in the spring, you can see that finding speakers takes

some doing. They arrange for programs on such themes as the history of our faith tradition, Bible study, and the spiritual journeys of individuals. On top of all his work in Christian education, Jack leads the Easter Egg Hunt, an outreach to the community, serving hundreds of children, many of whom may not have any religious affiliation.

A great sadness came for Jack when his beloved Linda passed in 2012, after cancer treatment that had given her many good years to be with her family. Today, son Jack, Jr., who as a youth loved being in the choir's fifty performances of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dream Coat*, is an attorney in Washington, D.C. His wife, Sarah, is a molecular pharmacologist at the National Institute of Health. Son Cornelius lives in Los Angeles, where he is in the commercial real estate business.

Today, Jack serves as a Selectman in the Town of Wellesley. He has his own business as a biotech consultant. He has found great satisfaction in supporting businesses whose products have saved so many lives and reduced human suffering. He is grateful for his time at Baxter-Travenol, where visionary leadership enabled him to grow, and where he met Linda, and, coincidentally, met friends Dottie and Phil Laughlin!

For Jack, the most moving church service occurs on Maundy Thursday, with its soulful music, flickering candles, and Bible readings. If you have not attended this service, take Jack's advice and come. You'll be moved.

by Elizabeth Robertson