



Herchel Hoover Sheets

December 8, 1928 - February 8, 2020

The Reverend Dr. Herchel Hoover Sheets, 91, passed away peacefully at The Oaks at Ashton Hills Assisted Living Center in Covington, Georgia, on February 8, 2020. He is survived by his loving wife of 70 years, Gladys Mallard Sheets.

Rev. Sheets was born in 1928 to Oscar Shelley Sheets and Emily Myrtice Bledsoe, in his family's home, in the Red Oak community of Heard County, Georgia. His first seventeen years were spent in this rural, farming county that borders Alabama. In his autobiographical book *My Early Life*, he gives details and tells stories about his life until 1952. Work on the family farm, including dealing with mules, horses, and wagons, filled his everyday life until he left for college. He writes: "We were poor and knew we were poor, but most of the people around us were poor also, which made our circumstances seem more normal. Yet we always had plenty of food to eat, because we raised it ourselves... Especially in our young childhood years, [our mother] made all of our clothes....which were not far different from the clothes our neighbors and schoolmates wore."

Rev. Sheets was a graduate of Berry College in Mount Berry, Georgia, and earned the Master of Divinity at Emory University's Candler School of Theology, where he later served as an adjunct professor. During the fifty years that he was under pastoral appointment in the North Georgia Annual Conference of the [United] Methodist Church, beginning in 1949, he served as pastor in ten churches and also served as Professor of Religion at Young Harris College, as Adjunct Professor at Candler School of Theology, as Council Director for the North Georgia Annual Conference, as district superintendent for the Atlanta-Marietta District, and as Administrative Assistant to the Bishop/Director of Administrative Services.

Rev. Sheets was respected as a leader in the North Georgia United Methodist Conference, fulfilling numerous leadership and service positions. He was elected numerous times to serve as a delegate to the General Conference of The United Methodist Church (twice as leader of the conference clergy delegation), to the

Southeastern Jurisdictional Conference, and to the World Methodist Conference. He was awarded honorary doctorates by two colleges affiliated with his beloved denomination: LaGrange College (Georgia) and Union College (Kentucky.)

Rev. Sheets was passionately devoted to reading, writing, preaching, and teaching. In Wesleyan tradition, he believed that we should continue learning and thinking about our faith throughout our lives. He published eight books, including the definitive *Methodism in North Georgia: A History of the North Georgia Conference* (2005). Many of his papers are archived at the Pitts Library of Candler School of Theology. He also wrote church school curriculum materials, numerous articles in journals for pastors, and, each summer for decades, the weekly church school lesson in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*. He continued teaching Sunday School at Snellville UMC until a few months before his death.

He was widely sought after as a guest preacher and teacher. He was the speaker for the 1992 United Methodist Series of the Protestant Hour radio program and for twelve lectures about the Letters of John on the jurisdiction's tv network in 1980. He frequently spoke and taught in Schools of Christian Mission, Christian Enrichment Schools, Lay Speakers' Schools, Pastors' Retreats, etc.

Herchel Sheets is also remembered by many pastors as a mentor and friend, as well as one who could be called upon to provide wise counsel and expert knowledge of United Methodist polity.

In addition to his wife Gladys, the consummate "preacher's wife" and mother, he is survived by their four children: Randall Sheets (Vera Lynn Kellum Sheets) of Mobile, Alabama; Rodney Sheets (Julia Wilson Sheets) of Covington; Melanie Sheets (Lowell Chambers) of Porterdale; and Marsha Sheets of Porterdale. Rev. Sheets took great delight in his grandchildren: Ryan and Lindsay Sheets; Ransome (Kimberly) and Mary Sheets; Wesley and Zachary Chambers; and Will (Kelsey) and Maria McCranie.

He is further survived by two of his 8 siblings: Eugene Sheets (Emily) of Fort Valley and Mavis Sheets Johnson (B. J. "Jack" Johnson) of Griffin, Georgia; and a large family of beloved nieces and nephews. The siblings who preceded him in death are: Wilene Sheets Sharpe (Clarence Sharpe), Robert Sheets (Norma), Paul "Huel" Sheets (Evelyn), Joel Morris Sheets (1925-1926), Versa "Ople" Sheets, and Doris Sheets Smitherman (Emeris E. "Smitty" Smitherman). Rev. Sheets's mother died in 1941, and in 1943 his father married Mrs. Minnie Howard Worley, who brought two of her daughters by a previous marriage into the family household: Vara Worley Croft (Max Croft) and Dara Worley Gore (Charles Gore).

A memorial service for Rev. Sheets will be held on Saturday, March 7, at 11:00 a.m. at Snellville United Methodist Church (2428 Main Street, East; Snellville, Georgia 30078), followed by a reception and visitation in the Wesley Hall. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Gladys Mallard Sheets Endowment for Methodist Studies (benefitting Candler School of Theology), which Rev. Sheets established in his wife's honor. The donations may be made at engage.emory.edu/Sheets or by contacting Emory University's Advancement Office.

Condolences may be sent or viewed at www.wagesfuneralhome.com. Tom M. Wages Funeral Service, LLC, A Family Company, 3705 Highway 78 West, Snellville, GA 30039 (770-979-3200) has been entrusted with the arrangements.

Events

MAR **Memorial Service** 11:00AM

7

Snellville United Methodist Church

2428 Main Street East, Snellville, GA, US, 30078

MAR **Reception following the service**

7

Snellville United Methodist Church

2428 Main Street East, Snellville, GA, US, 30078

Comments



“ A tribute video has been added.



Tom M. Wages Funeral Service - February 25, 2020 at 12:15 PM



“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Herchel Hoover Sheets.



March 06, 2020 at 11:16 AM



“ Bishop Sue & The Cabinet North Georgia UMC purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Herchel Hoover Sheets.



Bishop Sue & The Cabinet North Georgia UMC - March 05, 2020 at 05:08 PM



“ Hershel left for us a great legacy. Just about every Wednesday, over the span of 15 years we gathered for breakfast. Sometimes 6-7 were in attendance and in the later years, just the two of us. He was my mentor, friend, confidant, role model, and colleague. He had a great sense of humor, sharp wit, and a wise mind, even in his senior years. He loved to preach, but was in such a demand, it was difficult to get on his schedule. He was so supportive of the work of ministry, offered advice, encouragement, and accountability. He was so interested in the ministry of Supportive Clergy Association, and The Ministry Training Academy in Nicaragua. He often shared his love for Gladys, his children, and so much pride in his grandkids. Our church, and so many of us have lost a spiritual giant. Well done good and faithful servant!

Jerry Meredith

Jerry Meredith - March 05, 2020 at 09:51 AM



“ Herchel hired me at East Point UMC as the church secretary - and then a couple of weeks later, he was off to his new position as District Superintendent! I was honored to get to know him during that short time and then through reading copies of his Sunday sermons. He was a great man. He preached from the Bible and remained true to its truths and instructions. I'm sure when he walked through Heaven's gates, there were many in line waiting to greet him, including John Wesley. Herchel Sheets has been an inspiration to everyone who had the opportunity to work with him, listen to him, and learn from him.

Carol Cook, Jonesboro GA

Carol Cook - March 05, 2020 at 09:49 AM



“ Our deepest sympathy and prayers for comfort and peace go to the Sheets family. We remember Dr. and Mrs. Sheets coming to Canton First shortly after we were married there in 1961. What a great influence their relationship and teachings had upon us as a young couple! We remember you all with much gratitude. Bill and Sandra Henry

Sandra Henry - March 05, 2020 at 08:58 AM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Herchel Hoover Sheets.



March 02, 2020 at 05:55 PM



“ 50 files added to the album LifeTributes



Tom M. Wages Funeral Service - February 25, 2020 at 12:14 PM



“ I have such special memories of serving in East Point with Herschel and Gladys. It was Chuck Moon's first church as the senior pastor and preacher, and the Sheets were very supportive and encouraging of us both. Gladys and some of her fellow ministers' wives talked me into being president of our district wives group. Sending love, hugs, and prayers to Gladys and family.

Blessings,
Linda Trice DeWolf

Linda T DeWolf - February 18, 2020 at 10:32 PM



“ A true patriarch of our conference and a disciple full of God's love. He was a wonderful, model for preachers to emulate. He greatly impacted my ministry. He would listen. He cared.

You just liked yourself better when he was in your presence.

I praise God for giving us a time with Herchel and I look forward to being with him in Heaven.

Thank you,

Rev. Sam H Newman, Ph. D
Currently serving as Senior Pastor, Midway UMC, Douglasville, GA
drsamnewman@bellsouth.net

SAM NEWMAN - February 18, 2020 at 11:05 AM



“ Our condolences to the family of Herchel Sheets. He was a preacher in the early 1990s on our weekly radio program, The Protestant Hour, now called Day1 (Day1.org). A great preacher and church leader. May God rest his soul.

Peter Wallace - February 18, 2020 at 08:53 AM



“ YoLanda Jones-Colton lit a candle in memory of Herchel Hoover Sheets



YoLanda Jones-Colton - February 17, 2020 at 05:55 PM



“ Emory and Elise Brackman send our love and prayers for Gods comfort to all the family
Herschel was a wonderful brother in the faith .

Emory and Elise Brackman - February 17, 2020 at 05:44 PM



“ I have many fond memories of Dr. and Mrs. Sheets and their precious children while I was a student at Young Harris College. I was fortunate to learn so much of the New and Old Testament from his excellent teaching. I remember when we would see the Sheets family walking on campus, we would lovingly say, "Here come the Sheets and their little pillowcases!"

Rest in well deserved peace dear Dr. Sheets. Thank you for the wonderful lessons and memories you gave us.

Charlotte Sparks McCloskey
(YHC '62-'64)

Charlotte Sparks McCloskey - February 15, 2020 at 03:00 PM



“ Homer and I enjoyed living next door to Herschel and Gladys in Stone Mountain for many years. I'll always remember what a beautiful garden Herschel grew and shared with us.

Peggy Saunders - February 14, 2020 at 08:09 PM



“ Dr. Sheets was the pastor at Harmony Grove UMC when my family moved to Lilburn and joined the church. Herchel, Gladys and their family were a spiritual treasure for our church. He is one of the most admired ministers that I have known and I think that his influence lives on.

Mary E. Thornhill - February 14, 2020 at 04:11 PM



“ Herchel H. Sheets was a dear friend of my father Rudy Baker, my mother Jimmie Baker and my step mother Martha-Farr Baker. It was the Rev.Herschel Sheets who sat with our family and offered prayers and encouragement during Dad's open heart surgery and provided comforting words following the loss of both my parents. His publication, The Beginnings of Methodism in England, gave me a deeper appreciation of our faith and provided an excellent historical account of John Wesley's life and the experiences that shaped his ministry. Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife Gladys and family. Rudolph Richard Baker III and Family

Richard Baker - February 13, 2020 at 05:46 PM



“ Emory And Elise Brackman lit a candle in memory of Herchel Hoover Sheets



Emory and Elise Brackman - February 12, 2020 at 09:51 AM



“ Jacquelynn Diane Stiles lit a candle in memory of Herchel Hoover Sheets



Jacquelynn Diane Stiles - February 11, 2020 at 07:11 PM