



# Lynchburg Covenant Fellowship

## Peter Guerrant Cosby, III

412 Madison Street P.O. Box 6016 Lynchburg, Virginia 24505-6016 (434) 847-9059 May 2013



### *The Director's Corner*

This newsletter is dedicated to Reverend P.G. Cosby, III and is a tribute in honor of his 100th birthday on May 29, 2013. P.G. is a founding board member of Lynchburg Covenant Fellowship and served as the Executive Director from 1966 until 1976. P.G. loves to

talk about LCF and hear about everything that is going on. It was under his leadership that LCF began our first housing program by building Shalom Apartments in 1970. LCF's main focus is and has been to provide safe, decent and affordable housing for many decades. I would like to thank P.G.'s daughters, Emily Cosby, Ellen Cosby and Esther Khoury; his sister, Ida Gordon Poole, and long time friend, Judy Bork for their contributions to this tribute.

Our dad, Peter Guerrant Cosby, III was born on May 29, 1913, and raised in Lynchburg, Virginia. Dad believes his call to the ministry began early. Both participation in his childhood church, Rivermont Presbyterian, and his family life, which included four younger siblings, planted the seed.

Dad was valedictorian of both the 1930 E.C. Glass High School class and the 1934 Hampden-Sydney College class. After graduating from college and working 2 years in the family insurance business, Dad began seminary, graduating from Union Seminary in Richmond in 1940. He was ordained to serve at Lakeside Church in Richmond, Virginia. He also pastored at Shades Valley Church in Birmingham, Alabama and Laurel Church near Richmond. From 1950 to 1966, Dad served at Northminster Presbyterian in Roanoke where we grew up. In the early 1960's, Dad participated in pulpit exchanges with local African American ministers - a program that created some friction with conservative church members at the time.

Dad's strong belief in racial equality and tolerance led to his 1966 move back to Lynchburg to become Executive Director of LCF. In addition to his work with LCF, Dad also served as interim pastor to churches in Nelson County. He was instrumental in the rebuilding of these churches after the devastation caused by Hurricane Camille in 1969.

In 1975, Dad was the recipient of the Brotherhood Citation of the National Conference of Christian and Jews. After serving Lynchburg's most needy citizens for 40 years, Dad also received the Liberty Bell Award from the Lynchburg Bar Association.

Emily has just given some of P.G.'s history and now we continue with some special family memories.

Our names are Esther, Emily, and Ellen, the three daughters of PG. We wanted to share some of the things we remember from growing up with Dad. Our most vivid memories fall into three different categories.

**Walking.** As many of you probably know, Dad is very faithful about taking a walk every day. In the past, his walks were always at night. Over the years, he has had several run-ins with the police who were suspicious of this strange man walking around the neighborhood at night. Dad has always said, "I was very relieved when they let me go." More importantly though, Dad has always welcomed us to join him on his walks; these have become some of the most meaningful times for us to talk and share with him.

**Trips.** One of our fondest memories is of the vacations that we would take with Dad and Bev Cosby. The three of us girls would pile in the back seat, Bev would drive, and we would set off, singing along the way at the top of our voices. Destinations included New York City and Florida with spontaneous detours en route. These detours made the trips unexpected and exciting. There was one unforgettable day we spent at Koinonia Farm, an interracial Christian community near Americus, GA, just after the Ku Klux Klan had threatened them.

**Cultivation.** We all have memories of cuddling up with Dad on the sofa as he read to us. It might have been C.S. Lewis's Narnia chronicles, Shakespeare's plays, or any other fun, challenging books. Like our walks with him, reading was a special time for us. He nurtured his gardens in the same way he cared for us. After we grew up and scattered, Dad helped us cultivate our own flowers, shrubs, and yards whenever he would come to visit.

We believe the reading, gardening, walking, and trips express three important traits that are part of Dad's amazing character. These traits are discipline, curiosity about the world around him, and the nurturing of people and the environment.

P. G.,

This month is a special time as you approach your 100th birthday, calling our attention to the amazing life you have lived.

This gives me an opportunity to look back on our growing up years, spent mostly at the home called Pantops on the outskirts of Lynchburg, Virginia.

It didn't take me long to know what I would like to express to you about our relationship during those years which gave us a foundation for living a Christian life and preparing us for "loving others as we love ourselves."

My relationship to you can be summed up in a few words. Many folks outside of our family might be surprised that this could be written concerning a sibling or anyone with whom one has lived in the same house for many years.

P.G., until you left home to attend college, you were my idol, my mentor, my example to follow in growing more like Jesus Christ. In my eyes you could do no wrong. I did not allow you to be criticized, as I felt that you were always in the right.

I realize that this does not sound rational, but I always looked up to you; and continue to thank God for the help you have been to me in my spiritual growth through the years.

Much love,

Ida Gordon

P. G.,

You and I have been friends for over a decade becoming closer after Bev's death. I tell people about you and let them know that after that experience, we have been "connected at the hip." I look forward to our Sunday calls, emails and visits. You are a very special friend which is why I chose to write a tribute to you using the word, "FRIEND".

**You are...**

**F**riendly to all you meet

**R**esilient in the face of changing and difficult circumstances

**I**ntelligent with an amazing memory

**E**ntertaining with your dry wit

**N**aturally curious, kind, helpful and a generous giver

**D**edicated to Family, Friends and Ministry

**HAPPY 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY!!**

With love and gratitude for you,

Judy

[www.LCFHousing.org](http://www.LCFHousing.org)



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