

## **Rev. Dr. Colvin and Thalia Baird**

Information provided by the donor: E. Colvin Baird (1919 – 1997) and Thalia Buck Baird (1916 – 2010) began their life of ministry together after meeting at Bethel College and then marrying in 1940. Colvin was the son of Rev. Lacy E. Baird, a Cumberland Presbyterian minister, and Mrs. Hallie Baird of East Kentucky. A graduate of Bethel College and the Cumberland Presbyterian Seminary (now Memphis Theological Seminary), Dr. Baird served as a Chaplain in the U.S. Army with service in China and the Far-East from 1944 to 1946. He received a Th.M. from Louisville Presbyterian Seminary in 1948 and his Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1968. Dr. Baird ministered in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church prior to joining the Cumberland Presbyterian Seminary in 1953. He continued with the seminary after it relocated to Memphis becoming President, 1978 to 1984. In retirement, Colvin continued to pastor in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church until his death. Thalia Buck Baird was the daughter of Rev. J.T. Buck, Sr., also a Cumberland Presbyterian minister, and Mrs. Verner Buck. Thalia was a graduate of Bethel College and a long-time math teacher in numerous communities. She retired from Memphis City Schools in 1978. Thalia served as an Elder in the Cumberland Presbyterian Church for 46 years. Colvin and Thalia enjoyed over fifty years of marriage having five daughters, eleven grandchildren, fifteen great-grandchildren and more to come.

The Bairds valued faith and family dedicating their lives to serving others. While humble in demeanor, they often found themselves leading by example. After moving to Memphis in 1964, a time of civil unrest, they quietly, yet firmly, supported the rights of all peoples to live a life of faith and family without persecution. Dr. Baird joined church leaders of many religions and races to bring about change through love and compassion while Thalia volunteered to be one of the first teachers in a minority school during desegregation. They were gracious and generous with sharing a meal, shelter, clothing or prayer with anyone in need. Colvin and Thalia relished the bounty that God provided on earth, and there was always another jar of home-grown green beans ready to add to the dinner table for the unexpected guest. Colvin fished and Thalia sowed and sewed, both literally and spiritually. They walked side by side through life, through faith, through family, through love.

The Cumberland Presbyterian faith was integral to their lives. They truly believed “Whosoever will, may come”.

Endowment provided by: Baird Family