

Extraordinary Builders

By Lydian Bernhardt

The McElveens are builders.

Builders of houses, like the dilapidated cabin The Rev. Bill McElveen and his wife Carol bought in 1959. They spent the next 52 years working hard to turn it into a showplace as a hobby.

Builders of congregations, like Messiah Moravian Church in Winston-Salem and Unity Moravian Church in Lewisville, a congregation they and a number of fine lay people started. Bill now pastors 197-year-old St. Philips Moravian Church, which is moving back to its historic home in Salem.

Builders of generational wealth, like the annuity/life insurance Bill bought years ago and has grown ever since.

“For us, giving is a matter of gratitude and stewardship,” Bill says. “When I was at Unity Moravian, a woman in Sunday school – the oldest woman in the congregation, who had worked all her life at Hanes Knitting Company as a piece worker – told us, ‘I always give Him a tenth, because it belongs to Him, and I just love to give Him some of mine.’ That really stuck with me.”



The McElveens made the beneficiary of that annuity the Moravian Ministries Foundation in America, and in so doing, they become builders of the future. Through

the Foundation, individuals like the McElveens can plan gift-giving, investment and stewardship to benefit Moravian ministries and move them forward.

Thanks to this gift, the William H. and Carol S. McElveen Ministries Fund will provide endowments for 10 Moravian/ecumenical ministries, helping to ensure their sound financial future.

"It just gives us a real sense of happiness and excitement to think of these ministries, and others we selected, going on and on and on," he says as Carol nods, smiling. "I also like that we can go in and adjust anything we want to on those accounts for as long as we live."

The three McElveen children are grown, with children of their own and one great-grand – "There are 21 of us," Carol, a retired teacher, says proudly – and they all supported their parents' decision.

"They're all professional people who have done well for themselves," Bill says. "I got insurance because I had a family, and now we don't need it. When we talked to them about the gift, they were very supportive."

"We sat down with the Foundation, and they helped us write it up, allowing for a testamentary annuity that will benefit me if Bill predeceases me." Carol says of their gift, "It's a vehicle for doing important things."

"We've been blessed well, and I think you show that by what you do with your resources," Bill says. "Like the lady said, ten percent belongs to Him. And I just love to give Him some of mine. "

Would you consider making a gift of insurance? Please contact Chris Spaugh at 888-722-7923 or email him at cspaugh@mmfa.info.