



Stephen Mitchell

January 20, 1943 - September 22, 2020

Chaplain Stephen Gregory Mitchell was received into heaven September 22, 2020. While his family is mourning their loss we are also celebrating his perfect healing. For now, we look back at who he was, what he became, and the legacy he has blessed us all with. He was born on January 20, 1943 at St. Luke's Hospital in San Francisco to Fred and Delores Mitchell. 2 years later his sister Sue was born and 2 years after that his brother Lee. They were raised in Northern California until Steve was 10 years old and the family relocated to Culver City, CA. Steve stayed in Culver City throughout his high school years graduating from Culver City High School in 1960 with his favorite subject being English. After 2 years of college at UCLA Steve dropped out to work full time at UCLA as the Senior Stores Supervisor. He would continue there for 17 years.

In 1964, Steve met Nina Garza at First Methodist Church in Hollywood. For Steve it was love at first sight... Nina took a bit longer to convince. They began attending the Church of the Open Door, where Dr. J. Vernon McGee was the pastor. Nina wanted Steve to hear the gospel being preached and after a few months, on July 19, 1964, Steve received Christ as his personal Savior.

Less than a year later, Steve and Nina were married on April 3, 1965. They lived in a small apartment in Santa Monica and attended Bible Baptist Church where he was baptized in March 1967. 1967 was a great year because in April his eldest daughter, Lisa Marie, was born – and boy was she cute! In September of 1967, the family moved to a home in Lomita and in 1969 his favorite 2nd daughter, Zeilia Grace, was born – let us be honest here...she was pretty cute too! In 1975 the family moved to Harbor City and began attending Torrance Baptist Temple. Attending TBT was important because Brother Joe saw all the potential Steve had and began having him serve in Children's Ministry and Leading Worship and ultimately teaching the adults

In 1979, after a long period of searching and struggling, Steve received a clear call to ministry. He enrolled at Talbot Seminary under a special ruling that allowed 1% of the entering class to be accepted without a bachelor's degree. It took Steve 4 year to mass 114 units and graduate with the Master of Divinity Degree in May 1983.

To go to school, Steve and Nina quit their jobs, cashed in their retirement plans, sold their house and moved to Norwalk to be near to Talbot. They became missionaries with Child

Evangelism Fellowship and led many children to Christ under their leadership.

After graduating in May 1983, Steve was ordained at First Baptist Church of Downey and began serving as Pastor to Adults and Evangelism at First Baptist Downey. While sharing the gospel with adults was not something Steve felt immediately comfortable doing, he developed a great love for it and had the opportunity to lead many people to Christ throughout his ministry there.

In August 1993, Steve responded to a request by First Baptist Church of Brea to come and speak on Sunday's while they searched for a Senior Pastor. But what started as an interim position while they searched for a Senior Pastor turned into a precious love relationship and Steve accepted their invitation to become their Senior Pastor in November 1993.

In early 2000 Steve began to sense the Lord changing his direction in ministry. One day, as his family was talking about the next steps, it became clear that God was calling Steve to become a hospital Chaplain with HCMA ministries. This would be some of the most fruitful times of Steve's ministry. Each day he would go to Downey Regional Hospital and go room to room, meeting and praying for the patients there. Many times, he was called in the middle of the night to come and comfort patients and families facing emergency situations. One time he came home early one morning with tear stained eyes and face as he shared that he had been comforting a family that had lost their baby. He truly had a heart for the lost and hurting people in our world and was willing to love them as God loved them. Everyone at the hospital knew Pastor Steve and he was greatly loved. Clearly, Steve was an amazing Christian and servant of God. But he was also a loving husband, caring father, and an amazing grandpa. As a husband, he truly loved his wife. Every Christmas his daughters would roll their eyes because the gifts under the tree would be labeled "To my honey from her Bumblebee" and other little love sayings. As a dad he spent countless hours praying for and over his children. He helped them with homework and figuring out how to navigate life. They always knew he loved them.

As a grandpa, his favorite things to do were to talk with the grandkids and read them stories. He never turned down an opportunity for hugs and kisses, and he and his grandson often enjoyed a mean game of Chinese Checkers. But most importantly, his grandkids were prayed for every single day.

The hole he leaves here on earth is tremendous and he will be missed terribly. But as his 5 year old granddaughter prays daily, "Thank you for Grandpa that he is in heaven now and can walk, run, jump and play and his legs don't hurt him anymore and he is happy." Yes, sweet girl, he is finally free and fully healed. We imagine that he is now in heaven antiquing to his heart's desire and munching on an Apple Fritter, one of his favorite treats. Thank you for taking the time to read this remembrance of our Beloved Husband, Father, Grandfather, Brother, and Friend.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to:

HCMA Hospital Chaplain's Ministry

Acct: # 404

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Comments



“ 1 file added to the album Stephen Mitchell



Lisa Hodo - October 13, 2020 at 03:05 AM