



## Milton Detterline

November 16, 1929 - April 6, 2010

The Reverend Milton E. Detterline, 80, pastor of St. Peter United Church of Christ in Knauertown, passed away quietly at home in the early morning hours of April 6. Rev. Milt, as he was affectionately known by his congregation, came to St. Peter's Church in 1972 on a temporary assignment "and, happily, never left. He was known for the extraordinary care and love he showed to all, for the commonsense wisdom of his sermons, and for his boundless energy and enthusiasm " even as multiple illnesses took their toll in the final months of his life. "What was striking about Rev. Milt was that he had few casual acquaintances," said St. Peter's Consistory President Dotti Walters. "He was a rare individual in that he quickly became a dear friend to all who came to know him." While his congregation was small, Reverend Detterline's influence extended far beyond the boundaries of St. Peter's Church . Concurrent with his tenure there, from 1981 to 1996 he also served as pastor of St. Matthew UCC Church in Chester Springs , Pa. In addition, he officiated at baptisms, weddings and funerals for hundreds of families throughout the community without official church "homes." Reverend Detterline was an understated yet determined activist in serving local community needs. The St. Peter Fellowship Hall " named Detterline Hall in his honor " was conceived as a community gathering place, with the church hosting such diverse groups as the Boy Scouts and Alcoholics Anonymous. He had served as president of the Orion Communities, which helps to integrate people with disabilities toward a more meaningful life. He was a founding member of the Coventry-Warwick

Ministerium, a group of local churches that joined together to pursue common community interests. A lifelong devotee of the author, poet and philosopher Henry David Thoreau, Reverend Detterline was a permanent member of the Thoreau Society, and made frequent pilgrimages to Walden Pond for rest and rejuvenation. He travelled widely throughout the world on personal adventures, as well as leading guided tours in 62 countries on five continents. He was an avid writer and was widely published in a range of local and denominational publications. His biography is listed in Who's Who in Religion, Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the World, Community Leaders in America, and Tamaqua Citizen of the Year among others. Milton E. Detterline was born on November 16, 1929, in Bethlehem, Pa., the son of a Evangelical Congregational Church minister Milton E. Detterline Sr. and his wife, Elizabeth (Ault) Detterline. He grew up in the communities of Kutztown and Philadelphia where his father preached, and graduated from high school in Palmerton, Pa., north of Allentown. He earned a Bachelor's degree from Moravian College in 1951, and his Masters of Divinity from Drew University in 1954. In 1968 he participated in a Pastoral Fellowship in Ecumenics at Yale University . Reverend Detterline served as pastor of Christ Evangelical Congregational Church in Pottsville, Pa., from 1954 to 1958; St. John Evangelical Congregational Church in Allentown, PA from 1958 to 1961, and St. John United Church of Christ in Tamaqua, PA, from 1961 to 1969. From 1969 to 1972 he served as Chaplain, Alumni Director, and Special Assistant to the President of Ursinus College in Collegeville, Pa. Reverend Detterline is survived by sons James L., Jon S., Peter K., stepdaughter Krishnabai (Aimee Freas), and 4 grandchildren. Following cremation, a memorial service is scheduled for 11 AM on Saturday, April 17 at St. Peter United Church of Christ, Route 23 in Knauertown, Pa. ( 1920 Ridge Road, Pottstown , PA 19465 ). The family will greet friends after the service. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions are requested in Rev. Milt's memory to the St. Peter's Church Building Fund, c/o St. Peter's UCC Knauertown, PO Box 208 St. Peter's , PA 19470. Online condolences may be offered at [www.royersfordfun](http://www.royersfordfun)

eralhome.com. Arrangements were entrusted to Cattermole-Klotzbach  
Funeral Home, Royersford, PA.

# Tribute Wall

CD

“ He was the chaplain of Ursinus College when I was a student there. Cherished memories include the Sunday Seminar, wonderful joint retreats with Moravian students, Thoreau, journaling, and sleeping under the stars on the hill behind his house. Sincere condolences to all who loved him.

Carol Seifrit Pepper - [drcpepper@aya.yale.edu](mailto:drcpepper@aya.yale.edu) - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

ML

“ We'd like to extend our sincerest condolences to your family. It's so hard to lose a parent... know that we are praying for your comfort.

Marybeth and Marc Lisse - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

VV

“ "My father didn't tell me how to live; he lived, and let me watch him do it." Thank you, Reverend, for teaching me a little something about being a father.

Vito Petitti - [vito@vjplawoffice.com](mailto:vito@vjplawoffice.com) - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

EB

“ We saw Milt seldom, since we lived in Rocky Mountain National Park and Louisiana (in the winter). But as the obit says, he became a dear friend. When he and Jim visited us down here in the bayous, we had a great time touring the historical areas and, especially, the wetlands. We looked forward to his visits to Jim because we could see him also. His spirit touches us even now.

Ernie and Ros Bernard - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

TF

“Pop Church” will always be in our hearts.

The Clerkin Family - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

GC

We cannot express how sad this news makes us. Whenever we visited Rev. Milt's church, he made us feel like part of the family. What a loss to so many people who dearly loved him.

Gerald and Carol A Rathgeber - carathsinger@yahoo.com - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

BH

My deepest sympathy goes out to Milt's family on behalf on my sisters and me. Milt was a wonderful friend, confidant and spiritual leader for us. He married and buried almost everyone I know, and helped us whenever we were in time of need. He will be greatly missed by many.

Bill Helfferich - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

JG

I came to know Rev. Milt through the Coventry-Warwick Ministerium and have admired him for his warmth and sense of caring. Also enjoyed hearing his great singing voice. My condolences to the family and may God sustain you through this time of sorrow.

Jean Dick, 1st Baptist Church of St. Peters - grimmajeane@aol.com - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

MM

“ Dear Jim, Jon, Pete and family: Your Dad was a great pastor, teacher and leader. He was cordial to all and always provided assistance to our family when needed. His sense of humor, work ethic, and upbeat attitude will be long remembered. On behalf of our family, please accept our condolences.

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**Mary and Ann Milns** - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

CR

“ Dear Detterline's Family: My deepest sympathy and condolences goes to you and your father. I am so sorry to hear that you lost a father and a great friend. You will be in my prayers. Now he is at peace. Sincerely, Craig

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**Craig J. Russo** - russocraig1990@gmail.com - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

LL

“ We have lost a true friend and wise pastor. Our condolences to his family, and especially Jim, John and Peter who were so loved by their father. Things will never be quite the same without Milton Detterline amongst us. A truly remarkable man!

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**Laura and Bill Hendrick** - Laura@ptd.net - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

JJ

“ I have never heard a minister speak who had more rapport with a congregation. There was never any "shuffling" during his sermons. He was thoroughly enjoyed. He will be missed. There will never be a "replacement" for him as our minister. There was only one Milt. Please accept my deepest sympathy and know that his family was all important to him.

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**Joy Schollenberger** - jawshomeatlast@aol.com - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

JJ

“ I'll always miss our special bond, and will never forget the Christmas-present-wrapping-and-movie-watching tradition we enjoyed for so many years. I will remember Milt fondly. My very best regards to the family.

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**Jen Dreyer - jend830@yahoo.com** - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM

CA

“ Milt was more than a pastor, he was a true and dear friend. He will be greatly missed. Our hearts are heavy and we wish the family our sincere sympathy at this time. Caroline and Kirby Bloomquist

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**Caroline(hughes)Bloomquist** - July 19, 2013 at 08:37 AM