

MM Moment for Tom McCormick...

"Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit." (I Cor. 12:4)

It came the day before Valentine's Day...the day of the Impeachment verdict... news that would sweep away other news for me... news of the death of Tom McCormick.

I realize many on my lists didn't know Tom...but many did...you'll understand if I take a page for some personal memories.

Some on my lists knew him in his college or seminary days... and ever since. All have untold stories. I hope they get shared, especially with Tom's wife, Karen.

I first knew him around 1960. He came to pastor a Church in Seattle... a good preacher and on track to become a leading pastor in Washington.

In 1963 we got better acquainted when Tom and Jim Whitaker, the pastor of Tom's home church in Longview, drove with me from Kelso to the Earl Lectures in Berkeley. The lecturer was theologian, Paul Tillich. After the first Lecture, Jim said he didn't understand what Tillich said. For the next half hour Tom clearly summarized and explained the lecture we had just heard. I was impressed.

When I heard Tom was going to be a Campus Minister at the University of Washington my unspoken thought was that it was not an upward move for Tom.

I was so, so wrong in so many ways! In retrospect Campus Ministers were on the front edge of issues of racial and gender inequality and opposition to the Vietnam War.

Tom became Chaplain of the UW football team...and got to fly to the games.

In 1970 UW was in Corvallis to play OSU. Tom was staying with us when our house caught fire. A dangerous moment none of us ever forgot. Tom's action that night probably saved our lives.

One outstanding milestone was his work with the University of Washington School of Medicine. I asked him how that happened. He said he walked into the office and simply asked *"Is there any way the Campus Ministry could be of help to you?"* Only Tom could have done that.

I don't know how it all evolved but his decision led him to do a doctoral level degree in bio-ethics.

The rest is the amazing story of the development of the Office of Department of Bio-Ethics and Humanities, not only at the U of W, but in many other Medical Schools in the United States and abroad. He counseled many, did weddings for some, was a smiling, and encouraging friend.

Just a few weeks ago shortly after he reported his Stage 4 cancer diagnosis. This is what Tom wrote in his Sunday Night Letter:

"Every day, now, the mailman delivers cards and letters from across the country. It is such a blessing to hear from former students, and to see pictures of their healthy families and the growth of their children---many of whom claim they too wish to become physicians. I'm so pleased our lives intersected in medical school and that I was able to contribute in some ways toward the progress of these in the quest for their goal of serving humanity as a caring physician!"

One who reported Tom's death to me said: *"It leaves a hole in my heart."*
I say *In my heart* too... but think of all the holes he filled along the way.

For the Moment...Art Morgan