

TRIBUTE TO AVON PARK CAMP CHAPLAIN ROBERT ALLEN

David L Cowles

He was my special friend, one of the closest I've ever known, even "closer than a brother." He was known by most of us as "Bob."

While living on the Avon Park Holiness Campground during the past several winters, Bob served as Camp Chaplain. He regularly visited Camp residents in their homes, hospitals and nursing homes. He and his wife Mary served faithfully in various ministries at the Avon Park Community Bible Church of the Churches of Christ in Christian Union. They were also active with the Pacer Ministries in Chapel services at the Avon Park Corrections Institution.

"Bob was a wonderful man, a Godly man," his wife Mary said. "We had a wonderful marriage. I learned much from him. We felt that God just brought us together. He always said that he had a list of what he wanted in a wife, and I fit the bill perfectly. See what God does - he blinds us to the imperfections!" she laughed.

When Bob was very young he had a stuttering problem and had difficulty speaking in public. Yet, he has communicated to literally thousands of individuals both from the pulpit and in his daily routine as a pastor and community leader.

He was probably the most unlikely candidate to become a Christian minister. He had no formal education beyond graduation from Centerburg High School, OH in 1951.

Bob was ordained by the Ohio Advent Christian Church and served as President of the Ohio Advent Christian Conference for 9 years. He was a leader in getting the Ohio Advent Christian Camp and worked tirelessly in helping build cabins and other facilities.

When Bob was introduced by a pastor friend at the Morrow County Ministers Association meeting, he said, "I am just a simple pastor, don't call me Reverend, I am a pastor."

In his pastoral ministry, he was known as a visiting pastor. He visited people of all faiths, sharing Christ in hospitals, homes and nursing homes.

Bob retired in 2002, after 35 years employment with Chattanooga Glass Company in Mount Vernon, while at the same time pastoring Advent Christian Churches in Ohio.

In his last pastorate in Sparta, OH, he knocked on every door in the community. He retired after more than forty years as a pastor. He was named Pastoral Emeritus at the Sparta Advent Christian Church.

Bob and Mary lived in Marengo, OH. On November 4th, I received this email note, "David, Your friend, Bob passed away at about 2 PM this afternoon. Mary." His obituary read, "Bob fell asleep in the Lord to await the resurrection when Christ shall come."

A Memorial Service will be held in January at the Community Bible Church CCCU, 1400 CR 17A, east of Avon Park. For more information contact Pastor Donald Seymour at 452-5643.