

Patrick D. Miller Jr. (1935-2020)
President of SBL: 1998

Patrick D. Miller Jr., the Charles T. Haley Professor of Old Testament Theology Emeritus at Princeton Theological Seminary died in Black Mountain, NC following a lengthy illness on May 1, 2020. Born to Dr. Lila Morse Bonner and Dr. Patrick Dwight Miller in Atlanta, GA on October 24, 1935, he spent his childhood and youth in San Antonio, Texas and Atlanta, Georgia.

After graduating from Davidson College in 1956, he enrolled in Union Theological Seminary in Virginia where he met Mary Ann Sudduth from Louisville, Kentucky. Pat and Mary Ann were married in 1958. Following graduation from Union, they journeyed together to Harvard University where Pat earned the Ph.D. degree. Their first son, Jonathan, was born in Louisville as Pat was finishing his dissertation. To the surprise of some, instead of immediately pursuing a vocation in teaching, Pat accepted a call to serve as pastor of the Trinity Presbyterian Church in Travelers Rest, South Carolina.

In 1966, Pat, Mary Ann, and their young son traveled to Israel where Pat engaged in independent research as he prepared to begin his teaching ministry at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. He became the Professor of Biblical Studies at UTS later that year and Patrick James, their second son, was born. Pat spent eighteen years at UTS, and Pat and Mary Ann both served as mentors, teachers and friends to generations of students at UTS. Pat's contributions to Old Testament scholarship proliferated.

Pat's twin vocations of teaching and scholarship, in and for the church, led him to Princeton Theological Seminary in 1984 as the Charles T. Haley Professor of Old Testament Theology. He served actively on that faculty until retirement in 2005. During his years at Princeton, he served as editor of *Theology Today*, undertook responsibilities with numerous professional societies (including serving as President of the Society of Biblical Literature in 1998), and continued his prodigious scholarship (sixteen books and a multitude of journal articles), while always giving heart and soul to teaching and inspiring students year after year.

Because Pat's work was in and for the church, he was also engaged in its life and ministry: first as pastor in South Carolina, then as an involved church leader helping to develop confessional materials and new biblical translations. Moreover, with Mary Ann he was constantly engaged in the weekly worship and ministry of local churches, notably in ministries of music to which he lent his strong voice.

Upon retirement, Pat and Mary Ann moved back to Louisville, Kentucky to be close to Mary Ann's mother, and then to Black Mountain/Montreat, North Carolina in 2012. In this season of their life together, it became obvious that Pat's first and final vocation was to care for family, and especially for Mary Ann in her days of illness. His steadfastness by her side manifested the honoring of that cherished relationship as well as its extension to his sons and their partners, his grandchildren, and his great-grandchild.

In the household in which he was nurtured as a child, Pat absorbed the theology he believed to be magnificently expressed in Psalm 103. In Pat's own words, "Praise responds to the experience of God's grace and power, exalts the Lord, and bears witness to all who hear that

God is God.” So, his life came to express the refrain of Psalm 103: “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless God’s holy name.” Knowing that God is enthroned on the praises of Israel, Pat’s life joined in that enthronement.

Pat was preceded in death by his wife, Mary Ann.

In his last years and months, during illness, Pat was lovingly cared for and strengthened by his physical therapist, Jessica Risher, and by his live-in caregiver, Thembinkosi Madzimure. Each of these women became dear friends, were vital to his comfort, and inspired him deeply.

Survivors include son, Jonathan, his spouse Suzy and their children Isaac and Claudia; son Patrick James, his partner Katie McWeeney, and his children Jessica, Rachael, Alex, and granddaughter Adeline; sister Belle Miller McMaster and twin sister Mary Miller Brueggemann.

Share and enjoy your remembrances of Pat together online until we can be together again by reading and contributing to <https://drpdmiller.com>.

Gifts in memory of Patrick D. Miller can be sent to:
Montreat Conference Center
PO Box 969
Montreat, NC 28757

Or online at: <https://montreat.org/support/give>