

## **Terry A. Moreno ~ March 17, 2016**

### **Pastor Ed Treat**

Terry's family, his wife Cheryl of 46 years, and his son and daughter, Mike and Melissa shared with me some of Terry's story this last week and I would like to share some of what they had to tell me about his life.

Terry was born in 1946 in Saint Paul, Minnesota, to Calvin and Ruth Moreno. He has one older brother named Keith. Terry attended Saint Paul High School and was involved in diving, tap-dancing, gymnastics, baseball and the civil air patrol.

After graduating in 1965 he attended the Northwestern College of Chiropractic medicine. In 1970 he began his own practice and worked to heal people for 15 years. After growing weary of the business end of his practice he elected to find other ways to support his family.

Two years before graduating medical school he met Cheryl at a singles dance. They fell in love and married a year later, settling in Bloomington, Minnesota. Their first child, Mike, was born in 1974 and three years later they had Melissa.

Dr. Terry was forced to retire in 2008 after being disabled from a stroke and other health issues. His health has been an ongoing battle since that time.

Terry loved hunting and fishing with his son, Mike. The family travelled to many places such as New York, the East Coast, and California. They camped and travelled in a pop-up camper for many years. One time while hunting Terry heard his son Mike take several shots and when he later saw Mike said, "I thought it was WWII happening, I was hoping at least one deer would come my way."

His favorite pastime was collecting things and attending garage sales. He was a garage sale addict, along with his son. Cheryl lived with the constant fear that they would sneak more "bargains" into the house. He collected many things like, guns, antiques, and coins.

Mike recalls once as child spending the night in the car freezing to death while Terry snored on, so they could be first in line at an estate sale. Once at the sale you could see his head moving like a bobble-head doll looking for the treasure. He could easily and quickly spot a great deal.

He would do anything for his kids. He loved his children, he loved his grandchildren. He loved animals and had many pets. He said he didn't like cats, but he really did. He loved old movies like Stalag 17, The Sound of Music, Kelly's Heroes, and Grease.

He will be missed for his sense of humor, his many stories, travelling and hunting and his pranks. He once threw a firecracker down the basement while Mike was down there. When Terry was little he would put bullheads in the street to pop tires when people drove over them. He will also be missed for his great backrubs—he was a chiropractor after all so he must have been good.

Today we say farewell to Dr. Terry Moreno who leaves his family and his church community. He lived 69 years and experienced some of the best that life has to offer—a good marriage, a good family, a relationship with God.

We gather here today to do one of the hardest things anyone ever does in life, that is to say goodbye to someone we have known and loved. For Terry's family this is the hardest thing of all. They have spent a lifetime with him, close by his side, so many years and so many stories together. When someone so dear to you dies it is a wrenching experience that leaves you hollow for days and years to follow. In fact, when we lose someone we love life is never the same again. I can't be.

Of all the things we deal with in this world and in this life, death is by far the worst. There is nothing worse than death. Even under the best of circumstances, death is a terrible thing, and very hard to accept. Nature has its seasons but death can come to anyone, at any time, in any place. The Bible calls death our worst enemy.

We gather here today with sorrow in our hearts for the loss of a loved one, but also we come with the reality of death that has not only come to this family, but is a reminder of our own mortality. We don't want to think about death but at times like this we cannot avoid it. Terry's death is a reminder that we will all die.

Why do we have to die? What happens when we die? Can we really know? There are so many unexplainable mysteries about death that we simply have to leave in the hands of God.

And while we live with this great mystery, we do have some valuable words that I sincerely believe have come to us from the great beyond, that come to us from God through the one we call the Son of God. Jesus himself had a great deal to say about death, in fact death and resurrection was his focus and main mission in this life—to give us victory over the grave, to destroy death forever.

In John's Gospel Jesus says, "Whosoever lives and believes in me shall never die." John 11:26

The Apostle Paul was very adamant about the fact that we live beyond the grave. In 1 Corinthians he says, "Lo! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed." If we are to have faith in Jesus Christ and what he has promised then we also must have faith that Dr. Terry Moreno did not die, but he simply changed residence. He has gone from this room of life that we all live in to another grander room that we all look forward to.

My favorite promise of all comes from the Gospel reading I read to you earlier. Jesus was sharing his last meal before his death and resurrection, a celebration that we remember in the coming week, the most important holiday in the Christians year and the most significant even in all of history. God raised Jesus from the dead and has promised to raise each and every one of us as well.

As Jesus was explaining his death and resurrection to his followers they become upset and disturbed and he calms them down with these amazing, amazing words:

"In my Father's house are many rooms. I am going there to make a place for you. And when I go and make a place for you I will also come again and I will take you to that place so that where I am you may be also. I wouldn't tell you this if it were not true. Believe me!"

We don't understand the full mystery of this, but when we die but somehow we are changed. We go from these worn out old bodies to another kind of glory. We change residence from this world into the city of God. We join the saints in light.

Therefore, if Jesus was really telling the truth, then this means Terry closed his eyes last week at Southdale Hospital, and then he opened them again and found himself in God's world. He stepped out of his tired and worn out body and floated away in the hands of Jesus surrounded by his mother and father and son-in-law, Mark. He abides now with all the saints, all the patriarchs and matriarchs of the Bible. He is not death but alive and we shall see him again. Thanks be to God. Amen