

Email from Mary Sopoci:

I received the email below from Jean Ann Matter. It gave so much information in such a way that I wanted to share it with you. Her check arrived with a wonderful letter. It will appear in the eNews.

Mary

From: Jean Anne Matter [mailto:jeanannematter1@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 3:19 PM

To: Mary Sopoci

Cc: Jamie Matter; Brad Matter

Subject: Re: Donation in memory of E Macdonald Matter

Oops! Sorry about that! And here I did a special Duluth version of the obit and everything. It should be attached now.

I also attached a picture of our grandparents, Willard and Jean Matter, outside The Cabin, their beloved cottage on Cook Lake near Duluth. They both passed in the 1980s, so I am not sure if anyone remembers then any more, but ... well ... here they are. And while we are at it, I put in a picture of our dad and mom on dad's 90th. Just so you can see who these folks were.

I will mail my check tomorrow. It would indeed be reassuring if you would let us know when the checks are received. Thanks!

The address I have is:

Ms. Mary Sopoci

Pilgrim Congregational Church

2310 E 4th St,

Duluth, MN 55812

Let me know if that is not correct.

On Tue, Jun 30, 2020 at 12:19 PM Mary Sopoci <marys@pilgrimduluth.org> wrote:

Dear Jean-Anne,

Thank you so much for the wonderful information in your email. I will share it with the Council, Building & Finance and our archive committee. Everyone will be delighted with it.

It warms the heart to know that your father had such fond memories of Pilgrim that he asked you to make this donation. It is a blessing to hear stories like this and lives touched anytime, but especially during this time of social distancing and the challenges that presents.

I am working during this time even though the church isn't open. We have a secure system for our mail so you can send it directly to the church. I will be looking for the checks and I certainly can send you confirmation that I have received them if you wish.

You mentioned an obituary being attached. There wasn't an attachment to your email. We would very much like a copy.

Thank you and your brothers for your generosity and stay healthy.

Mary Sopoci

Business Manager

Pilgrim Congregational Church

2310 E 4th Street

Duluth, MN 55812

From: Jean Anne Matter [mailto:jeanannematter1@gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, June 30, 2020 7:32 AM

To: Mary Sopoci; Jamie Matter; Brad Matter

Subject: Donation in memory of E Macdonald Matter

Dear Ms. Sopoci:

Our family would like to make donations to Pilgrim in memory of our father, E. Macdonald Matter, known to all as Mac, and my mother, Constance Somervell Matter.

Dad passed away on June 29, 2019, one week shy of his 100th birthday. Mom passed in 2011. My two brothers and I each plan to send you a check for \$3500, for a total donation of \$10,500. Where shall we send the checks? Ordinarily we would mail them to the church, but given the need for "social distancing," we wanted to make sure the church office is functioning. Please let us know if we should send the donations somewhere else for secure and timely delivery.

In the attached obituary, you'll see that dad was born and raised in Duluth, son of Willard and Jean Macdonald Matter, who were stalwart members of the Pilgrim congregation. Willard grew up in Duluth, and his family attended Pilgrim from at least the 1890s, maybe before. I believe you have a Matter window in the church. We are those Matters. Our great grandfather was Elmer Wales Matter and our great great uncle was Samuel Ernest Matter, both of whom attended and supported Pilgrim.

Dad married an Episcopalian as did his cousin, Henry Roberts, who still lives in Duluth with wife Terry. So dad was a "lapsed Congregationalist," but he retained fond memories of Pilgrim and specifically requested that we donate to the church upon his death. Please let us know how best to do so. Thanks!

Sincerely,

Jean-Anne Matter (Pittsburgh)

James Matter (San Francisco)

Bradley Matter (Seattle)

1970's Photo of Jean and Willard Matter:



Photo of Connie and Mac Matter (6 July 2009):



E. Macdonald Matter Obituary



Elmer Macdonald (Mac) Matter finally gave up his determined struggle against mortality on June 29, 2019 at the age of almost 100. The cause of death was pretty much just old age.

Around the year 2000, Mac's grandchildren decided he must be a secret agent. After all, consider his accomplishments: ice skater, gymnast, expert backwoodsman and canoeist, private pilot, skier, SCUBA diver ... and he collected knives! With his wife, Connie Somervell Matter, he travelled all over the world, from Patagonia to St. Petersburg, the Caribbean to Kenya, the Seychelles to Sydney to Papua to Peru. Supposedly they were touring and SCUBA diving, but who knows? They could have been on secret missions for the CIA.

Mac was born in Duluth, Minnesota, on July 6, 1919, the only son of Willard and Jean Macdonald Matter, who were both active in civic affairs and very involved with Pilgrim Congregational Church. Mac was president of the class of 1940 at Carleton College, then went to Harvard for his MBA. When WWII broke out, Mac spent several months with his dad helping to build the Alaska Highway. (Willard was co-owner of Duluth's Standard Salt and Cement Company.) Once the assignment on the highway was complete, Mac memorized the color vision charts and got into the Navy despite his color blindness. He was stationed in Sydney and Manila before returning to the U.S. in 1946.

In 1948, Proctor and Gamble sent Mac to Pittsburgh, PA for sales training. He met Connie Somervell at a picnic held by Pittsburgh's University Club. In 1949 Mac and Connie married, promptly moved away, and spent 20 odd years living all across the country. They finally returned to Pittsburgh in 1972 when Mac took a job as Vice President of Sales for Fisher Scientific.

Mac retired in the mid-1980s, which is when he really got busy. A volunteer assignment with Achieva (which provides services for people with mental retardation) led him to help found the Pittsburgh Sheltered Workshop Association. Later he became President of COMPRO, the operating company for Achieva. He served as Chairman of the Board of the Easter Seals Society of Western Pennsylvania, sat on the Board of Directors of the University Club and was a deacon at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church (now All Saints Anglican Church). He and Connie spent summers golfing at Wildwood Golf Club near their home in Allison Park and winters traveling to many, many warm sunny places with good SCUBA diving. They gave up diving when Mac was 87 years old and instead began month-long trips around Central and South America with itineraries that were exhausting just to contemplate. After Connie passed away in 2011, Mac slowed down a bit, but he still managed to make it to his 75th college reunion in 2015.

Mac will be fondly remembered and sorely missed by his children, Jean-Anne Matter (Allen Humphrey), Jamie Matter (Caryn), Brad Matter (Holly), and grandchildren, Alex Humphrey, Brehon Humphrey (Phoenix Mandel), Elizabeth Matter and Arthur Matter. Also by his cousin, Henry Roberts (Terry) of Duluth, Minnesota.

Funeral service will be held July 6, 2019 at 2:00 p.m. at All Saints Anglican Church, 1510 Haine School Road, Cranberry Township, PA 16066. Arrangements made by the George A. Thoma Funeral Home, Wexford, PA 15090. In lieu of flowers, donations would be appreciated to Achieva, 711 Bingham Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15203 or <https://www.achieva.info/donate>.