

# Faith & Values

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## Never too retired

### In 60th year of ordination, pastor still in demand

BY LARRY CLARK  
RECORD STAFF WRITER

#### CLAREMONT

The Rev. Stanley Stiver retired in 1990. At least, he retired from full-time pastoral responsibilities.

He's still in the pulpit, preaching regularly as a guest speaker. He's been an interim pastor. And, he's still a civic activist.

The congregation at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Claremont, where Stiver was pastor for 31 years, can't forget the man who was counselor, friend, mentor and minister. On June 10, the church will honor Stiver with the title of Pastor Emeritus in celebration of his 60 years in the ministry.



Stiver

The community is invited to the 10:30 a.m. service and reception that follows. Indeed, many in Claremont may come to honor one of the city's most ardent leaders and cheerleaders.

Stiver served for 10 years in he Piedmont Area Development Association. Claremont earned top honors five times.

He was on the board of the Catawba County Chapter of the American Red Cross for 20 years. It's estimated the 65 blood drives he chaired collected more than 13,000 pints of blood.

He's a former president of the Catawba County Chamber of Commerce. He was president of the Eastern Catawba Chamber of Commerce before the Hickory Chamber and the Eastern Catawba Chamber merged.

The pastor is known for his extraordinary collection of crosses. They number in the hundreds. Plain and ornate, large and small, wooden and fancy metal, Stiver has collected crosses from all over the world. Each one is a statement of faith, an icon to the power of God and the love of Jesus Christ.

Stiver has won awards, served in many other public capacities. But his first love is the call he heard early on to do God's work.

"I think I wanted to be a minister since I was 10 or 12 years old," he said when he retired. I love the ministry. I would like to be involved in some church as a visitation pastor ... I want to work with people."

Has he ever. Stiver is especially sought-after during religious observances and holidays. He's still a strong voice for Claremont and Catawba County.

He has been called the ultimate volunteer. His congregation won't argue with that. He's never too retired to serve community, people and God.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Here are snapshots of Stanley Stiver from the past. Above, at St. Mark's during the centennial celebration. Below, trumpeting Claremont's selection as a No. 1 small city.

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