

## **Remembrance of Bishop Cox from Joni Eareckson Tada:**

There's only one place in Scripture where Jesus describes his heart. He says in Matthew 11:29, "... Learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart." That's also an apt description of the heart of Pastor Dan Cox: gentle and lowly. It's how I remember him growing up at Bishop Cummins. My first camp at Four Brooks took me away from home for over a week, and halfway through,

Pastor Cox pulled me aside, "Joni, don't you think your parents would appreciate a letter from you? Take a minute and write them today." His tender heart was evident during my Confirmation Class; He Made certain his students completely understood the significance of a new life in Christ.

Finally, when I was confirmed, his steady hands settled on my head as he pronounced me a member of the body of Christ. And at the communion railing, after administering the elements, we would all agree: Pastor Cox's warm, rich, and robust voice drove his blessing to us deep. Yes, we will miss that steady, unwavering voice. When he said the name of our Savior, it almost resonated.

After the 1967 accident in which I became paralyzed, it was Dan Cox who organized an all-night prayer vigil for me and my family, and even when it was clear I would not be healed, he was an enthusiastic and staunch supporter of Joni and Friends, our global ministry to reach the world's disabled for Christ. Although I've lived in California for over 40 years, Pat and Dan never missed sending me birthday cards, always with heartfelt accolades for our work among the disabled. Even after so many years, I still feel like I'm a part of the Cummins Memorial congregation. He made me feel that way.

How odd it seems to eulogize the man who spent countless hours in innumerable memorial services, eulogizing others. The tables have turned. I miss the fact that Pastor Dan Cox no longer lives at 9 Hilltop Place, Catonsville, Maryland. He now lives in the presence of Jesus in another world, far more alive than he ever was on earth. In fact, he resides in the land of the living, and it is we who are in the land of the dying. It's why First Thessalonians 4:13 says that "we do not grieve like the rest of mankind who have no hope...." Then the Bible adds, "Therefore encourage one another with these words." I pray these words give encouragement to us all as we press on with gentle and lowly hearts, following in his path. My husband Ken joins me in asking God to pour out consolation and comfort on you, Pat, and on Steve and all the family. Onward and upward... Joni Eareckson Tada