

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP SKETCH
OF
MARTHA REYNOLDS SORENSEN
(MRS. J. DOUGLAS SORENSEN)

Submitted by Presbyterian Women
Bayside Presbyterian Church
Virginia Beach, Virginia
1988

Martha Loleta Reynolds Sorensen, daughter of George Prichard Reynolds and Loleta Ingram Reynolds, was born on February 22, 1941, in Decatur, Georgia, and was baptized in the First Presbyterian Church in Decatur. The family moved to Smyrna, Georgia when Martha was four. There, they were part of the Log Cabin Sunday School, a country church with regular Sunday School and a church service once a month. Strong community support and longtime family friendships were part of this early education. In later years, returning to the Log Cabin Sunday School for the annual First Sunday in June Picnic was a special treat.

When Martha was in fourth grade, the family moved to Marietta, Georgia, and there, Martha joined the First Presbyterian Church, where she was active until her graduation from Marietta High School when the family moved again to Smyrna. The nurturing congregation in Marietta encouraged Martha in her involvement with the youth fellowship as president and as a choir member. Thus, it was natural that she would seek out the opportunity for study, worship and fellowship through the Presbyterian college outreach program at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. It was at Westminster House that Martha met her future husband, J. Douglas Sorensen, from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. She graduated with a B.S. degree in Communicative Disorders, majoring in speech therapy. Married in 1962, Doug and Martha lived a short time in Chicago before moving to Sioux Falls where Doug worked as a C.P.A. They joined the First Presbyterian Church of Sioux Falls and Martha first became active in the Womens Association. She taught Sunday School there. They moved to Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1963 and were members of Hope Presbyterian Church in Richfield, Minnesota. Martha worked as a speech therapist with the Bloomington school system. Their daughter Lisa was born in 1966. In 1968, they moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where Doug attended the University of Michigan Law School. They were active in the very small Calvary Presbyterian Church where Martha taught in Sunday School and Bible School and participated in the Womens Association.

In 1971, they moved to Silver Spring, Maryland where John was born. They joined Northwood Presbyterian Church, and for ten years, the entire family was supported in their faith and personal growth by a warm and caring Christian community. In January, 1974, Martha was ordained as an elder and served on the session from 1974-77, as clerk of session. She was a member of the pastoral search committee in 1977-78, taught Sunday School, was director of Bible School, chaired the Mission Committee, edited the church newsletter, and was active in all areas of church life including the Womens Association. A commitment to bringing about needed changes in the school system involved her in many years of intense activity in the community. She also worked as a Parent Involvement Specialist with the Title One program.

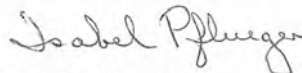
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When Doug made the decision to leave the Treasury Department and join a private law firm, the family was drawn to Hampton Roads by the ambience of the area and their love of the water (as avid sailors). Martha has been active in the Norfolk-Portsmouth Bar Association Auxiliary, the Virginia Lawyers Auxiliary and AAUW. She is the Director of the Norfolk Court Docent Program. Since joining Bayside Presbyterian Church, Martha has taught Sunday School, served as Adult Division leader on Church School Council, has participated as a member of the Strengthening, Nominating, Advent and Lenten committees, and has been an editor of the Advent Book. She served on the Women of the Church Council for two years as Ecumenical Missions Chairman and later as President for two years. During her term as WOC President, 1986-88, the group experienced the transition to Presbyterian Women. It was an exciting, challenging and enriching time.

In her twenty-five years as a member of the Presbyterian Women's group and circle member since her young days as a bride, Martha has been nurtured by the study, prayer, worship, sharing, loving, questioning, encouragement, and sense of community found through the Women of the Church.

This honorary life membership in Presbyterian Women has been awarded in recognition of the many hours and faithful service she has given to the Presbyterian Women of this church. The certificate was dated September 10, 1988. Martha was given this recognition at the 11 A.M. service of worship on January 22, 1989. We have been truly blessed to have Martha as a member of our Presbyterian Women.

Respectfully submitted,



Isabel Pflueger,
Presbyterian Women
Historian