

Thomas Jefferson, another right accomplished Virginian, wrote regarding the topic of religion: "I have long thought religion was a concern purely between our God and our consciences, for which we were accountable to Him, and not the priests or preachers. I rarely told my own religion, nor scrutinized that of another. I rarely attempted to make a convert, nor wished to change another's creed. For it is in the way I live my life, and not from my words, that my religion will most assuredly be read."

Walther Balderson Fidler joined Mildens Presbyterian Church on June 25, 1933. Rev. Harvey McBath was the pastor. This was the beginning of his walk with Christ but he was following in footsteps begun 45 years earlier when his grandfather, James Robert Fidler, became a charter member of Mildens Presbyterian Church in 1888. Later, James William Fidler and Peyton Joseph Fidler, Sr., sons of James Robert, were also leaders here at Mildens. Peyton Joseph Fidler, Sr. was Walther's father. For 122 years, since 1888, there has been a Fidler serving in a leadership capacity, continuously, up to today. Sixty-two of those years have found Walther Fidler in leadership here.

On June 27, 1948, he was ordained as a Deacon and Dr. James Clark was the pastor. The first of two calls Dr. Clark served with Mildens. Then, on November 9, 1958, Walther was ordained as an Elder, serving with Rev. John McCloy, pastor. Prior to becoming Elder, he served as Treasurer for five years before turning the job over to Mrs. Cornelia Fidler Rice who served in that capacity for 39 years.

Additionally, Walther Fidler has served Mildens as Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School Teacher, Clerk of the Session, Church Registrar, Trustee and has been a lifetime member of Mildens's Choir. Since he was ordained in 1958, Walther Fidler has helped welcome over 215 new members to Mildens. His leadership in Presbytery has also been on-going through the years as well.

In the book, Mildens, the First 100 Years, Walther wrote regarding the charter members of Mildens, "We are heavily indebted to them for this church being here today and as their spiritual descendents, we need to recommit our lives to the cause of Christ in this place." If, as Thomas Jefferson wrote, the words of a man's religion are written by the way he lives his life, Mildens has been, and continues to be, both blessed by and indebted to, Walther Balderson Fidler for the life of service he lives for Mildens Church.

Ellen Hart Fidler Pritchett

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