

Pentecostal Founder of Earth Day Passes at 97

John McConnell Jr., the Pentecostal founder of Earth Day, passed away on Oct. 20, in Denver. He was 97 years old.

McConnell's grandfather was at the **Azusa Street Revival** and his parents were founding members of the **Assemblies of God**.

Following the Kennedy assassination, McConnell's Minute for Peace gained worldwide attention. This led to his Earth Day and other initiatives aimed at promoting people and planet. In this book *Peace, Justice, Care for Earth*, he shares the views that garnered support during the environmental movement from 1969 onward, and that have inspired followers for 40 years at annual Earth Day ceremonies at the United Nations and cities across the globe.

San Francisco hosted the first Earth Day on March 21, 1970. Margaret Mead, U.N. Secretary-General U Thant, President Ford and 33 Nobel laureates supported McConnell's Earth Day, and 36 worldwide dignitaries signed McConnell's Earth Day Proclamation, supporting Earth Day on the spring equinox, an annual planetary holiday linking people everywhere without regard to politics, culture, national border or religion.

John McConnell initiated: Star of Hope (1957), Minute for Peace (1963), Earth Flag (1969), Earth Day (1970), Earth Trustees (1971), Earth Society Foundation (1976), Earth Charter (1979), Earth Magna Charta (1995).

You can read about McConnell in the article, "John McConnell, Jr. and the Pentecostal Origins of Earth Day," published in the 2010 edition of *Assemblies of God Heritage* magazine. Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center Director Darrin Rodgers recorded an oral history interview with McConnell and his wife, Anna, on July 15, 2009, at Timberline Church, Fort

Collins, Colo.

McConnell is survived by his wife, Anna McConnell, his son, Cary McConnell, and two daughters, Christa Mason and Corenella Keiper. A memorial service will be held at St. John's Lutheran Church, 700 South Franklin Street, Denver at 10:30 am, Friday, Nov. 2.