



Dr. Robert H. Reardon was born in the Church of God Missionary Home in Chicago, Illinois, on April 27<sup>th</sup>, 1919. His mother was Pearl Horman Reardon and his father, a pastor, was Eugene A. Reardon. The family moved to Anderson, Indiana in 1919, where Eugene Reardon became pastor of Park Place Church of God from 1920-1926 and 1933-1944.

As a child, Reardon attended Anderson Public Schools and worked as a newspaper delivery boy. He went on to attend Anderson College, where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1940. He received his private pilot's license the same year. While at college, he met Geraldine Hurst of Princeton, Indiana. The couple married in August 1941 and had four children, all of whom graduated from Anderson University.

Reardon went on to earn a Masters of Divinity degree from Oberlin Graduate School of Theology and a doctoral degree in ministry from Vanderbilt Divinity School. During his time at Oberlin, he was employed as the university organist. Then, from 1943 to 1947, he pursued his career in ministry, pastoring in Loudonville and Kipton, Ohio, and Chester, Pennsylvania.

In 1947, Reardon became an assistant to President John A. Morrison at Anderson College. He stayed in this position until 1953, when he became Executive Vice President, in addition to teaching practical theology classes in the Department of Religion. From 1955 to 1957, Reardon chaired the President's Study and Planning Commission, which examined the college's administration, academic, and physical plant development. When Morrison retired in 1958, Reardon was elected by the Board of Trustees as Anderson College's second president. At thirty-nine years old, he was one of the nation's youngest college presidents.

During Reardon's presidency, enrollment grew from 1,003 to 2,008, and 7,000 students graduated in total. The full-time faculty grew from 54 to 96. Fourteen new buildings were added to campus, including the School of Theology, Olt Student Center, Hartung Hall, Decker Hall, Krannert Fine Arts Center, and Rice, Smith, and Myers Halls. An experienced traveler, Reardon also started the TRI-S Program, also known as the Student Summer Service.

In 1983, after twenty-five years of service, Reardon retired from the presidency and became a consultant to Christian colleges throughout the country. Already the author of *Early Morning Light*, he continued writing books and articles for *Vital Christianity*, *Youth*, and *Christianity Today*. He was frequently invited to speak at youth conventions, churches, schools, colleges, and civic groups across the nation, and served as interim pastor for many Church of God congregations. In 1988, he pastored for one year at Buru Buru Church of God in Nairobi, Kenya. Reardon was also involved with numerous educational and community organizations.

For his work at Anderson University and throughout the country, Reardon was awarded many honorary degrees and recognitions. He received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree from DePauw University and a Doctor of Laws from Oakland City College. In 1983, he was also awarded an honorary LLD from Anderson University. He received several other awards, including the Distinguished American Educator Award from the Eisenhower Memorial Scholarship Fund, and was named Sagamore of the Wabash by former Indiana Governor Otis Bowen.

Upon his death in 2007, he was one of the nation's most recognized, active, and nationally involved college presidents, and had done much to ensure the growth and survival of Anderson University.

**Anderson University and Church of God Archives**

**Robert H. Reardon Papers**

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