



## Dan Wray Cochran

August 1, 1934 - October 18, 2020

Dan Wray Cochran was born to Wray and Mabel Cochran in Eldon, Missouri on August 1, 1934.

He graduated from Eldon High School in 1952, serving as senior class president; Received the B.A. degree from the University of Missouri in Psychology, Philosophy and Sociology in 1956; Earned the B.D. degree from New Orleans Baptist Seminary in 1959; Awarded the Th.M degree from Southwestern Baptist Seminary in 1963 and the Th.D in Philosophy of Religion in 1966; Attended post-graduate studies at the University of Texas, the University of Virginia and Oxford University.

Dan married Roberta (Bobbie) Perkins in 1953. Daughter Dana Jo was born in 1954; daughter Kimberly Dee was born in 1959. Dana then married Gary Lynch in 1974, to whom was born Adam Lynch and Andrew Lynch. Kim married Michael Stewart, to whom was born Joshua Stewart, Tyler Wray Stewart and Lyndsay Maze. To the family tree was added great-grandchildren Josie Maze, Wyatt Maze, Elizabeth (Lizzy) Lynch and Eleanor (Ella) Lynch.

He pastored Baptist churches in Texas and Missouri for nine years while pursuing advanced degrees. In 1966, Dr. Cochran began a thirty-nine-year service at Southwest Baptist University in Bolivar, Missouri as the first chairman of the Philosophy department, teaching twenty-one different courses

(including Jan-terms). Responding to student needs, frequently he offered special elective courses on philosophy of religion, existentialism, religious fads, and C. S. Lewis.

In the educational field he was elected for a term as president of the Southwestern Association of Baptist Teachers of Religion. Twice he was selected by SBU students as the Distinguished Teacher of the Year. He also received the Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching.

As a teenager he enjoyed playing semi-pro baseball, pitching two high school conference championships, and being voted by state sportswriters as a member of the All-State High School Basketball Team in Missouri (1952). The academic and athletic awards were a reminder that he had overcome an early childhood illness of "sleeping sickness."

After retirement in 2005 he continued to watch SBU athletics and play golf until a heart condition slowed him down. He always savored special times with family and friends.

Faith was the absolute basis for his life and college teaching. In fact, he accepted faith as the starting point for all knowledge. All science, religion, and the arts begin in an experience of faith. The understanding comes later by asking questions. We learn that better answers result primarily from better questions. This process is known by the classical phrase, "faith seeking understanding."

Memorial Contributions may be made to the Redford College of Theology and Ministry at Southwest Baptist University.

Due to the current pandemic the family will be having a private family graveside service at the Greenwood Cemetery in Bolivar, MO.

# Tribute Wall



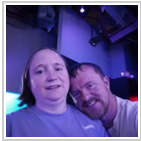
“ *Dan Wray Cochran*

October 05, 2023 at 05:18 AM



“ *Dan Wray Cochran*

January 26, 2023 at 04:15 PM



“ *Dr. Cochran will be missed. I had him for intro to Philosophy at SBU*

**AI Rice** - October 28, 2020 at 11:17 PM



“ *Dr. Cochran's profound influence in my life cannot be overstated. The classes I took under him impacted the way I think, learn, and live to this day. His desire to help his students think deeply and keep our lives centered on the Lord challenged us all to become more thoughtful and generous people. His life shone for Christ in every way and I am better for knowing him. My deepest sympathy and fervent prayers to his precious family.*

*Teri Lynne (Buster) Underwood*

**Teri Underwood** - October 25, 2020 at 09:01 PM

DK

“ I am so sorry to hear of Dan's passing. My sincere condolences to Bobbie, as well to Kim and Dana and their families. Dan was so kind, thoughtful and caring. He touched so many lives in a positive way. One of my favorite memories was when my daughter, Mary Nell Koon was a young girl. She and Emily Hacker lived across the street from one another and just a few houses from Dan and Bobbie. Dan always left his shoes outside next to the door before he went into the house. Mary Nell and Emily would put rocks in Dan's shoes and then ring the doorbell. They would hide and watch him find the rocks. He always acted surprised, just to delight the girls. Dan told me that was one of his favorite things to do. What a wonderful, kind and loving person. RIP Dan Cochran.



Dolly Koon - October 23, 2020 at 01:35 PM

JL

“ I graduated from SBU in 2002 he was my advisor, philosophy teacher and a great supporter of our tennis team. Last time I saw him was about 8 years ago when I brought my family to campus. He gave us a tour of all the new athletic facilities. Can't believe he still remembered me after those years. Great great man.

Justin Livingston - October 22, 2020 at 08:23 PM



“ Dr. Cochran was one of my favorite professors of all time. I enjoyed all of his classes, and I loved his C.S. Lewis class over Jan term. He always challenged and encouraged me. He was a great man who lived a selfless life. I was inspired by his compassion and his willingness to call out the best in his students. I hope I can be more like him. I feel so honored to have known him and sat under his teaching.

Rayden Hollis - October 22, 2020 at 02:29 PM

CG

“ Sadden to learn of the death of Dr. Cochran. He was a favorite professor of mine and thousands of other SBU alumni. He taught me how to ask better questions, and to tolerate not knowing while always seeking better understanding. I took 12 hours of philosophy courses under him, and loved every second. I became an existential psychologist partially inspired by what I learned from him. My wife sometimes gets aggravated with me for constantly asking, "Why?" You can blame Dr. Dan for that. Prayers and condolences to Bobby and the family.

*Christopher Grimes, SBU class of 2000*

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**Christopher Grimes** - October 22, 2020 at 02:07 PM

DC

“ Dr. Jim Layman and Crocker Baptist Church purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Dan Wray Cochran.



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**Dr. Jim Layman and Crocker Baptist Church** - October 22, 2020 at 10:17 AM

JL

“ I was a teen when Dr. Cochran pastored Crocker Baptist Church in the early 60s. He became a role model for me and strongly influenced by calling and choice of ministry as a vocation. I have retired after serving ten years as a pastor; twenty-nine years as a hospital chaplain and twenty-two years as an Army chaplain serving National Guard and Reserve units.

*I will always be grateful for his profound influence and send my condolences and prayers for Roberta, Dana, Kim and families.*

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**Jim Layman** - October 22, 2020 at 10:09 AM

TM

“ I was a philosophy minor at SBU, which means I took every class Dr. Cochran taught while I was there! I think about him often. Just yesterday, in fact. His delivery. The challenge of his words. His lecture about asking the right question. His story about how he hated philosophy which is why he made it his doctorate: to make his weakness his strength. His smile! His faith, and how it survived the challenges of secular philosophy. And of course the epic C.S. Lewis Jan-term class. I'm sure I'm not alone when I say he was one of the most influential people in their college experience, if not their entire lives. Rather than miss him, I know I will see him again!

Prayers for his family, who loaned Dr. Cochran's time out to students like me.

-TM

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**Tim MalcomVetter** - October 22, 2020 at 10:08 AM

MC

“ Beyond grateful for Dr. Cochran's investment in my life during my days at SBU. He was so much more than an amazing teacher. His kind and gracious spirit were an incredible example to those of us who were privileged to know him. His legacy of faith and humility will never be forgotten.

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**Michael Cooper** - October 22, 2020 at 09:52 AM

SA

“ I remember him . He was a great teacher and very understanding. Sending prayers to his family.

*Sandra Dubro Ballingall*  
*SBU Class 1985*

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**Sandra** - October 22, 2020 at 08:31 AM

MG

“ My sympathies to Bobbie and the Stewart and Lynch families. He was such an admiral man - a man of faith, a consensus citizen, and a loving father and grandfather. He lived the life that many of us aspire to live.

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**Mary Gregory** - October 21, 2020 at 05:56 PM

SS

“ The Cochrans were the first SBU faculty to invite me into their home for a meal. They invited the whole cast of the first SBU Theatre production of which I was a part. Throughout my college career I continued to receive Dr. Dan's affirmation, usually through kind words spoken, when I would participate in campus activities. I've always appreciated his being one of my balcony people.

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**Sherry L Shoemaker** - October 21, 2020 at 11:48 AM

EM

“ Praying for the family. I had the privilege of having him as a teacher when I attended SWBC, and interacting with him and Bobbie once I became faculty at SBU. He was a great man of faith and will be deeply missed.

*Evelyn Mercer*

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**Evelyn Mercer** - October 21, 2020 at 11:39 AM

LG

“ I am so sorry for your loss, which is Heaven's gain. What a wonderful man Dr. Cochran was. He was so kind, thoughtful and caring and touched so many lives. He never failed to ask me about Valary when we met - usually at the grocery store! Please accept my deepest condolences. Praying for the family.

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**Leta Gass** - October 20, 2020 at 09:32 PM

DG

“Of all the SBU faculty I knew, no one touched my life more than Dr. Dan. His gentle words, his generous gifts of time and apple fritters, his love for C.S. Lewis -- so many interactions with him that I will always cherish. So grateful that God brought him into my life. He was my hero. Sending prayers to his family. Thanks for sharing him with me.

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**Debbie Gamble** - October 20, 2020 at 01:16 PM

JO

“When I was a young undergraduate student, Dan purchased a book for me ("If Aristotle Ran General Motors"), given my interest in philosophy. Though we never had a class today, we had wonderful conversations in his office. Love from our household.



*Jonathan Cisco*

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**Jonathan** - October 20, 2020 at 12:14 PM

NL

“Words can not convey the sorrow it brings me to hear of Dan's passing. My sincere condolences to Bobby, and the Lynch family on such a great loss to them. Dan was always kind, grateful and always personable. I will miss his sweet smile and gracious attitude.

*Nan Lien (Ramsey)*

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**Nan M Lien** - October 20, 2020 at 09:43 AM

SB

“ *Many prayers for the family. I am very thankful for getting to spend time studying philosophy in his class at SBU plus time at First Baptist Church.*

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**Sandy Branstetter** - October 19, 2020 at 11:51 PM

JW

*So sorry to read of Dr. Dan's passing. He was a wonderful man, so kind and gentle ❤️ Always enjoyed visiting with him whenever we saw him. Thoughts and prayers go out to Bobbie and the family 🙏🌸❤️*

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**Judy and Larry Wollard** - October 21, 2020 at 12:04 PM