



## Don Baker

November 7, 1930 - May 22, 2018

In God's perfect plan, James Donald Baker, was born into this world on November 7, 1930. Don was born in the family home in Brown Branch, Missouri, the son of John Calvin and Riffie Ashwell Baker. The word faith describes his life, moving calmly yet purposefully through the years, a man who sought God with all his heart. Don's final step on his journey of faith came when his soul was carried away May 22, 2018 to continue his eternal relationship with His loving Heavenly Father. And now, his faith has become sight.

Don was a scholar. He was inquisitive and innovative, and he loved a good challenge. Growing up on the farm was an education in itself, but Don also maintained a strong commitment to formal education. He graduated from Hollister High School, Southwest Baptist College, William Jewell College, Central Seminary in Kansas City, and later obtained his doctoral degree in theology from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Don was a family man. He met the love of his life, Pat Hoffmeister, while they were students at Southwest Baptist College. They were married in Jackson, Missouri on June 22, 1952. Don and Pat consistently showed Christ-like love to their three girls, Pamela, Dana, and Beth. Don baptized each of his daughters, 6 grandchildren and one son-in-law after they decided to commit their lives to Christ. Years later, he performed the marriage ceremonies of his

3 daughters and his three married grandchildren. He consistently planned meaningful and fun activities that created wonderful memories for his family, including his six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Don was a minister. He was a pastor in Southern Baptist churches in Marshall Junction, MO; Drexel, MO; Corning, AR; and Clifton, LA. Additionally, he dedicated himself to help start a new church in Jefferson City in the 1970's, Concord Baptist. After leaving the full-time pastorate, Don preached at countless churches throughout Missouri and then taught the Sellabration Sunday School Class at First Baptist, Bolivar. In addition to his work in churches, Don shared his God-given talents when he was the Director of Public Relations at SWBC (1957-1966) and Director of Public Relations at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (1967-1971). Dr. Baker, as his students called him, taught in the theology department at SBU from 1976-1996. He especially enjoyed his role as Director of In-Service Training, helping college students in some of their first experiences as church leaders.

Don was a tender man, with beautiful blue eyes, a richly-toned voice, and hands that were strong yet tender. His family loved hearing the stories he would frequently tell during canoe trips, driving to grandkids' sports events, fishing along a river bank, or camping on a sand bar. Don always wanted to have a project to work on. When he ran into unforeseen complications in a project, he would say, It's not a problem. It's a challenge. His expert craftsmanship is seen in the many pieces of furniture he has built for family members. Traveling was a favorite activity, including mission trips to foreign countries such India, Bolivia, and Malawi. Another activity that Pat claims Don enjoyed was transplanting bushes and flowers for her each year all over their yard. He and Pat were often side-by-side, with Don editing Pat's writing projects, sitting together in church and singing well-loved hymns, taking walks in their neighborhood or at the SBU Wellness Center, and having their daily prayer and Bible reading each morning after breakfast.

Pat is positive that Don's happiest mornings during his retirement years were the ones when he could go flying. He believed that his desire to fly, which began when he was a boy, was something that God led him to fulfill after a forty-year wait. On several occasions, Don said that flying was a gift from God to him.

Now Don's family will continue his legacy. By the grace of God, they will move forward in a way that honors Don and glorifies Christ. Family members include his devoted wife, Pat; daughters Pamela Bultmann and her husband, Nelson; Dana Harrigan and her husband, Pat; Beth Grabowski and her husband, Mark. The grandkids who will forever treasure the love and influence of their Pepaw are Julia Hornung (and husband, Nate), Brian Harrigan, Jim Grabowski (and wife, Taylor), Michael Bultmann, Kelsey Harrigan, and Amy Varner (and husband, Robert). The great-grandchildren who will continue to benefit from the influence of Pepaw are Truman, Cecelia, Porter, and Wallace Hornung; and Sarah Varner.

Instead of flowers, friends may honor Don Baker by contributing to S.O.A.R. (Service Oriented Aviation Readiness) at the Bolivar Municipal Airport or the Baker-Hoffmeister Preaching Scholarship at SBU.

Services: Friday, May 25, 2018, First Baptist Church, Bolivar, 10:00 visitation, and 11:00 Celebration of Life.

# Previous Events

## Celebration Of Life

MAY 25. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church  
316 N. Main  
Bolivar, MO 65613

## Visitation

MAY 25. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church  
316 N. Main  
Bolivar, MO 65613

# Tribute Wall



“ *Don Baker*

October 05, 2023 at 05:18 AM



“ *Don Baker*

January 26, 2023 at 04:15 PM



“ *Pat I was so very sorry to hear of Dr. Baker's passing. You probably don't remember me, but I remember you both very well, and especially Dr. Baker, who made a lasting impact on my life and career. He hired me as an 18 year old right out of high school to join him in July, 1976 as he became the In Service Training Director at SWBC. This was my first job and he was my very first boss, and I will never forget him and his kindness to me as I learned how to become a secretary, while planning a wedding back in Arkansas. He was just the most wonderful man to work for, and I loved every day being there during the 4 years Bruce was at college there. My tribute would be that he was one of the nicest, kindest, most sincere Christian men I've ever known. Sending prayers for you. Love in Christ, Leta and Bruce Wilbanks*

**Leta Wilbanks** - June 18, 2018 at 03:50 PM

CE

“ As a student in the early 1960s at SBU, I was privileged to participate in revival teams under the supervision of Dr. Don Baker. His gentle and earnest leadership was a gift to us, as young students. We were learning how to do ministry for Christ purposefully and joyfully. Other memories of Dr. Baker and Pat Baker, who taught my Sunday School class, are especially helpful. I am thankful. The Lord is good. Charlotte West Earp

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**Charlotte West Earp** - May 26, 2018 at 08:54 AM

GH

“ In the late '50's, I worked in the public relations office with Dr. Baker and that was the best time of all my days at the college. Such a wonderful man! I have many wonderful memories. Gayle M. Hadley (Gannaway)

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**Gayle M. Hadley** - May 25, 2018 at 12:13 PM

KD

“ Pam,

*Dennis and I are very sorry to hear about the loss of your father. We did not know your father, but the wonderful tribute to him spoke volumes about how he lived his life. You and your family are in our prayers.*

*Kris and Dennis Donovan  
Fort Collins, CO*

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**Kristine Donovan** - May 25, 2018 at 08:27 AM

SM

“ To have known Don Baker for these many years was to know the essence of kindness and so much more. A soft-spoken man of God, Don connected with our hearts as well as our minds. Dearest Pat, thank you for sharing your wonderful husband with us. And I would add, Dearest Don, thank you for sharing Pat, a true lady who has impacted my life and the lives of so many others. I have to smile when I think of the great times my parents enjoyed with Don and Pat Baker during the Jefferson City years! To the Baker family, may God bring you peace and comfort. And may you always hold dear those special times, like the cherished memory of an evening gone.  
Steve and Jean Morrow

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Steve Morrow - May 25, 2018 at 02:26 AM

FP

“ Pat and family,  
I find myself caught between two extremes. Part of me wants to rejoice and the other part of me wants to deal with sorrow and grief. I, like everyone else, was shocked and sorrowful at the news of Don's passing. Then I thought... It was the best day of Don's life! He was rejoicing and praising God and hearing "Well done good and faithful servant." My heart goes out to you Pat and the family members who now must deal with the pain and hurt of missing Don day by day. Know that you are being lifted up to the Father by hundreds of friends. I wish I could be present for the Celebration of Don's life. But know I will be celebrating his destination and praying for each of you.

Freddie

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Freddie Pike - May 24, 2018 at 11:20 PM

ND

“ Our family is so blessed to have known Brother Don and Sister Pat while serving as interim at our church, Mission Chapel. Brother Don was such an inspiration and supporter to our youth and their projects, always asking "what can I do" , taking every chance to share God's love with them. Well done thy good and faithful servant. You will be missed.

Nancy Dedmon - May 24, 2018 at 09:28 PM

JA

“ I was so very sorry to hear of Don's passing. I will always treasure many fond memories of working with him through Southwest Baptist University. I especially enjoyed seeing him while he was serving in Colorado. Please know that your family are in my thoughts and prayers.

Jerald L. Andrews

Jerald Andrews - May 24, 2018 at 05:36 PM

PB

Thank you so much, Gerald

pat baker - May 30, 2018 at 04:52 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Don Baker.



May 24, 2018 at 03:40 PM

FH

“ I will always remember the first Welcome Week we hosted for SBU freshmen in 2007. Don and Pat joined us for a perfectly "lovely" poolside BarBQ in the pouring rain! ☁️  
Despite the miserable conditions, Don & Pat "made the rounds" welcoming all the students and giving a genuine Christian warmth to the dreary day.

Franka Hopwood - May 24, 2018 at 01:42 PM

PB

Thank you , dear neighbor

pat baker - May 30, 2018 at 04:53 PM



“ Sunny Memories was purchased for the family of Don Baker.



May 24, 2018 at 12:33 PM



“ Written in the Stars was purchased for the family of Don Baker.



May 24, 2018 at 11:20 AM

PR

“ Paul Powell, Melissa Eason, Tami Baumer & Joe Rider purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Don Baker.



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**Paul Powell, Melissa Eason, Tami Baumer & Joe Rider** - May 24, 2018 at 11:20 AM

SD

“ I remember him as a great man and teacher. Prayers to his family.

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**Sandra Dubro** - May 24, 2018 at 11:14 AM

SS

“ Believer, scholar, pastor, father, husband, teacher, mentor, craftsman, gentleman, statesman, mild, meek, strong, courageous, consistent, friend ... Christlike!

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**Stan Sullinger** - May 23, 2018 at 10:28 PM

PB

Powerful words to describe this precious man. thanks Stan/Kima. your visit is part of my healing.

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**pat baker** - May 30, 2018 at 04:55 PM



“ Secret Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Don Baker.



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May 23, 2018 at 08:09 PM

CK

“ I had the privilege of knowing Don for 35 years. He was a wonderful, Godly man with a sweet, loving spirit. If you could think of the kindest, nicest person you know, multiply that by 100 and you would still not come close to Don. He meant a lot to many people. I am especially grateful to have been blessed to know him. RIP with Our Savior, Don.

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**Cathy Kline** - May 23, 2018 at 07:27 PM

PB

Such a beautiful expression with words. Was touched with the last sentence.

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**pat baker** - May 30, 2018 at 04:56 PM

TE

“ Don Baker will be remembered as a very much appreciated man of all who met him...for Don loved his family....his beautiful wife,his life,especially holding on to his strong faith to GOD...Don ,you will be truly be missed but we know through our tears & sadnesss one day we will meet in Heaven...may comfort be for your family at this time ...Robert lee~ Teresa Evans

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**Teresa evans** - May 23, 2018 at 07:55 AM

LN

*Don and Pat Baker's life and marriage is a testimonial to the Living, Risen Lord they both love and worship.*

*In the words of Shakespeare, "all the world is a stage" and (paraphrasing) throughout our lives we play many roles. People come and go—and are on stage with us briefly or for long periods time. Don played leading roles as husband, father, grand and great grandfather, friend, counselor, minister; but for his role as a Child of God, he is given the Golden award that our Great God bestows on those who are His.*

*Don and Pat have shared the stage with many, many, many people—including us. Their presence, their goodness, and their witness are foundational in our lives. Don-----always the Godly, solid, thoughtful, quiet, observant, considerate man. His words----always a mirror of the Lord and an inspiration. We were blessed to call Don and Pat friends and to have shared numerous meals and enjoyed Christ-filled conversations with the Baker family. Don was trusted and we, like many, could depend on him with advice (if asked) and actions. Typical of Don, we had car trouble late one evening in Springfield. Our car could not be driven back to Bolivar and was towed to the "car hospital." Whom did we call? Don. Within 45 minutes, he was there and took us home.*

*And now, Christ has escorted Don to his heavenly home. While we are in shock, pain, and sorrow, Don is in glory. He is truly blessed as he is in the presence of the Risen Savior. Life is good!*

*Lynn & Sally Nance*

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**Lynn & Sally Nance** - May 23, 2018 at 03:53 PM

PB

*Praise God for people/friends like you. Your words healed a little portion of my heart.*

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**pat baker** - May 30, 2018 at 04:58 PM