



## Susan Baker

July 27, 1933 - March 19, 2019

(Ila) Susan (John) Baker of Bolivar, daughter of Gerald A. and Nelle W. (Jones) John, was born at home in Ashland, Missouri on July 27, 1933. She passed away at age 85 from complications of Alzheimer's Disease on March 19, 2019 at home in Bolivar with her daughter Beth, son-in-law David, and sister-in-law Clara (Baker) Stovall at her side. Visitation will be on Saturday, March 23 from 6:00-7:30 p.m. at First Baptist Church, Bolivar. Funeral service will be on Sunday, March 24 at 1:00 p.m., also at FBC, Bolivar led by Dr. Billy Russell, senior pastor. Inurnment will occur at Greenwood Cemetery at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, March 25. Butler Funeral Home is assisting the family with arrangements and services.

Sue was preceded in death by both parents; her brother, Austin D. John; a great nephew, Aaron John; two sisters-in-law—Delores (Andersen) John Kloss; and Evelyn (Burnett) John; one brother-in-law, Robert N. ("Bob") Meyer, Sr.; and Sue's beloved husband, George I. Baker.

She is survived by her daughter, Beth (Susan Elizabeth) and son-in-law David L. Dixon of Bolivar; grandchildren Laura Dixon (mother of great-grandchildren Phillip, Anna, Lillian and Noah Bly) of Bolivar, Jacob Dixon and his fiancée Emma Tabler of Bolivar, and Ethan and Lacey (Ruble) Dixon of Marshfield; her brother, Justin A. John and wife Dorothy of Ashland, MO; sisters-in-law—Mary Ellen John, Columbia; Ruth (Baker) Meyer, Troy; and Clara (Baker) Stovall and her husband David E. Stovall, Abilene, TX; several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, great-nephews, and many wonderful friends.

Susan was taught piano by her mother at an early age, was saved at the age of 8 and began accompanying hymns at her local church in Ashland at the age of 12. Sue believed that the Lord called her into church music ministry during that time of her life. Sue attended Ashland High School, played center on the girls' basketball team and graduated as Valedictorian of her class. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education with honors from the University of Missouri-Columbia, where she met her husband George. They met while participating in the campus Baptist Student Union, and they eventually worked together leading revivals and traveling with BSU groups on mission trips. Sue was also a short-term missionary for one summer in Dalles, Oregon. During college, Sue was chosen to be inducted into the Music Honor Sorority, Sigma Alpha Iota, and continued to play piano and began playing organ at several Baptist churches while in Columbia and participated in revival teams.

Susan and George were married on December 19, 1953 at Calvary Baptist Church in Columbia, MO. Shortly after, they moved to New Orleans, LA to attend New Orleans Baptist Seminary. Sue graduated with a Masters in Organ Performance and George with a Masters in Church Music in 1955.

After graduation, Sue and George began a lifetime of serving the Lord in music ministry, beginning full-time at West End Baptist in Atlanta, Georgia from 1955-1963 (Beth was born in 1959); at First Baptist in El Dorado, Arkansas from 1963-1966, and at Tallowood Baptist in Houston, Texas from 1966-1974. At every church they served, they worked together as a team. George prayerfully planned and led the worship services, adult and youth choirs, orchestras, small ensembles and choir mission trips. Susan accompanied the Adult Choir, was church organist, and coordinated, created curriculum for, recruited and trained choir workers, and directed children's choirs (in every church they served).

While in Houston, Sue was asked by what was then known as the (Southern) Baptist Sunday School Board (BSSB, now Lifeway) to write a book about teaching music to preschoolers called "Teaching Preschool Music for 4s and

5s” and subsequently, wrote another book about the importance of incorporating music and rhythms in early childhood education at home, church and school entitled, “Everyday Rhythms for Children.” She also co-authored a second book for preschool music leadership. Susan composed over 25 songs for church preschool children’s choirs and wrote multiple articles and curriculum in the monthly choir materials printed by the BSSB for several years. Between 1966 and 1976, George and Sue were asked to teach and participate in seminars and clinics at two of the Baptist Convention Centers—Glorietta, New Mexico, and Ridgecrest, North Carolina. They took multiple choirs on tour to perform and work alongside other churches in evangelism—what are now called “mission trips”—every summer from 1963 through 1984. In 1974, George and Sue were invited by Duncan Couch, Music Dept Chair, to join the faculty at what was then Southwest Baptist College, to assist in establishing a Church Music degree. George was also called to be a member of the ministry staff of First Baptist, Bolivar as Minister of Music, and soon after, Susan was hired as organist and graded choir coordinator. George and Susan worked together on the SBU faculty from 1974 to 1981, establishing the church music degree and George also directed the Concert Choir and taught voice. In 1981, George decided to resign from one of his two full-time jobs and continue in worship ministry at FBC, Bolivar. Susan continued teaching classes in Church Music, Music Theory and Sight-Singing, Elementary Music Ed., and of course, organ until she retired in 1997. She was also an active member of the American Guild of Organists and had taken additional post-graduate courses in organ performance at Univ. of Missouri-Kansas City conservatory of music in the summers of 1980 & 1981. George and Sue resigned from FBC Bolivar in 1998 and continued to serve in worship ministry at Glenstone Baptist in Springfield, MO from 1998-2006, and at Brighton Baptist from 2006-2014 when both George and Susan’s health began to decline. They retired in 2014 from the work they delighted in doing together in the Lord’s service for over 60 years.

The number of students and worship participants influenced by the witness and ministry of George and Susan Baker will only be known in heaven. Their goal was to glorify God, lead others to worship in Spirit and truth, and encourage and equip believers to utilize all the talents and gifts God had given them to worship, serve and share the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial gifts be designated to the Baker-Keathley Music Scholarship fund at SBU, Bolivar or CMH Hospice here in Bolivar, whom the family thanks for their excellent, compassionate care of both George and Susan in their last few months here. To God be the glory, great things He has done!

A Visitation for Susan Baker will be held Saturday, March 23, 2019 from 6-7:30 PM at the First Baptist Church in Bolivar, MO. A funeral service will be held Sunday, March 24, 2019 at 1 PM at the First Baptist Church in Bolivar, MO. Services are under the care and direction of the Butler Funeral Home of Bolivar, MO.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR **23**. 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church  
316 N. Main  
Bolivar, MO 65613

## Funeral Service

MAR **24**. 1:00 PM (CT)

First Baptist Church  
316 N. Main  
Bolivar, MO 65613

# Tribute Wall



“ *Susan Baker*

October 05, 2023 at 05:18 AM



“ *Susan Baker*

January 26, 2023 at 04:15 PM



“ *George and Susan Baker were a team. In life, at church and on campus. I cannot imagine one without the other and I am sure they felt the same way. What a joy to have worshipped under them. Served alongside them. And known them as friends. Thank you George and Susan for impacting so many so well. Well done good and faithful servants.*

Stan and Kima - May 03, 2019 at 08:14 PM



“ *I was living in Chattanooga, TN and had just begun teaching preschool choir. The MM gave me a book - Teaching Preschool Music for 4s and 5s - and it was my lifesaver. Once I moved to MO and began working at the BSU I learned this book had been written by a BSU alum. I'm so sorry I was never able to meet Mrs. Baker and tell her how much I appreciated her sharing her knowledge and love for music.*

Rene Carver, Operations Mgr, MU BSU - April 08, 2019 at 02:40 PM

MM

“ We were so very sorry to hear of your loss. The ministry of Sue and George at the BSU is still shared and will forever be a part of the BSU.

*Mizzou BSU Collegiate Ministries*

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**Mizzou BSU Collegiate Ministries** - April 08, 2019 at 02:35 PM

EB

“ I was one of her many students at SBU back in the '80s. Mrs. Baker imparted to us knowledge that many of us have used to earn a living or in the ministry of the churches which we belong. We will be forever grateful of her service to us. She will always be remembered as an accomplished and enthusiastic organist who was extremely supportive of her husband's music ministry. God blessed us with her presence in our lives.

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**Eric Bennett** - March 30, 2019 at 07:51 PM

CC

“ We have always been grateful to Susan for all that she did for our son, Trey Clegg, and for the powerful influence she has been on his life. We enjoyed our times of fellowship when we would be in Bolivar. May God bless and comfort you and your family, Beth.

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**Cecil and Ann Clegg** - March 25, 2019 at 03:39 PM

DW

“ Susan was a talented woman who had an impact on thousands of lives, including me and my family. My condolences to the family.

*Sandra York Woods*

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**Donna Woods** - March 24, 2019 at 07:48 PM

RD

“ Susan was such a beautiful lady. Always had a smile and hugs for anyone. She will be greatly missed.



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**Rosie Dehues** - March 23, 2019 at 01:14 PM

KK

“ An amazing couple, both Sue & George, and I'm sure that by edifying one another in marriage each helped the other become even greater in faith, love, knowledge, and service.

*My wife loved helping her out as a work-study student. Susan was both earnest and fun-loving; she was very knowledgeable and talented. Perhaps the thing that surprised us most was how she rejoiced at our engagement announcement and helped throw a bridal shower for Mrs. Kinsey ... that's way above & beyond the call, right there.*

*So we mourn the passing of a great lady, but, in faith, she will be on to better things, worshiping without sorrow and I'll bet the pipe organs of heaven are gonna feel her touch at some point!*

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**Kevin Kinsey** - March 22, 2019 at 10:40 PM

HG

“ Beth and family you are in our thoughts and prays.



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**Harlie and Nancy Gallatin** - March 22, 2019 at 10:30 PM

RB

“ So sorry to hear this. Jane & I loved Susan & George!

*She (unknowingly) provided background organ music on February 14, 1982 when I proposed to Jane Burton in the baptistry of FBC, Bolivar before Sunday School. She was practicing music for the worship service.*

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**Ross Burton** - March 22, 2019 at 12:01 PM

KR

“ Dear Beth and family, Please accept our sincere sympathy for the loss of your dear one. Your mother was such a wonderful, friendly, talented lady. She and Bro. George always exuded the love of God, not only for each other, but also for everyone. In my mind's eye I still can see their beaming smiles and hear their laughter. Our prayers are with all of you. In Christ's love, Kathy and Leon Reschke

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**Kathy sand Leon Reschke** - March 22, 2019 at 03:09 AM

DR

“ Susan Baker was my organ professor 1990-1993. Both her and George made a profound impact on my life. Not only as a church musician, but as a the person that Christ calls us all to be. They both lived their lives as compassionate and Godly examples to us all. She will be missed.

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**Duane Roth** - March 20, 2019 at 11:47 PM

JS

“ Susan spent her life ministering to the Lord, especially through piano and organ. God has been gracious to give her the gift of worship through music to the end. I could see how music blessed her Sunday after Sunday, for I couldn't help but glance her way often during hymns and choir specials. Her sweet smile also stayed with her, and she bestowed it upon many whose names she had forgotten. Early in our marriage, Tom and I bonded with George and Susan when they convinced us to go as sponsors to Illinois on a trip with the Sonshine Company. Later they were instrumental in keeping our daughters actively involved in church and growing as believers through their faithful service to youth. What an excellent team George and Susan Baker made here in Bolivar, and now as part of heaven's choir.

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**Jean Stark** - March 20, 2019 at 07:50 PM