



James M. Baker

APR 29, 1926 - MAR 24, 2021



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Funeral Home & Cemetery

Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Events	Page 5
Tribute Wall	Page 6



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When James M. Baker (known simply as “Baker” by those who knew him best) was a young clerk in the US Post Office, he would find among the bushel-loads of mail he would have to sort, picture postcards from all over the country and, indeed, the world. Coming from a small, rustic farm in Weakley County, Tennessee, Baker would look wistfully at each one, pledging that he would himself go to these far-off places. And he did. An accomplished photographer, he, with his beloved wife, Sue, and their children, traveled to every state in the union – including virtually all of the national parks – and four continents.

Born in 1926 in Sharon, Tennessee, to Roy M. Baker and Zella Mae Baker Casey, Baker never imagined the life God had in store for him – serving his country in the US Navy in the World War II Pacific Theatre – and moving to Memphis in 1947 with his new bride with whom he would share life for nearly 74 years. In Memphis, they began a whole new life.

Baker found a 33-year career at the Post Office rising from entry-level clerk to Assistant Manager of the Germantown and Frazier offices. In addition to his travels, this inspired hobbies in coin and stamp collecting.

Those were minor past times compared to his being a master woodworker, designing and building everything from wooden pens to large, ornate pieces of cabinetry. Baker’s farm past also followed him with his love affair with the life-giving qualities of the earth – be it roses or vegetables – from asparagus to zucchini.

As a teenager, Baker felt the Hand of God on his shoulder, leading him to life-long service to God and God’s church. For 68 years, until its closing in 2019, Baker was a true servant leader at Highland Heights United Methodist Church. Whether as a youth leader, a baritone in the choir, feeding the neighborhood’s hungry, cleaning up communities after natural disasters, or especially, just keeping the Church together through grit and grind, Baker personified, into his 90’s, God’s command to love and to serve. The congregation officially recognized Baker as its



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“Unsung Hero” for the work he had done quietly and humbly over the years.

Outside the Church, Baker sought out ways to make Memphis an even better place to live – by volunteering, over decades, at the Orpheum, Theatre Memphis and the Cannon Center for Performing Arts.

In addition to his wife, Sue, Baker leaves his daughter and son-in-law, Darlene and Rob Williamson, his son and daughter-in-law, Rick and Jackie Baker, grandchildren Richard Williamson and his wife Allison, Susan Epperson and her husband, Mark, Jeanette Covell and her husband Daniel, and James Robert Baker as well as 5 great grandchildren – Ethan, Emory, Eliza, Baker and Henry. He also leaves his brother, Bobby Baker, and nephew Brian Baker.

The visitation will be held from 1:30 p.m., Sunday, March 28, 2021 until the service time at 2:00 p.m., in the Rotunda at Memorial Park Funeral Home and Cemetery Mausoleum.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Baker’s name are welcome to be sent to the Mid-South Food Bank

<https://www.midsouthfoodbank.org/ways-to-give-donate>

or Heifer International

<https://www.heifer.org/usa/show-your-support.html>

To view his memorial tribute video click the link below.

<https://www.tributeslides.com/tributes/show/7B6G3KN9YSXXMP8C>



Events


James M. Baker

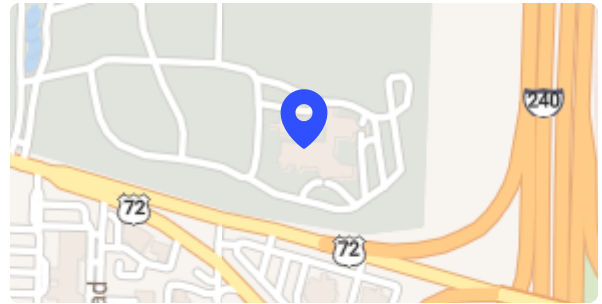
APR 29, 1926 - MAR 24, 2021

Visitation

 **Sunday**, March 28, 2021


 1:30 PM - 2:00 PM CT


 **Memorial Park Mausoleum**
5668 Poplar Avenue, Memphis TN 38119

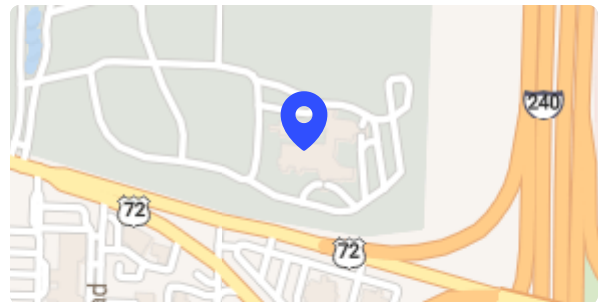


Funeral Service

 **Sunday**, March 28, 2021

 2:00 PM CT

 **Memorial Park Mausoleum**
5668 Poplar Ave., Memphis TN 38119





Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Baker family.

March 27 at 5:58 AM



From The Hawkins Family sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Baker family.

March 27 at 4:51 AM



Anna A. sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Baker family.

March 26 at 11:15 AM



Kathy Mckinnon Wilson posted:

So very sorry to hear of your Dad's passing, Rick. Will be praying for you and your family as you adjust to him being "absent in the body but present with the LORD". You have truly been blessed to have he and your Mom for so many years -

March 26 at 7:26 AM



Gary Gatlin posted:

Richard and Family, Please accept my deepest sympathies on Mr. Baker's passing. The times I met him, he was so kind and friendly. You all will be in my thoughts and prayers in the days and weeks to come. May God Bless You All.

March 26 at 7:18 AM



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CW

Charlotte White posted:

Gary and I are so sorry for your loss. I have so many precious memories of Sue and Baker during my time as secretary at HHUMC and afterwards visiting with them. Baker was always serving God and his church in every way possible. I will always be thankful for the ways he touched my life. God's blessing on each of you. Charlotte White

March 26 at 5:50 AM

ST

Sharon Taube posted:

Darlene, Rick, Mrs. Baker, Richard, Susan and other family members. Words cannot express the loss that I know each of you is feeling with the passing of Mr. Baker. He lived a long and blessed life. He was such a wonderful person and a very special Husband, Dad and Grandfather! He loved all of you so much and just know that he will be watching over all of you from Heaven! Sharon Taube

March 25 at 6:14 PM

OS

Oma Strickland March 27 at 1:44 PM

With joy and with sorrow I read the beautiful tribute to Baker. What an impact he and Sue had on my life. Sue and Susan Boyd are the reasons I chose HHUMC when I came to Memphis, I met Bob there, and the rest is history. How blessed we have been to have spent some time (although short) with them. The memories of HHUMC are precious. Thank you for the gift of your father. I rejoice that he (a good and faithful servant) is celebrating this Easter in the presence of our Lord. Oma Strickland

DM

Dorothy Mitchell March 27 at 9:08 AM

I will always remember your Dad. So glad I got to visit with Baker & Sue last year. I was at Highland Heights from 1961-1980, & then visit the church many times after that. He was a great person. Dorothy Fincher Mitchell



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring James by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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