



Norman L. Gardner

November 11, 1935 - October 23, 2023

Norman L. Gardner of Naples, FL passed away peacefully on October 23, 2023. Norman was born on November 11, 1935, in Winfield Alabama. At age two, he moved to Ada, Oklahoma. A graduate of Ada High School, Norman earned the degree of Bachelor of Music Education in 1957 from Oklahoma Baptist University. Feeling a call into the ministry, Norman moved to Louisville, KY to attend Southern Baptist Theological Seminary where he earned a Master of Sacred Music degree in 1959.

Norman combined his love of God, music, and working with youth to serve in numerous churches during his life. He served 9 years as Minister of Music and Associate Pastor at the First Baptist Church, Henderson, KY. It was here he met and married his wife of sixty-two years, Mary Ruth Nichols. She served beside him as his administrative assistant until they both retired. In 1969 they moved their family to serve as Minister of Music and Youth at First Baptist Church in Gallatin, TN. Norman was proud to be ordained by the Gallatin church as a Minister in January 1980. He also served several churches in an interim position including First Baptist Church, Portland, TN, and First Baptist Church, Lebanon, TN. Norman and Ruth retired in 1996 to Naples, FL where they were members of First Baptist Church.

Norman's passions also included reading, traveling, and sports. He loved playing golf and worked at Valencia Golf and Country Club, Naples, FL. He

enjoyed watching and rooting for his favorite teams - Vanderbilt Commodores, Miami Hurricanes, and the Miami Dolphins.

Survivors include his wife, Mary Ruth; his son, Norman Thomas Gardner (Debbie); his daughter, Debbie Childress (Ron); his grandsons, Brent Childress (Sarah) and Wesley Posey; his granddaughters, Shanna Gregory (Chris) and Morgan Butler (Miley); great-grandson, Jeremy Childress (Leanna); great-granddaughters, Blakely Childress, and Keagan Childress; great-great-granddaughter, Ember Childress. He was preceded in death by his mother, Lucy Gardner; his aunt Myrtice Gentle; his son Alan Posey, and his grandson Bryan Childress.

Norman's favorite hymn was "Make Me A Blessing". He touched so many lives through his ministry. He was loved by his family and friends and he will be missed dearly. In lieu of flowers, his request was that memorial contributions be made to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Student Scholarship Fund, 2825 Lexington RD, Louisville, KY 40280. As Norman wished, a celebration of life will be held jointly with his constant companion, Mary Ruth.

Tribute Wall

CD

“ *Some of my fondest memories surround choir and handbell choir! Brother Norman and Mrs. Ruth played a significant role in my faith!*

Cheryl Whitsell Duffy - October 27, 2023 at 04:24 PM

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“ *I remember Mr. Norman as a most wonderful, joyful and enthusiastic Sunday school teacher at Gallatin 1st Baptist. Im sure I was a handful at that age. But he and Mrs. Ruth both gave me ground work to being the good person I am today. They both have a place in my heart and soul. ❤️❤️❤️*

Blake Vantrease - October 26, 2023 at 12:31 AM