

Janet Tyson Biography



The Rev. Janet Tyson of Waxhaw, N.C., died Tuesday, December 13, 2022 in Charlotte, N.C. Janet was born on June 19, 1946, the beloved only child of the late Samuel Herbert and Kathleen Wilson Robinson. Growing up in Waxhaw, N.C., she graduated from Parkwood High School in 1964, then earned a B.A. in Education from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, S.C. Despite her mother's wishes, Janet moved to Columbus, Ga. after college and taught for a year at Baker High School. Janet and her roommates, Maureen and Juanita, did their part to support the war in Vietnam by teaching and nurturing the children whose parents worked at a nearby U.S. Army base Ft. Benning. Many of the students' fathers were either in Vietnam or were on the way there.

Janet returned to Waxhaw in 1969 and became engaged to Harold Dean "Bud" Tyson, a Waxhaw native, a 1958 graduate of Mineral Springs High School, and a 1965 graduate of North Carolina State University. They married on July 4, 1970. Janet returned to Winthrop, earned her M.A.

in English in 1971, and taught at Wingate University for two years before taking a position at Sun Valley High School in 1973.

Janet and Harold were blessed with the birth of their daughter Katie in 1974 and son Sam in 1976. Tragically, Janet's husband, a civil engineer for the N.C. Department of Transportation, was killed in a work-related accident four years later in 1980, just days prior to the start of the new school year. Always a woman of strength, Janet led her family forward and taught her children by example with her strong character, work ethic, and steadfast perseverance. While a single parent, Janet went on to earn an M.A. in Education Administration from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Janet was promoted to assistant principal and then became only the second woman to serve as a principal of a high school in Union County.

In addition to her dedication and commitment to a 30-year career in public education, Janet felt called to continue to serve others in Christian ministry. She took classes at the Charlotte campus of Richmond-based Union Presbyterian Seminary and earned her third master's degree in 2006. She was ordained by the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. and served in a variety of local Presbyterian churches in both interim and full-time roles. Most recently, Janet was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Monroe where she devoted her time and talents to a congregation whom she loved and adored.

An avid reader and illustrious storyteller, Janet's sermons were inspiring. Her skills honed as an educator enriched her work as a pastor - whether in the pulpit or ministering to her many parishioners. Although Janet was well known for her sermons, she felt her calling was in pastoral care, especially to the elderly, sick, and bereaved. She kept a busy calendar - from routine retirement community visits to sitting with family members in hospital waiting rooms while a loved one underwent surgery.

Janet's experience in the classroom and pulpit led to yet another "career" as a eulogist. Friends, family, and strangers alike asked Janet to preside over their funerals. Her children, both of whom work in banking, fondly referred to these funeral requests as her "book of business." This extensive "book of business" kept Janet busy and often shifted family dinner and vacation plans. Janet wouldn't have it any other way.

As many can attest, Janet ruled with an iron fist in a velvet glove. Her left eyebrow was legendary, as its raising could command quick obedience from her audience - especially her children. Janet wouldn't tolerate meanness, but she did love a little mischief. She got plenty working with teenagers at Sun Valley High. Sam and his friends also provided an ample supply through the years. Janet loved the smell

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of gardenias, the taste of key lime pie, the touch of her grandson's hand, the sound of bagpipes, and the sight of the mountains. In her later years, she enjoyed spending time at the family's beach home in Isle of Palms, S.C. Janet's gal pals from college, church, and Sun Valley joined her on many of these beach trips. To use Janet's favorite word, these beach trips were "delightful."

Janet was an incomparable example of dignity, faith, steadfastness, humility, humanity, and Christian values. Her love for others was deep and unqualified. She valued peace and contentment and wished it for others. Her life set an example for many and her fingerprints will remain for generations. Janet was a rare and noble gift who made this world a better place. To God be the glory.

Janet is survived by her children, Kathleen (Katie) Tyson Von Bergen (Brian), and Samuel Tracey Tyson (Dana), of Waxhaw. Janet was blessed with one grandchild, Alexander Tyson Von Bergen, whom she cherished and spoiled. One of Janet's most meaningful moments as pastor was baptizing Alex, and she actively participated in all of his activities.