



Rev. Mary Yonker Belew

December 4, 1940 - July 18, 2023

Rev. Mary Yonker Belew passed into the eternal peace of God on July 18, 2023 in Madison, NC. She was born December 4, 1940 in St. Louis, MO, the first of five children of the late John and Dorothy Yonker. She was a loving, faithful daughter, sister, wife, mother, and grandmother.

Mary spent a happy childhood in St. Louis, often visiting with her grandparents, who also lived in the city: Samuel and Lola Halbrook, and Henry and Maud Yonker. There were many large family gatherings with her siblings, cousins, and aunts and uncles as well. Much time was spent at Hamilton Avenue Christian Church, where Mary developed her faith in God and her nurturing nature.

In 1958, Mary graduated from University City High School and in 1963, she earned a Bachelor of Religion from Culver-Stockton College, which was also her father's alma mater. She excelled in the concert choir, and choral music sustained her for the rest of her life. She spent a year at Vanderbilt University in a teaching program, and also worked for A Christian Ministry in the National Parks.

Mary attended Brite Divinity School in Fort Worth, Texas, where she earned a Master of Christian Education, and met her beloved husband of 50 years, Robert Belew. They were married in 1966, and in 1968, ordained together as

Christian ministers in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) at Hamilton Avenue Christian Church in St. Louis, MO. During her adult life, while raising two children, she served congregations as a lay leader and minister's spouse alongside Robert in Texas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri, Kansas, and Illinois. She also worked for various church regional offices, writing articles and planning Christian education curriculum.

After retiring in Quincy, IL, Mary and Robert had the joy of spending time with their grandchildren, and planning and taking trips. Shenandoah National Park was their favorite. They were active members of First Christian Church in Quincy, IL, where Mary still made use of her experience and education, serving as a lay person in many aspects of church life.

She was preceded in death by her husband Robert, with whom she has now reunited. Her life is celebrated by those who remain behind: daughter Laura Simcox, son-in-law Patrick, and grandson Henry of High Point, NC, son Will Belew of Palmyra, MO, grandchild Veda Belew, and granddaughter Martie Belew of Quincy, IL, sister Dorothy (Bob) Heltibrand, brothers John (Sarah) Yonker, Jim (Nancy) Yonker, and Richard (Kathie) Yonker, and six nieces and nephews.

Visitation (1 pm) and funeral service (2 pm) will take place July 27, 2023 at James and Gahr Mortuary in Salem, MO. She will be buried alongside her husband and next to her parents in Cedar Grove Cemetery in Salem.

Memorial contributions may be made in her honor to the Ministerial Relief and Assistance fund: Pension Fund of the Christian Church:

www.pensionfund.org.

Cemetery Details

Cedar Grove Cemetery

Salem, MO

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 27. 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

James & Gahr Mortuary - Salem
103 West Center
Salem, MO 65560
(573) 729-3117
jgsalemmo@hotmail.com
<https://www.jamesgahrmortuary.com/>

Service

JUL 27. 2:00 PM (CT)

James & Gahr Mortuary - Salem
103 West Center
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(573) 729-3117
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Tribute Wall

RW

“ *Richard Walker purchased the Sweet Tenderness for the family of Rev. Mary Yonker Belew.*



Richard Walker - July 25, 2023 at 09:16 AM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Rev. Mary Yonker Belew.*



July 22, 2023 at 04:34 PM

LR

“ *Mary was so kind and patient with us as kids and my parents really enjoyed visiting with her and Robert when they visited. Laura and Will and families are in my prayers 🙏🌸*



Lisa Raynes - July 22, 2023 at 04:11 PM