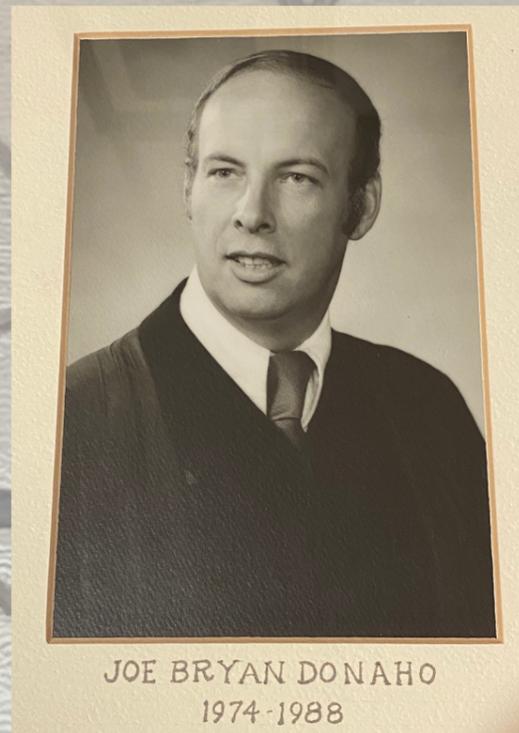


REV. DR. JOE BRYAN DONAHO

February 19, 1938—March 23, 2020

Former Pastor of GSPC, 1974-1988



Born in Bryan, Texas (TX) on Feb. 19, 1938, Joe was the oldest of five born to Ottis Bryan Donaho and Lois Kraft Donaho. Joe leaves the following siblings: Lorita Donaho Tipton, John and Jill Donaho, Margaret Donaho Yellot, Susan Donaho Sampson and Art Sampson, and many nieces and nephews. A graduate of Stephen F. Austin High School he was involved in the National Honor Society, football, baseball, choir and was an Eagle Scout. He attended and graduated from Texas Christian University (TCU) in Ft. Worth, Texas where he met and later married his wife Karolyn Kay Ferguson of Palestine, Texas. Their marriage was blessed by three daughters, Amy, Blythe Heather, who gave them 5 grandchildren, Bryan and Abby Howell, Grace, Baye and Tinnin Lewis.

Joe and Kay moved to Austin, Texas to work on an advanced degree in theology and then moved in 1963 to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma where they established a new church, Northwest Presbyterian Church and then moved in 1968 back to Austin where Joe served as Dean of Students and Admissions at the Austin Theological Seminary. In 1974, the Donaho family moved to Mobile, Alabama where Joe was called to be the Senior Pastor of The Government Street Presbyterian Church (GSPC). He served GSPC for 14 years. It was during this period of time Joe received his Doctorate Degree in Theology from the McCormick School of Theology in Chicago, Illinois. Following this, in 1988, they moved on to Columbia, South Carolina, where he served as Senior Pastor of Eastminster Presbyterian Church. He also served as adjunct professor at McCormick during this time (8 years) as well as being invited to serve on the Institute of Southern Studies at the University of South Carolina (6 years). In 2005, Joe and Kay retired and moved to Germantown, TN where Joe became the Interim Pastor at Woodland Presbyterian and then later, at Germantown Presbyterian Church.

Over the span of his career, Joe had a multitude of awards and appointments (too many to list) including Moderator of the Synod of Mid-South (PCUSA), Board of Directors of the following: Presbyterian College, Oliver Gospel Mission (Columbia, SC), Junior League of Mobile, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary and Austin Presbyterian Seminary. His leadership was evident not only to the churches he led but to the communities in which he lived and served.

Joe was known as a great theologian for his ability to teach the Bible--especially more difficult books such as Deuteronomy and Revelations. He understood and advocated for intensive theological Bible study groups in all his churches. Evangelism was important to him and he wrote and published his book, "Good News Travels Faster," as a resource for Christians to use in their churches to spread the good news of the Gospel.

Joe also took pride in being a part of kids' lives. He loved the day schools, the students, interns and staff at all of the seminaries he worked with. His passion for teaching and mentoring students also included marriage counseling. He enjoyed hunting and fishing and teaching many of these students about God's beauty in nature. "Some of these interns I had in the church killed their first deer with me...including one of my interns not holding the gun tight enough..." Joe's passion for the great outdoors came from his Texas roots. Some of Joe's favorite sports were deer hunting, fly fishing (both bass fishing, saltwater fishing) with friends and family. Any of Joe's interns will appreciate his competitive, good-natured spirit where he would not allow them to graduate until they could beat him on the racquetball courts.

Due to the current CoronaVirus, the celebration of Joe Donaho's life will be announced at a later date. He will be memorialized in the Memorial Garden (which he helped start and raise funds for) at Germantown Presbyterian Church, Germantown, TN. Final note: Joe Donaho approved this message (obituary).



MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS MAY BE MADE TO:

The Joe Bryan Donaho Teaching Church Endowment

Eastminster Presbyterian Church
3400 Trenholm Road, Columbia, SC, 29204

The Memorial Garden Fund

Germantown Presbyterian Church
2363 Germantown Road South, Germantown, TN, 38138

The Joe and Kay Donaho Student Scholarship Fund

Austin Seminary
100 E. 25th Street, Austin, TX, 78705