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Rev. Tony Kevin Eskew

NOVEMBER 15TH 2012 BY STAFF WRITER

Rev. Tony Kevin Eskew

The Rev. Tony Kevin Eskew, most commonly known to many as Brother Kevin, passed away Tuesday, November 13, 2012 at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, surrounded by his beloved family and friends. Kevin served as Pastor of the First General Baptist Church of Bloomfield, Missouri for 35 years.

Kevin was born on February 22, 1952 in Piggott, Arkansas to Vaval Royal Eskew and Mary Ellen Smith Eskew, both deceased.

Kevin is survived by his precious wife Becky, whom he married on June 2, 1973, in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. He is also survived by a daughter, Tonya Skinner, and her husband, Bruce, of Cape Girardeau, and their daughters Sierra and Alexis; a son, Tim Eskew of Kennett; a sister, Sharon Vernon of Piggott; and a brother, Kim Eskew and his wife, Karen, of Springdale, Arkansas. In addition to these, Kevin is survived by numerous sisters-in-law, cousins, nephews, nieces and his beloved church congregation and community.

Kevin and Becky met while both were attending Oakland City University in Indiana, where Kevin received his Bachelors of Arts degree in Religious Studies. Kevin later received his Master's degree in Christian Counseling from Liberty University, in Lynchburg, Virginia.

Kevin served as Pastor at Henderson, Kentucky, when he and Becky's oldest child Tonya was born. They went on to Pastor in Decatur, Illinois, before being

called in October 1977 to serve at First General Baptist Church of Bloomfield, where their son Tim was born.

While in Bloomfield, Kevin has served on numerous committees and boards and was frequently in charge of the city-wide Memorial Day services at the Stoddard County Courthouse. Many folks in the community turned to Kevin to preach their family member's funeral services, to counsel with them in times of trouble and to join them in marriage. Kevin also served on the Ministerial Alliance for over three decades, and was the first president of the General Baptist Council of Associations.

Kevin preached numerous revival services in many towns all over Missouri and Arkansas. He published several Sunday school lessons for the General Baptist denominational literature, and his final lessons will be featured this December in all the lesson books distributed to the denomination. Last year, Kevin was proud to be the keynote speaker at the Oakland City University Founder's Day event.

If you knew Kevin, you knew he was an amazing man of God and lived his life as an example of how Christians should live, love and serve others. You knew that he loved his family deeply and that they were his joy. You knew that he was a faithful husband and loved to spoil his precious wife Becky. You knew that his two granddaughters, Sierra and Lexi, were the absolute lights of his life, and that every chance he got to go and "kidnap" them from school or their house to spend time with him, he did. You knew that he was extremely proud of his daughter Tonya and believed her to be the best teacher in Missouri. You knew that his son-in-law Bruce was someday going to "run a university" and loved to refer to him as Dr. Skinner. You knew that if his son Tim was coaching a basketball game that this proud Dad was probably sitting right behind him cheering him on knowing that he was the best coach around. You knew that he was first and foremost an Arkansas Razorback fan and that the Hogs held a special place in his heart, even forcing a Missouri congregation to "Call those hogs!" You knew that Kevin and his brother Kim had an incredible bond and love for each other that few have ever experienced. You also knew of his love for everything Disney and one of the highlights of his life was taking those beautiful granddaughters on their very first visit to his favorite place on Earth.

Several people on Facebook, in social media and in a newspaper article have referred to Bro. Kevin Eskew as "one of the greatest men they have ever known." That would be news to Kevin, because he was such a humble servant of God,

answering God's call into the ministry at the age of 16. He will be deeply missed.

Under the direction of Rainey-Mathis Funeral Home of Dexter, visitation will be held on Friday, November 16, 2012 from 4:00-8:00 p.m. at First General Baptist Church, 501 Christian Drive in Bloomfield, Missouri. Services will be held at the church on Saturday, November 17 at 11:00 a.m., with Pastor Greg Stevens presiding. Burial will be held immediately following the service in the Bloomfield Cemetery. Pallbearers are Tim Eskew, Kim Eskew, Bruce Skinner, Tony Eskew, Chad Eskew and Dustin Hicks.

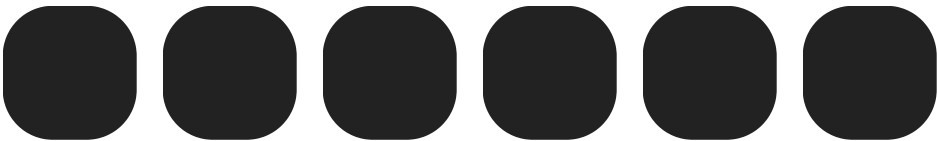
In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Tony Kevin Eskew Endowed Scholarship Fund at Oakland City University, 138 North Lucria, Oakland City, Indiana 47660.

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