

KAREN NULL

Member since 2003

Background

Birth Date:

October 14, 1945

Place of Birth:

New Bern, NC

Did You Know...

Karen traveled to the Holy Land with a group from our church, led by Rev. John Dromazos in 2006. She says that it was an amazing experience; being in the places where Jesus lived really made the Bible come alive.

Karen's son, David, owns the Country Breeze Farm Market in Marion, PA.

Favorite Hymn

What A Friend We
Have In Jesus



Karen was born when her dad was in the Marines and stationed in New Bern, NC. Less than two weeks later, her dad got his discharge and they were able to move back to be near their family in West Virginia.

Growing up, Karen remembers her father being quiet and reserved, while her mother was very outgoing. She had both a sister who was close in age and a brother who was ten years younger. Karen remembers being involved in different activities, including Girl Scouts, 4H, and playing clarinet in the band. Each summer she would spend a couple of weeks at her grandmother's house. During these visits, Karen remembers her grandmother teaching her to embroider. Perhaps this was the spark that led to her later career in teaching Home Economics.

In order to pay her way through college, Karen remembers working at the Golden Delight (similar to Dairy Queen). After graduating with her teaching degree from West Virginia University, Karen became a Home Economics teacher. It was a job that she very much enjoyed, especially when she had the opportunity to teach child development. Beyond the content, Karen also enjoyed being around her students and felt like she was someone that students felt safe to talk to.

Karen describes the majority of her life as being “smooth and even,” with one major exception when her husband, Ralph, was diagnosed with cancer. She was still working at the time, and remembers it being difficult to balance her responsibilities at both home and school. But she also remembers finding comfort and hope in different things that happened. Karen’s job was very understanding of the situation, allowing her to use liberal sick leave, so that she could care for Ralph’s needs. And she noticed an amazing change in Ralph himself. Karen says that he had always been a worrier. Yet, after his diagnosis, he suddenly seemed to be at peace. Karen says that in the midst of the confusion she felt, she found peace by clinging to God’s promise in Proverbs 3:5-6:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

After Ralph’s passing, Karen finished out the last couple of years she needed to reach retirement, and then moved to Chambersburg to be close to her son, David. Again, Karen testifies to God’s provision, “It had to be a God thing. Everything just worked out. I sold my house easily and found another home here. The move was just too perfect.”

Karen has a lifelong experience of faith; her family has belonged to the Methodist Church for many generations. She remembers her days of attending VBS and later going through Confirmation before officially joining the church at age 11. She remembers her childhood Sunday School teacher, Mrs. Thomas, as being influential. Karen says, “I felt like she was always there for us. She was loyal to the church and active in everything.”

Karen also mentions several members of FUMC as being influential during her adjustment to Chambersburg. There was the chance encounter with Shirley Jones in the parking lot, which led to an invitation for Karen to join her Sunday School class. Karen talks about Deanna Nolder’s influence in helping her to get involved in service opportunities through the Neighborhood Ministry Program. Over the years, Karen has helped as a tutor in the After School Program, volunteered with the Summer Neighborhood Program, cooked for the Thursday Night dinners, and even now continues to serve in the clothing ministry. Outside of church, Karen also volunteered with the House of Grace, using her Home Economics training to teach women basic sewing skills. With the spiritual gift of helps, Karen says that she always felt like these supportive, behind-the-scenes jobs were a good fit for her.

Karen says that one of the ways she most senses the presence of God is when she sees a newborn baby. Interestingly, on the morning of our interview, Karen was anticipating this exact experience, having just received news of the birth of her second great-grandson, Lincoln Wyatt Zimmerman.

When asked what advice or wisdom she would like to pass on to younger generations, Karen says, “Don’t take things so seriously.” She goes on to encourage young people not to worry so much what other people think about things like clothing or appearance. But to focus instead on the things that matter most.

For Karen, these most important things have been to be a good Christian, teacher, mother, and grandmother. And to keep her word and follow through on her promises. She remembers her mother affirming this part of her character, telling Karen that she was like her dad—trustworthy and honest.

Since those days, Karen has always tried to be someone that others could depend on. And countless members of our church and community have benefitted from her quiet, faithful service.