

Obituary

Elaine (Beiler) Stoltzfus was born to David S. and Mary M. Beiler on May 28, 1941, in Morgantown, PA, and peacefully slipped into the presence of Jesus on Sept. 22, 2022 at her home in Kidron, OH following a time of illness.

Elaine graduated from Lancaster Mennonite School in Lancaster, PA in 1959 and married Ken Stoltzfus, of Coatesville, PA, on Jan. 2, 1960. Her godly heart was evident in her roles as a highly fulfilled wife, mother, homemaker, “Grandma,” friend, and mentor.

In her nearly 63-years of marriage she set up house-keeping 21 times in PA, TX, VT, OK, VA, OH, and Kenya, Africa, as she and Ken followed God’s call.

Elaine’s lifetime of humble and generous, behind-the-scenes service to her family and others, including 34 years as a counselor at the Pregnancy Care Center, touched many. She will be remembered for her gentle and quiet spirit, her love for Jesus, her simplicity of faith, and her partnership with Ken “through thick and thin” as they dared to follow God’s leading in aviation activities, entrepreneurship, and pastoral and missionary settings.

She prayed much for her family and friends, and for the many missionaries whose photos adorned her study.

She was preceded in death by her parents, sons Ken Jr. (1960-2011) and Brian (1963-2019), and five of her siblings.

In addition to her husband Ken, she is survived by her son Mark (Jodie), and daughters-in-law Sheila (Ken Jr, now Kline) and Sandi (Brian); nine grandchildren, Kahly (Greg) Antal (NC), Colby (Alyssa) Stoltzfus, Isaak Stoltzfus, Tanya (Chris) Minnick, Austin (Whitney) Stoltzfus, Abbie (Kelsey) Jurkovich, Chelsea (Frank) Musick, Danae (Garett) Beaudette and Garrett Stoltzfus (PA)

She delighted in her 13 great-grandsons, Tanner, Carson, Brantlee, Ryker and Killian Stoltzfus; Asher and Jude Antal; Ezra, Silas, Ezekiel and Samuel Jurkovich; and Levi and Everett Minnick. She is also survived by her stepmother Mabel Kurtz, sisters Gladys Shearer and Mary Ann (Glenn) Leaman, all of PA, and brother Paul (Leanna) Beiler of VA.

Services will be held at the Fairlawn Mennonite Church in Apple Creek, OH, with calling hours from 3-6 on Sunday, Sept. 25. A memorial service themed “Christ in us the hope of glory” will be held at 11:00 on Monday, followed by a meal prepared by Ken and Elaine’s Amish friends. A private burial will be held at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, North Lawrence, prior to the memorial service.

Elaine could truly say: *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. (II Tim. 4:7-8 niv)*

Memorial gifts to the Pregnancy Care Center of Wayne County are invited. www.pccwayneoh.org/

CHRIST IN US THE HOPE OF GLORY

OF ELAINE

We are all a blend of the person we were formed to be by God’s design; by the impact of our environment; and by our own choices. Elaine’s humble and serving heart, and her “gentle and quiet spirit” which blessed so many, illustrate that well.

She had the good fortune of growing up in a very stable and loving family. She became much like her mother, and her godly father’s tendency to be his own person in certain ways helped prepare her for the years ahead. She enjoyed wonderful, giving-and-receiving relationships with aunts, uncles and cousins, her church community, and others.

At the age of 11, some aunts and uncles invited Elaine to be part of the Sunday School in a church they were planting, and that certainly imparted to her a sense of mission as part of what “church” means.

She accepted Christ as her Savior at a young age and found her identity in Him in ways that enabled her to live well in her challenging adult years alongside me.

She rarely held a mic, but her life preached Christ to many who were touched by His Presence in her and were encouraged in their own pursuit of God and His righteousness. She mentored many women, some intentionally but more by her life, and no man ever influenced me as much as she did.

OF US

When Elaine's and my eyes met that evening at supper at our boarding high school in late 1955, her smile said something that touched an as-yet-undefined drive within me. Beginning on Jan. 2, 1960 then, enabled by Jesus' Presence, she partnered with me through thick and thin for nearly 63-years of marriage in spite of my personal weaknesses and failures, and despite the cost of following that calling.

In 1974 God illuminated to me the "Christ in us the hope of glory" of Col. 1:25-27, which enhanced the II Cor. 3:18 call to transformation into the image of Christ that had captured me earlier. They, along with the "seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness" of Mt. 6:33, and the "set your mind on things above" of Col. 3:1-2, became central to our walk with Christ together, our family life, and our service to Him in the pastorate, in business, and as missionaries in Africa.

I've had the sense that Jesus' John 3:16 and 10:10 Abundant Life is for today; that a Christians' life-altering commitment to the Father's evangelistic purposes in Christ is to be the norm; and that embracing the cross of Luke 9:23-26 is essential to such a life - but that all are largely missing in today's church.

Nobody embraced that vision personally, better than Elaine, and she was unwavering in her willingness to follow Jesus' call to follow Him in ways that challenge today's typical Christian lifestyle. She modeled the meaning of helpmeet, friend, and partner as we attempted to live and proclaim such unpopular truths.

Her I Peter 3:3-5 gentle and quiet spirit, and her readiness to forgive, served us well over the years. She was more like Jesus than anyone else I've known, and I learned much from her.

I pray that Elaine's memorial service glorifies God and encourages the saints by proclaiming the glorious message of the Life in Christ that we were created for, and which she experienced so deeply - even as we honor her for the ways that Jesus touched others through her because of her walk with Him.

Such a life is described in FOR HIS GLORY, at www.10minas.net/for-his-glory/

The memorial service will be livestreamed at <https://youtu.be/0URhy0FEPB4>

Thank you!

"Thank you" to the many who stood with Elaine, our family, and me in this journey, through your prayers, encouragement, meals and overall support. You were truly the "Church," and an invaluable part of ministering God's comforting Presence to us.

Finally, words cannot express our appreciation for LifeCare Hospice (Wooster), who responded to our need with skill and in a caring spirit. They are accessible, compassionate, and generous - and the world would be very different if the Church emulated their spirit in fulfilling the mission that Jesus entrusted to us.

Ken Stoltzfus
Kidron, OH
Sept. 22, 2022

In loving memory of . . .



Elaine (Beiler) Stoltzfus

May 28, 1941 - Sept. 22, 2022

A memorial service to celebrate Life in Christ, and to honor Elaine for how she demonstrated the presence and rule of Jesus in serving, loving, accepting, and forgiving others, and in persevering in life's challenges - because of Him.