



Darlene Key

August 5, 1960 - July 12, 2026

Naomi Darlene Key passed away peacefully on July 12th, 2026 surrounded by her family in their Vestavia Hills, Alabama home.

Darlene was a devoted wife, mother, teacher, and world traveler. She was born in Birmingham, Alabama on August 5th 1960 and grew up in Sumiton, Alabama. She graduated from Dora high-school in 1978 before graduating with her education degree at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in 1982. She lived in Florida, Tennessee, and Alabama where she touched many lives as an elementary school teacher. She found great joy in helping children grow, especially during her time as a PE teacher. After having children, she returned to college where she received her master's degree in teaching English as a Second Language in 2011. Subsequently, she taught English to foreign exchange students at both Samford University and the University of Alabama at Birmingham for the following eleven years. She brought a kindness and practicality to everything she did that was loved and respected. She was a light and a leader in every room and touched many lives of students and coworkers through her career.

She was able to marry her love for travel with her faith by participating in Mission trips with Mountain Brook Community Church. She engaged in outreach service locally in Birmingham, Alabama, collaborated with building food centers in Juarez, Mexico, and hosted English as a Second Language

classes and soccer camps in Diósd, Hungary over the course of many years.

She was loved dearly by many family members and friends who will miss her wisdom, humor, pragmatism, love, openness, and enthusiasm for life.

She is survived and missed by her husband of 45 years, Gary Key; her daughter, Lucy Key; and her son, Auston Key, as well as many family members and friends including Robert Raygan, Jimmy Ferguson, Rieta Noe, Hazel Windham, Beverly Ausbun and Mildred Grey. She is preceded in death by her parents, Terry Raygan and Lucille Raygan.

A Celebration of Life will be held at 11:00am, Friday, July 24, at Mountain Brook Community Church located at 3001 Hwy 280. The family will receive friends from 10am until service time.

In Lieu of flowers you can make a donation to Mountain Brook Community Church Mission programs so that the faith outreach program that meant so much to her can provide further outreach and allow others to have the valuable experiences that she enjoyed.

To donate online, go to mbcc.us/give. Gifts can be directed to the General Fund, and in the Notes section, type "Darlene Key Missions Fund." Select the payment options found on the web page.

Previous Events

Family to Receive Guests

JUL **24.** 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Mountain Brook Community Church
3001 US 280
Birmingham, AL 35243

Celebration of Life

JUL **24.** 11:00 AM (CT)

Mountain Brook Community Church
3001 US 280
Birmingham, AL 35243

Tribute Wall



“ *Heavenly Grace Spray was purchased for the family of Darlene Key.*



July 21 at 08:53 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Darlene Key.

July 21 at 08:53 AM



“ *Jeff, Joe & Anna Vallejo purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Darlene Key.*



Jeff, Joe & Anna Vallejo - July 15 at 04:16 PM