



Elizabeth ("Liz") Norris Shannon

AUG 25, 1941 - MAY 18, 2024



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Elizabeth ("Liz") Norris Shannon

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Elizabeth ("Liz") Norris Shannon passed away on May 18, 2024, in Fayetteville, Arkansas. She was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, on August 25, 1941, to Gordon and Verna Norris a few years after her older brother, Gordon Norris, Jr. The family quickly moved to Lake Village, Arkansas, where Liz grew up, played the organ at church, and graduated high school. Before heading off to college at Hendrix, Liz caught the eye of her future husband, Robert ("Bob") Patterson Shannon from the congregation at Lakeside United Methodist Church. Six years her senior and a veteran of the Army and Hendrix College, she was wary at first even offering to find him a date at a Hendrix dance because she had already been asked. But Bob was persistent, and they married on August 6, 1961, at Lakeside UMC.

Bob and Liz spent their early married years in Memphis where Liz graduated with a music performance (piano) degree from Memphis State. They later moved to Knoxville, Tennessee, where they welcomed Michael Norris Shannon in 1967. Two months later, the family moved to Corning, Arkansas where Bob ran the local Gulf Oil distributorship. In 1969, they were blessed with a daughter, Kathryn Leigh Shannon. Liz taught private piano lessons to many during their time in Corning and played the organ at Corning's First United Methodist Church. She often accompanied Bob (a "card-carrying" lay minister) early on Sunday mornings to play the piano at local charge churches in the area who needed both their talents only to drive back and do the same at their own church. During their final year in Corning, Liz became the elementary music teacher at Central Elementary School.

In 1979, the family moved from Corning to Sheridan. As God's providence would have it, the long-time elementary music teacher, Mrs. Lewis, had just retired. Liz interviewed for the job and did not skip a beat for the next 25 years. In this time, she earned her master's degree by correspondence from Henderson State University. Her hand-picked elementary choirs were renowned for their many performances, and she introduced every student to the recorder and the basics of the piano/keyboard.



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Liz immediately joined the choir at the First United Methodist Church in Sheridan. Over the years, she assumed the organist and choir director positions but always put her salary back into the collection plate. She challenged the choir with rousing Easter and Christmas Cantatas. Together, she and Bob served the youth group and taught Sunday School.

Bob and Liz welcomed their first grandchild, Alexander ("the Great") Michael Shannon in 1995. Unfortunately, Bob passed away in March of 1996 before he could meet their next seven grandchildren – Claire Olivia Shannon; Aidan Robert Smith; Isaac Michael Smith; Robert Patterson Shannon II; Samuel Aaron Smith; Lucy Shan Li Smith; and Elizabeth Jeannine Shannon. Liz doted on her grandchildren extra hard after Bob's death earning the name "Mamo." The events she attended are countless but remembered. Her pool attracted many summer visits along with trips to the dollar store and late-night runs for half-price milkshakes at Sonic. Christmas presents were over the top and numerous. The grandkids learned to appreciate Andrew Lloyd Webber during rides in the car and watching Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat.

In 2016, Liz chose to move to Fayetteville, Arkansas, and Butterfield Trail Village where she was close to Leigh and their children. She participated in all the activities offered at BTV and often played piano at various services there. She continued attending her grandchildren's myriad events until late 2022 when her memory began to betray her, and she transferred into another unit. After a short battle with her physical health, she passed away quietly while holding Leigh's hand.

During her lifetime, she provided Bob with the direction (or redirection) he needed while he strutted in front of anyone who would not ignore him. They were pivotal in leading the Arkansas Ashram movement and started numerous local Ashrams where they included any other local denomination willing to participate. Bringing people of different faiths together was a passion and talent they collaborated to achieve.

Liz was a lover of classical music (always donating to KLRE 90.5) and enjoyed many intellectual games and pursuits. Rarely did a day start before the crossword puzzle and the Cryptoquote had been solved. She loved Broadway shows and showtunes. Indeed, she took (and read religiously) The New Yorker magazine until shortly before her death.



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Liz is survived by her brother, Gordon (Karen) Andrew Norris, Jr. of Tulsa, Oklahoma; her son Mike (Jennifer) Shannon of Little Rock, her daughter Leigh (Michael) Smith of West Fork, and her eight grandchildren including a granddaughter-in-law, Chrissy.

Services will be held at Sheridan's First United Methodist Church on Saturday, May 25, 2024, at 10:00 am to be followed immediately by a time for gathering and celebration in the Great Hall. The family would like to thank the staff at Butterfield Trail Village and Circle of Life Hospice for giving Liz outstanding care in her final years. In lieu of flowers, please send any memorial gifts to the First United Methodist Church, PO Box 357, Sheridan AR 72150.




Events


Elizabeth ("Liz") Norris Shannon

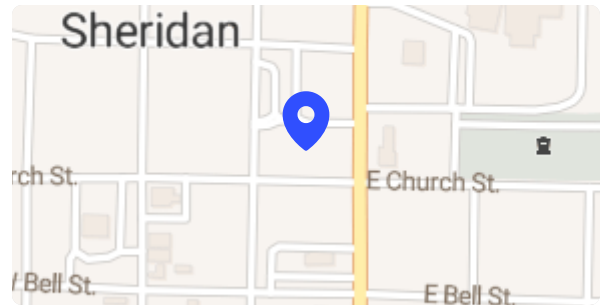
AUG 25, 1941 - MAY 18, 2024

Memorial Service

 **Saturday**, May 25, 2024

 10:00 AM CT

 **First United Methodist Church of Sheridan**
100 E. Church St., Sheridan AR 72150





Tribute Wall

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Kim Fuhrman posted:

From the moment I met Liz, who was about to be my brother's mother-in-law, she treated me like one of her kids. She sent me a balloon bouquet when I got my first "real" job. She played the piano at our Christmas Eve parties for a sing-along. She came to my kids' activities! A sweeter, more generous soul I can't even imagine. I loved just being around her 💜

May 21 at 4:05 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Elizabeth ("Liz") by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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