



## Mareta Ann Keener

June 4, 1930 - March 22, 2025

Mareta Ann (Lentz) Keener, age 94, of Dayton, passed from earth to heaven at her home on March 22, 2025. She was born in Upland, California on June 4, 1930 the daughter of late Alva Asa Lentz and Florence Margaret (Overholtzer) Lentz Maust.

The legacy of Mareta is that she loved well. She loved Jesus well and with all her heart. She loved her husband, Marvin, well. She loved her family well. She loved her friends well, and even loved her enemies well. She loved well.

Mareta grew up as the middle of three siblings in southern California orange groves with vacations camping at the ocean. In her autobiography, *The Door is Open*, she remembers, "I can't remember a time when I didn't love God." Sitting on a tombstone in a cemetery when she was 10 years old, she asked her friend, "Do you think we'll ever be able to actually know God? Kind of like a Daddy?" Her spiritual journey led her to indeed know God personally in Jesus Christ.

Mareta earned her BS as a registered nurse from Stanford University School of Nursing in California. In 1957 she married Marvin Keener, an ex-naval sailor who she met through their common ministries with the Navigators. Their four daughters were born in the next five years in California, then their son after they moved to Wheaton, Illinois. In 1972 the family moved to Dayton,

Tennessee.

In addition to her career as an RN, Mareta helped run the family business, Keener Marketing, for many years. Always sharing the love of Jesus with others, her various ministries included Good News Clubs in her home, women's Bible studies, children's church, and many more.

She enjoyed writing and is the author of five books including her autobiography, *The Door Is Open* and a children's book, *Wisdom Seeds from Grandma's Garden*. Mareta helped to found The Care Center and is Past President of Dayton Lions Club. She was an active member of Grace Bible Church for many decades.

Mareta is survived by her husband of 68 years, Marvin Louis Keener, Sr. of Dayton, her five children Linda (Clay) Thomas of Culleoka, Tennessee, Margie (Eric) Wertz of Chattanooga, Ruth (David) Massey of South Carolina, Flo (Harold) Martin and Marvin Jr. (Jennifer) of Dayton; as well as 18 grandchildren and 30 great grandchildren.

A private family graveside service will be followed by a public Celebration of Life at Grace Bible Church in Dayton on Saturday, March 29th at 11 am with Rev. Jim Woychuk officiating. A visitation will be held at the church one hour before.

The service will be live streamed on Grace Bible Church's website at [www.gbcdayton.org/listenwatch](http://www.gbcdayton.org/listenwatch).

The family is being cared for by Vanderwall Funeral Home in Dayton, Tennessee and gravesite at Rhea Memorial Gardens.

Memorial gifts in Mareta's name may be made to Grace Bible Church, The

Care Center, or Dayton Lion's Club.

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR 29. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Grace Bible Church  
2809 Old Washington Hwy.  
Dayton, TN

## Celebration of Life

MAR 29. 11:00 AM (ET)

Grace Bible Church  
2809 Old Washington Hwy.  
Dayton, TN

# Tribute Wall



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mareta Ann Keener.*



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March 28, 2025 at 02:13 PM



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

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March 28, 2025 at 02:13 PM



“ *Bimbo McCawley lit a candle in memory of Mareta Ann Keener*



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**Bimbo McCawley** - March 27, 2025 at 12:17 PM



“ *Mareta will live forever in our hearts She was one of the sweetest and nicest persons that I ever met. Prayers for Marvin and family.*



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**Millie Sweat** - March 24, 2025 at 01:51 PM