



## Karen Elizabeth Neilson

February 26, 1960 - July 13, 2021

Karen Elizabeth Neilson (née Record) died peacefully at home surrounded by those most precious to her on July 13, 2021, in Wilmington, North Carolina. Karen is survived by her husband, Douglas Gregg Neilson; children, Douglas Madden Neilson, Garrett Hall Neilson, and Katherine Elizabeth Neilson; twin sister, Fran Record Cash, her husband Randy, and their children Samuel, Nathan and Daniel of Huntsville, Alabama; and older sister, Christy Sue Baron and her husband Chris of Sandestin, Florida. She is also survived by her numerous and much beloved Roberson cousins. She was preceded in death by her parents, Walter A. Record, II, and Margaret Sue (Roberson) Record and older brother Walter A. Record, III, all of Huntsville, Alabama.

Karen was born on February 26, 1960, in Jacksonville, Florida, but soon thereafter the family moved to Huntsville where she spent her entire childhood. In 1978, she graduated from Huntsville High School, where she excelled in the visual arts. She then attended Auburn University completing her Bachelor's degree in 1982. During her last year at Auburn, she met and fell in love with Doug. They were married on June 30, 1984, at Trinity United Methodist Church in Huntsville. For their "honeymoon," as they often joked, the newlyweds headed to Purdue University where Karen obtained her Master's degree in Counseling. Some of her fondest memories occurred during their time in West Lafayette – building their first nest together in a tiny, married student apartment, taking trips to Chicago, attending auctions in search of furniture for a future dream home, hosting dinners, especially for

foreign students, and forming a lifelong friendship with her dear friend, Katherine Bolyard. After she and Doug moved to Corning, New York in 1991, Karen began working for Corning Community College as a career counselor. Over the next nine years, the couple welcomed their children into their home on Walnut Street. In 2001 the family relocated to Wilmington, North Carolina, and Karen focused on caring for and nurturing the kids. As a mother Karen had the prized ability to successfully balance the liberties given to her children so that they would grow into their own, making and learning from their mistakes, and to support her children so that they would know she was always there to protect and guide when needed. Her greatest sense of fulfillment was knowing that her children are all imbued with her spirit of a love for, and an empathy toward, all others.

Karen was happiest when she was in the kitchen preparing any number of delicious, gourmet meals. She read cookbooks for pleasure! Her culinary skills embraced many different cuisines: Southern, of course, but also from the other three points of the compass. One night she might serve cornbread and red beans with ham, the next night an Indian curry, and then the next night savory-filled arepas.

Those that were fortunate to know her well form a consensus in their impression of her: she was kind, charming, sweet, clever, well-read, wholly genuine, and deeply concerned about others. Karen was very active in small group Bible Study at Port City Community Church. She led numerous studies and cherished the many friendships that she formed with her group members. For many years, Karen kept a small piece of paper on the refrigerator that displayed "The Counsel of John Wesley's Mother":

Avoid whatever weakens your reason,  
impairs the tenderness of your conscience,  
obscures your sense of God,  
takes off your relish for spiritual things ...  
increases the authority of the body over the mind

In her very quiet and unassuming way, this is how Karen lived her life.



# Tribute Wall

DS

“ Just by happenstance saw Karen's notice. She was always "out of her way" nice to me throughout Jr and HS. A wonderful person!!! Never knew we shared birthdays. Rest in peace! David

David Selah - March 06, 2025 at 02:34 PM

KM

“ My deepest sympathies. May you find strength from each other as you to heal, with each of you carrying the light of her love.

Kathy Morse - September 23, 2021 at 06:21 PM

FC

“ In Loving Memory of Karen Elizabeth Neilson, A Sympathy Gift of Group of 10 Memorial Trees has been Planted In Loving Memory of Karen Elizabeth Neilson courtesy of Fran Cash.

Fran Cash - September 15, 2021 at 05:57 PM

PS

“ Doug, I am so sorry for your loss, thoughts and prayers for you and your family.

Pam Smith - July 27, 2021 at 03:37 PM

HD

“ Doug and family - We are so sad to hear of Karen's passing yet at peace to know that she is safe with the Lord. Her life was so exemplary, and she had a big impact on us when she was a graduate student at Purdue and attending our church and small group. What fun we had together and how much we enjoyed her and your friendship over several years. We really missed seeing you since you moved away. We will never forget Karen. Please be assured that you are all in our prayers. In Christian love, Heather and Harlan Day

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**Heather and Harlan Day** - July 25, 2021 at 05:25 PM

SE

“ I'm sorry to hear that Karen has transitioned from this life. Karen and I were friends in high school. We had so much fun in Mr. White's art class @HHS. She was a very sweet and kind person. I had hoped to be able to reconnect with her. I am praying for peace and comfort for her family. May she rest in peace 🙏🙏

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**Sabrena Emmett** - July 24, 2021 at 09:04 PM

CJ

“ Wonderful smile terrific person. Rip

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**Chris Jamieson** - July 24, 2021 at 08:08 AM

SW

“ To one of the sweetest, kindest people I've met in a long time. We'll miss you, so will Murphy, Daisy, Indy and Teddy. RIP.

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**Steve Watmough** - July 23, 2021 at 03:27 PM

GC

“ Doug, I am so sorry for your loss. Stay strong my friend and know that she will not be forgotten by anyone who knew her.

Gary Cummings - July 22, 2021 at 10:56 AM

TF

“ Mi más sentido pésame a la familia. Un beso enorme

Tamara flores - July 22, 2021 at 10:08 AM

JJ

“ Doug, I am so sorry to hear of this loss for you and your family. My heart breaks for you, and I wish that time can bring some measure of healing.

John Jewell

John Jewell - July 22, 2021 at 10:04 AM

SC

“ Doug, I'm so sorry. Words seem meaningless at times like this. I truly believe we will be reunited with our loved ones someday. In the meantime live your best life and give your Karen a daily movie until you are together again.

Steve Curran - July 22, 2021 at 12:45 AM

BW

“ Karen was a sweet friend, both in High School and then later hanging out with Karen, Doug and my wife Carol. We had some fun trips together. in New Orleans and in Chicago. I remember Swenson's ice cream was our go-to treat!

Bob Webber - July 21, 2021 at 10:04 PM

CW

“ *Doug and family*  
*We are so sorry to hear about Karen and your loss! She was a blessing to anyone who knew her! Please know that we are praying for all of you. My fondest memories were our trips and constant laughter together - found some funny photos and will send them to you Doug! Love and hugs to you and your entire family!*

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**Carol Webber** - July 21, 2021 at 09:55 PM

MB

“ *I am so sorry for the loss of Karen. My thoughts and prayers are with all of the family. So sorry Fran!*

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**Martha Sue Binner** - July 21, 2021 at 09:42 PM

TS

“ *Prayers for everyone*



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**Toni Smyly** - July 21, 2021 at 08:34 PM

KH

“ *My deepest sympathies to Karen's family. I have not seen Karen for many years and was happy to read in this notice what a wonderful life she had and that she was surrounded by love. I am very sorry for your loss.*

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**Karen Griffin Hollon** - July 21, 2021 at 08:16 PM

RW

“ Dear Doug words cannot express my sympathy for you and your family.  
She was a beautiful woman. I so enjoyed seeing pictures that you posted of your family over the years. Just know that I am praying for you during this difficult time may God hold you all up in the hollow of his hand and give you comfort at this time. Love, Rachel Worrall White

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**Rachel White** - July 21, 2021 at 08:08 PM

RS

“ *Lo Siento mucho amigo*

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**Rafa Sánchez** - July 21, 2021 at 07:37 PM

RW

“ *In Loving Memory of Karen Elizabeth Neilson, A Sympathy Gift of 10 Memorial Trees has been Planted In Loving Memory of Karen Elizabeth Neilson courtesy of Robert Webber.*

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**Robert Webber** - July 21, 2021 at 07:03 PM

CB

“ *Our thoughts are with you.*

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**Craig D Bernard** - July 21, 2021 at 05:53 PM

CS

“ *I will forever remember the fun times we shared. Karen was always a pleasure to be with and was a constant ray of sunshine, lightning up any room or place she entered. Karen will be deeply missed by all of us who loved and cared about her.*

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**Chuck Smith** - July 21, 2021 at 04:58 PM