

March 17, 2017

**CONDOLENCE FROM CANAAN BAPTIST CHURCH, URBANA, ILLINOIS**

To the Bereaved Family of our Beloved Deacon, Willie T. Summerville, a Tither, Sunday School Teacher, Minister of Music, S.W.A.T. Soul Winner, Canaan Academy supporter, and one of God's greatest Pastoral Supporters!

A steadfast voice has been silenced; yet, we can never forget the tireless and gifted service he gave to Canaan Baptist Church.

"Music is God's gift to man." As Minister of music, Deacon Summerville recognized that God, in His wisdom and grace, has planted a song in our hearts and has endowed us with voices to give it utterance. Isaiah 23:16 says "Sing many songs that you may be remembered." Deacon Summerville will be remembered as a man of courage, creativity, compassion, and celebration of those whom he encouraged to believe they could sing.

Deacon was a master teacher who taught and admonished others in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in their heart to God (Colossians 3:16). His love for music and for the Lord demonstrated that The Sunday Worship strikes the keynote for the week, and that nobody dreams of music in Hell, and nobody conceives of Heaven without it.

May your heart be encouraged to know that there are souls in Heaven today because Deacon Summerville was a Soul Winner on the S.W.A.T. who shared the Plan of Salvation.

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He was a superb “Sunday School Teacher who knew that the “The joy of teaching ... is to touch a life forever!” He was an effervescent person excited about EDIFYING souls in the WAY of the Lord; EDUCATING them in the WORD of the Lord, and ENCOURAGING them in the WORK of the Lord.

There is an empty place in your heart and home, but we pray you will be encouraged to know that the finality of death only brightens the reality of Heaven! The Apostle Paul said, “To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.” It is not death to close the eyes that have been dimmed with tears, for Deacon Summerville is safe in the arms of Jesus and is now spending eternal years with the Lord.

As he comforted others, we pray that you, too, will be comforted by the God of all comfort. May you find comfort in our Lord’s encouraging words, “I am the Resurrection and the life; he that believeth in Me, though he were dead yet shall he live.”

We are praying for your strength in the Lord. God is able to sustain you, for He knows just how much you can bear.

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