

Bio-Shirley Baylor

My name is Shirley Baylor. I am a mother of three sons, a daughter, two daughters-in-law and nine grandchildren. My family is such a special blessing. My father often said "A happy family is but an earlier heaven." Such a beautiful sentiment!

I am a happily retired Special Education Teacher. My 35 years of teaching were amazing and rewarding. It was a privilege to connect with so many students over the years. I taught in a preschool, an elementary school, Head Start Program, private special needs school and Junior and senior High Schools all of which are located in our local towns. I have taught religious education classes for both Saint Teresa's and Holy Spirit.

Growing up in West Creek was the absolute best! We walked to our two-room school house, had lessons, walked home for lunch and back to school. Grades K-second were taught by one teacher! We were the best of friends, swimming in the creek in the summer, playing in the snow in the winter, horseback riding at my grandmother's and sleepovers at each other's houses.

My family and I were members of Saint Teresa' Catholic Church. I was baptized, made my First Holy Communion and Confirmation in the building that now is home to Holy Spirit Episcopal Church.

After graduating high school, I began working at the First National Bank of Tuckerton as a teller. I was married at nineteen and divorced seven years later. That's when I enrolled at Stockton and received my Bachelor of Science degree in Speech Pathology and Audiology. I planned to work as a speech pathologist in our public schools so I could be on the same schedule as my children. Just then the schools began requiring the speech pathologists have a Master's degree. Back to college. This time I went to Georgian Court College and took courses in education. Looking back I can't imagine how I managed it all.

It was at this point in my life that I began searching for a different church. I spent some time at the Presbyterian church, then tried the Methodist church. Finally, on the advice of my aunt I walked into the church of the Holy Spirit and I was home. I love my church! This is where I belong.

I was confirmed in the church by Bishop Councill and Evie Brown was my sponsor. On April 18, 2014 I was married by Mother Martha. We had a beautiful service and our reception was held in the Hospitality Room.

Sadly, my husband's memorial service was also to take place here after his death on December 12, 2017. The church was full with lots of family and friends and like our wedding, his memorial was well done.

I enjoyed helping out in the kitchen for the fish fry, gift auctions and making pies for the Blueberry Festival. Two years ago after many invitations from Louise, I attended Bible Study and am so happy that I did! I also worked at the Farmer's Market, Pumpkin Patch, Luau, and assisted Frosty as a greeter for the Easter Bunny Breakfast. That's a little bit about my spiritual journey that led me to Holy Spirit. I also am volunteering at the Community Garden that produces fresh food for the Tuckerton Food Bank, taking crochet classes with my granddaughter, singing in our choir, teaching Sunday School, and eating lots of birthday cakes. It's always someone's birthday in my big beautiful family!