



## Thomas Rhea Peake

December 8, 1939 - August 15, 2017

Beloved King College professor and supply pastor for several area churches, Dr. Thomas Rhea Peake, 77, of Gray, TN passed away and went to be with his Lord Tuesday morning, August 15 at the Bristol Hospice House. He was preceded in death by his parents Mattie Jane and Charles B. Peake; his brothers, Lawrence and Charles Peake; his sisters, Violet, Buelah Rose and Cleo Yoakum; and his cherished daughter, Teresa Lynn Peake Foulke. Survived by his wife of 59 years, Peggy Ann Collins Peake; son in law Stewart Bartow Foulke III of Johnson City, children Deborah Ann Denney and spouse Larry of Blountville; Barbara Kae Roark and spouse Wm. Rowland of Knoxville; Beverly Rae Moore and spouse Joe of Bristol; Thomas R. Peake, II and spouse Joi Elizabeth of Winston-Salem, NC; and D. Claudette Decker and spouse Brett of Jonesborough; and thirteen grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Sisters: Dorothy Cline of Rock Hill, SC; Wilma Blake of Winter Haven, FL; Peggy Keith of Richmond, VA; and Darla Hunter of Oklahoma City, OK.

Dr. Peake was a life-long scholar, graduating with distinction from Burton High School, King College, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and the University of North Carolina. In 1957, he represented his home state of Virginia at Boys' Nation and was elected President by his peers. He began preaching at age 16 and served churches his entire life which included Pound Presbyterian Church in Pound, VA, Sunrise Baptist Church in Bristol, TN, First Baptist Church in Bristol, VA, Shady Valley Presbyterian Church in Shady Valley, TN, and Mountain City Presbyterian Church in Mountain City, TN. A distinguished professor and historian, he taught thousands of students at King College, led study tours in the U.S. and abroad, and authored numerous books and articles. A talented singer, musician and dancer, he loved music and performing for congregations, friends and family. He was inducted to the J.I. Burton High School Hall of Fame in 2017. For their excellent care of Dr. Peake, the family would like to thank his primary physician Dr. Amanda C. Stoltz; Drs. Butler and Poohbalasingham and the staff of the Fresenius clinics in Kingsport and in Bristol.

The family will receive friends Saturday, August 19, 2017 from 2:00PM until 4:00PM at First Presbyterian Church, Bristol, Tennessee. A Memorial Service for Dr. Thomas Rhea Peake will follow at 4:00PM and will be officiated by Dr. Errol Rohr and Rev. Charles

Echols.

Honorary pallbearers will be Dr. William J. Wade and John S. Gaines and King College history majors everywhere.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the Peake/Wade Scholarship Fund at King University, 1350 King College Road, Bristol, TN 37620.

# Events

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**AUG** **Visitation** 02:00PM - 04:00PM

**19**

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First Presbyterian Church

701 Florida Avenue, Bristol, TN, US, 37620

**AUG** **Remembrance Service** 04:00PM

**19**

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First Presbyterian Church

701 Florida Avenue, Bristol, TN, US, 37620

# Comments

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“ peggy and family  
i am so sorry about the passing of your loved one and my long time friend, Tom  
i cannot find your address to send a card.  
i have relived so many sweet memories from so many years ago but still fresh in my  
mind  
the time i spent with terri and debbie were so wonderful .  
i did not get to know the other children.  
miles have kept us apart but i love you in my heart.  
love wilma jean

**Wilma Bellamy** - August 29, 2017 at 11:25 AM

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“ I remember Dr. Peake with fondness, respect, and gratitude. I was a History Major at King College and took several classes from him 1966-69. I went on to be a U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer with postings in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Canada, and Washington, DC. The information, analysis, and judgements that I learned from Dr.Peake helped me in my career and in life. Dr.Peake was a good man, thoughtful, kind, and a skilled teacher. He should be honored and will be missed.  
Robert Stephen Ayling, King College, Class of 1969

**Robert Stephen Ayling** - August 25, 2017 at 05:22 PM

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“ No man had greater respect and faith in their students than this great educator. This confidence he instilled helped me develop into a high school history teacher with a much better reputation than I had as a student at King.

Thoughts go to the family and a wish I had got closer to all.  
Reuben Pritchard

**Reuben Pritchard** - August 25, 2017 at 03:35 PM

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“ To the Family and Friends of Dr. Thomas R. Peake,

Like you, I am a product of Dr. Thomas R. Peake. I graduated from King College as a business major, but I continued to study history, beyond matriculation requirements because of Dr. Peake.

I sat near the window looking west from Bristol Hall overlooking the men's dorms, always in the back, admiring Dr. Peake for his passion, light grey blazer, and chalk smattered face. Yes, he used a chalk board and was covered in chalk by 11:30 a.m., every day. The steam pipes for the heating would bang periodically, and Dr. Peake conducted his history encounter without distraction, day after day.

His passion, besides people and Christ, in my estimation, was Russian society. I was in one of his classes; we were reading “A History of Russia” by Nicholas V. Riasanovsky. About mid-way through the course one day he stopped his writing on the chalk board (abruptly). He turned around, and with wide eyes, asked “who wants to go to the Soviet Union?”. My mother sponsored the trip for me and the book came to life because of Dr. Thomas Peake, my tour guide. I will never forget the experience. I will never forget the man that provided that gift.

Dr. Peake impacted my life. He came to my home off campus from King. We sat on buses together. We ate together. He enjoyed teaching me (and others) and I (and others) enjoyed learning from him.

I am not a history major. History is not what I learned from him. What I learned was passion and excitement. That is what I received from this humble and loveable leader of instruction. I didn't take those classes for the history. I took them because his name was on the course listing.

For the family: I will pray for you and for him. I am forever grateful to have known this man and that he cared enough to even call my name in class. Thank you for sharing him.

Sean T. Dardeau (1991)

Sean Dardeau - August 25, 2017 at 10:09 AM

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“ Dr. Peake was a great teacher. He was my Western Civilization professor at King College, and I was never really interested in history until taking his class. He was such an interesting person and a great personality on the campus of King. My favorite memory of Dr. Peake was when he played banjo in the cafeteria. :)

Karen Sproles Elizondo - August 21, 2017 at 08:38 PM

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“ Dr. Tom Peake was a true and humble leader. When he was teaching and detecting interest from a student he would smile and sling both hands forward with pointed fingers like a cowboy shooting for great ideas. His encouraging enthusiasm was contagious. He knew stories and details and interesting angles of everything we encountered in history and modern life. And yet, he responded to every question you asked him as if it were a puzzle he could not complete without your help. When he preached he would weave in current events (he knew what was happening on every continent), history, Peanuts cartoons, the context of what people were wearing and trading and saying as Jesus walked through communities, and he would send us out with a new understanding of how to apply the Gospel to our lives. He took a group of us to Russia with an adventurous spirit, tons of local contacts, and a detailed plan to nurture our group and nurturing the Russian people we spent time with. He raised an incredible family and expressed his love and respect for Peggy Ann in ways that generated insight for people around them on how to take care of a healthy marriage. He had many professional degrees and credentials, but if you asked him what he was proud of in his resume he would proudly describe his time as a meat cutter at Krogers. He carried large loads of books and papers across the Oval at King, but if you had a ball, he would put the books down and throw the ball with you for a precious moment and then run to class. He interviewed and knew critical figures from the civil rights movement and could draw from real experience to share hard lessons through a compassionate heart. He helped me find my faith in Christ. Tom Peake was the best! May the good Lord bless his soul and his family. Love, Blaine Honea

**Blaine Honea** - August 18, 2017 at 11:22 PM

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“ KC Alumni Facebook page is full of tributes and thanks for our experiences in having known and learned from Dr. Peake. I thought it important to pass that information on to you, his family. He remains alive and strong in our memories, since he helped to shape us into the persons we have become. We are grateful for all he gave to us, for all we learned from him - and we look forward to seeing him again, when our turns to leave this Earth come around. It's not such a long time.... thanks be to GOD! May you find comfort in the love and outpourings of thanks for his life. Thank you for sharing him with us. We are praying for you.

**Jean Crawford Briscoe** - August 18, 2017 at 04:24 PM

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“ To the Peake Family, Our thought and Prayers are for your comfort during these times.

Love Bob and Nancy Brown

**Bob Brown** - August 18, 2017 at 12:14 PM



“ Tom was two years ahead of me at King and in those days of the early 1960s all the students knew one another. We were never close as students but inasmuch as we followed somewhat parallel careers in our graduate studies and ultimately as professors, I kept track of Tom's career with great interest. He became a King icon--a man of simple faith, an admired (indeed adored) professor, and one of those rare individuals with a knack for touching everyone with whom he came in contact. He was a worthy successor to Dr. Bill Wade, and generations of King students were blessed to have him as a professor, mentor, and friend.

Whenever I think of King, it is with a deep appreciation of the fact that it has been individuals such as Tom Peake who have given the institution and its alumni a sense of pride and proud places in the wider world.

My thoughts are with all of the family, and you will hopefully find a bit of comfort and surcease from sorrow in realization of what a wonderful man Tom Peake was and how many lives he helped make better.

Jim Casada

**Jim Casada** - August 17, 2017 at 08:42 PM

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“ Having lived in Nashville for 15 years, I just recently found out that Dr. Thomas Rhea Peake had been ill. I wrote a letter yesterday - long overdue - to tell him how much his teaching and mentoring meant to me when I was at King. I hate that I never got to send it to him this side of heaven, so I'm posting it here for his family and friends. Maybe he can even read it from Heaven. Who knows?

If someone has impacted your life, don't put off telling them.

August 14, 2017

Dr. Thomas Rhea Peake:

An inspirer.

An empowerer.

An engager.

A supporter.

A mentor.

These are the words that come to mind first when I think about you and your impact on my life. Your enthusiasm, love of history, and passion for learning awakened the same in me when I was at King - and those things are still alive in me today, almost 20 years later. You are pretty much solely responsible for my obsession with period TV shows (mostly British), movies (mostly British), and historic literature - both fiction and non-fiction.

So I just wanted to take a moment to do something that I should have done a long time ago and say thank you. Thank you for teaching me to love history.

No.

For showing me how to love history.

Thank you for introducing me to Tolstoy and Solzhenitsyn and Gogol and Turgenev and Dostoyevsky. To Voltaire and Hugo and Cervantes. To Orwell and Huxley. To Kostya Levin and Kitty Shcherbatskaya. To Jean Valjean and Fantine and Cosette. To Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. To Old Major and Napoleon and Snowball and Boxer and Clover.

Often, as I am reading or watching show about World War I in Europe, or Queen Victoria, or the Cold War, I think back to your European and Russian history classes and wonder how accurate they are and what you would think about them. And I always - without fail - end up wishing I was still in one of your classes taking notes and listening to you lecture about the tsars or the Bolsheviks or Archduke Ferdinand or Winston Churchill or Nikita Khrushchev. I so wish I had recorded some of your lectures when I was at King.

So thank you. Thank you for inspiring me to never stop learning, seeking, and growing.

Your student always,

Nancy Hodge Wike  
King College Class of 1999

P.S. The "baby" you were afraid I would have in your class? He will be 21 in November and is 6'6" tall. :)

**Nancy Wike** - August 17, 2017 at 10:06 AM

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“ Everyone who knew Tom at King College was blessed beyond measure to know a man who paired scholarly and Christian endeavors in ways that struck home to the mind and heart and preserved the core values of his academic discipline and faith. When Tom spoke, people listened. He earned that respect through hard work and loyalty. I send my condolences to Ann and the entire family.

**Edgar Torbert** - August 17, 2017 at 10:01 AM

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“ Debbie and family, We were saddened to hear of your loss. May you find comfort from the beautiful memories and look to the Lord for strength during the difficult days and weeks ahead. You and your entire family remain in our thoughts and prayers.



**Michael/Barbara Akers** - August 17, 2017 at 08:50 AM

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“ Barbra,Debbie,Tommy and Claudette,I am so sorry to learn of the loss of your dad.It has been years since the time we had at BSG! Those are among some of my most cherished memories.Your dad raised such wonderful children.Barb and Claudette,you both set such wonderful examples for myself and so many other young girls.i have and will always consider myself blessed to have known you and your family.  
Claud you were such a good friend to me and i will always love you for that friendship.My thoughts and prayers are with you in this time of sadness.  
Love,Dawn Bailey Sims

**dawn sims** - August 17, 2017 at 08:25 AM

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“ Farewell, good friend and colleague.  
  
John Gaines and family

**Jennifer Kidder** - August 17, 2017 at 08:08 AM

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“ Lt. Danny Bains BTPD-retired  
Dr. Peake was one of my favorite teachers at King and helped guide me in the right direction. A truly kind and humble gentleman. God bless your family.

**Lt. Danny Bains BTPD** - August 17, 2017 at 08:05 AM

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“ Tom was a good one, all his life, a genuine good person. Norton was lucky to have spawned him. My sincere sympathies to Peggy and family.

**Thomas E. Adams** - August 16, 2017 at 11:05 PM

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“ Keeping the family safe n my thoughts and prayers.

**Heather Cooke** - August 16, 2017 at 09:17 PM

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“ Deborah Leslie lit a candle in memory of Thomas Rhea Peake



**Deborah Leslie** - August 16, 2017 at 08:20 PM



“ Ann and Family, I am so very sorry to hear about pastor Tom. I remember all the good times when you and he were in Shady Valley Presbyterian Church. I remember when he christened my 3 grand children. I also remember all the vacation Bible schools when Leeann was growing up. Again I am so sorry and I am praying for you and the family. Love, Debbie

**Deborah Leslie** - August 16, 2017 at 08:29 PM



“ Ann, I am very saddened to learn of Tom's passing even though we know he is in a better place. I remember how caring and helpful he was to my mother and to our whole family. He was a wonderful pastor who cared for the entire community when he was at the Shady Valley Presbyterian Church. My thoughts and prayers are with you and your family. Lou Dunlap

**Louise Dunlap** - August 17, 2017 at 04:31 PM

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“ There are so many who knew Dr. Tom better than I and can relate meaningful stories about how he touched so many lives. I can only say how blessed Sonnie and I are to have had our paths intersect with Tom's for a few years.

But I will add... I listened harder to Dr. Tom's sermons than any pastor I can remember. Tom always brought a good message - but he also liked to randomly call on a member of the congregation to say the benediction. And I sure didn't want to be the one who couldn't close the service without including a "take away" from the sermon!

I give thanks that we'll get to be with Tom and Ann in eternity.

**John Wright** - August 16, 2017 at 08:16 PM

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“ Thoughts and prayers of sincerest sympathy to the Peaked family during this difficult time. Unfortunately I will be unable to attend the visitation and funeral service this coming Saturday but my spirit will with you all. All my heartfelt love, Kat Marshall.

**Kat Marshall** - August 16, 2017 at 07:17 PM

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“ Ms. Patty and I have been remembering all of the great memories that we shared with Dr. Tom. He was such a blessing to Eden, Mackenzie and I. I will always remember what a sweet, kind, loving man he was. May God bring comfort to you Ms. Ann and your family in the days ahead. God Bless



**Jean Linton** - August 16, 2017 at 04:46 PM