



## John A. Beckwith

June 26, 1946 - October 13, 2019

John A. Beckwith  
1946–2019

In Celebration of A Wonderful Life

“Strange, isn’t it? Each man’s life touches so many other lives. When he isn’t around he leaves an awful hole, doesn’t he?”

- Clarence The Angel

The son of Nellie Mae Beckwith and Llewellyn Arthur Beckwith, John was born in Keene, New Hampshire on June 26, 1946. John was their third child, joining his sisters Jane and Esther. The three siblings would later welcome a fourth, Thomas. John spent the whole of his young life in Keene, surrounded by mountains, rivers, forests and their animal inhabitants — an unsullied wilderness that certainly fostered his deep and pensive nature.

After graduating from Keene Senior High School in 1964, he worked as a plumber and a lumberjack in the pristine wild of his beloved New England. In 1968 he matriculated at Keene State College, where he nourished his life-long academic nature and strengthened his faith, serving as president of the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship. In the early 1970's he made a difficult, life-altering decision to travel to a foreign land — Kansas City, Missouri. Although

it meant temporarily separating from his precious daughter, Melina, John followed what he knew to be a divine directive to attend the Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City. He was, at heart, a theologian. The burgeoning preacher moonlighted as a plumber. He completed 3 of his planned 4 years at the Theological Seminary before he was broadsided by that most devastating force that has derailed the plans of countless men through the ages — a woman. This particular woman had 3 children in tow. His heart and his selflessness proved greater than his personal desires and he was taken on a journey that he never foresaw. Although he wrestled and spoke of the “death of a preacher”, he listened to his new divine directive and became a husband to Marsha and a devoted father to 3 children: Billy, Larry and Laura.

John went to work as a full-time plumber, tackling that work with the same assiduous disposition as his Seminary studies. He believed and lived Colossians 3:23: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.” He also worked with all his heart at connecting with and shaping the children that were suddenly in his charge. He never viewed them as anything but his own, and his dedication in this arena altered their lives in wonderful and ineffable ways. He also found a new mission field, preaching behind water heaters instead of the pulpit he had once imagined.

In 1984 his daughter, Melina, died in an auto accident. She was 18 at the time and still in New Hampshire. This inexplicable event cut a deep gash, but, amazingly, did not shake his faith. He knew that God had a plan and he somehow kept moving forward, continuing to listen for his next marching order.

Although at the time it seemed an impossible dream, John ultimately started his own plumbing company. Pilgrim Plumbing was born and John became a

master plumber and a master conductor, running that business with integrity and care and gaining an impeccable reputation. During the waning years of his life, John's equanimity was even more commendable.

Encumbered by a series of strokes, his unwavering faith remained on display. He ultimately died unexpectedly on October 13, 2019.

John leaves behind a loving group of admirers: his wife of 43 years, Marsha; his children, Billy and wife Shawna, Larry and wife Shari, Laura and husband Keith; his brother and sister-in-law, Tom and Cathy; his brother-in-law, Terry; and a gaggle of grandchildren and great grandchildren, Caleb, Kristian, Keifer, John Daniel (JD), Samuel, Natalie, Emma, Carli, Vincent, Paxton, Matthew and Easton.

# Tribute Wall



“Garden Accent Stone - *“It Broke My Heart to Lose You”* was purchased for the family of John A. Beckwith.



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October 25, 2019 at 04:30 PM



“John was always admired by our family for the love, comfort and security that he gave Terry. He not only filled a void in Terry's life when he was lost but he gave Terry unconditional love and a purpose. We thought the world of him. His faith was unwavering and stood as a light of faith for all. We are so grateful for all he gave.

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**Kenna Manley** - October 25, 2019 at 01:22 PM