



# AGAPE of NC

*Strengthening Families One Child At A Time*



## IN MEMORIAM: JACK R. BAKER

SECOND QTR 2020

For many years, Jack Baker was a tremendous supporter for AGAPE of North Carolina. We are grateful for this opportunity to share a little about him now.

Son of the late Rudolph Jackson and Edna Carpenter Baker, Jack was born in Durham, NC on April 18, 1946. He graduated from Durham High School in 1964 and from UNC-Chapel Hill in 1967. Having obtained his MS degree in Chemical Engineering, Jack made that field his lifelong profession. His major interests were the Lord, his family, travel, hiking in the woods, and genealogy. Most recently, Jack lived in Charlotte, NC and worshipped with the Archdale Church of Christ.

Last January, at the age of 73, Jack graduated to Glory. He passed away of melanoma at the Charlotte home of his sister and brother-in-law, Dr. Betty Baker Reiter & Dr. Harold B. Reiter (both mathematics professors). Jack's family arranged for his earthly remains to be returned to Durham for burial in Maplewood Cemetery. (Duke Hospital and Duke University's West Campus now occupy land that once belonged to Jack's ancestors. His great-great grandparents, Jesse & Mary Rigsbee, and several descendants are buried in the privately-owned and preserved [T.J. Rigsbee Family Graveyard](#) located near Wallace Wade Stadium.)

Although Jack never married or had children of his own, he was a loving uncle (the photo here is from his niece's wedding in 2001) and was generously kind to others. He was known to be a gentleman -- very pleasant and well-liked.

We are told that Jack never owned a home, always choosing to live in a modest, but sufficient, apartment. He drove modest cars "until they wore out" (according to his family) before he would get another one. Jack's family also shared that he enthusiastically enjoyed bargains and couponing. All this sounds in keeping with his frugal (yet not stingy) nature.

You see, Jack saved and planned. Throughout his life – and even at his death – Jack served God, giving of his resources first to further the Lord's work and help others. Jack's sister added that he earnestly looked for opportunities to support causes in which he believed.

As Jack big-heartedly gave to AGAPE of North Carolina throughout the years, he expressed his appreciation for the significance of our mission to provide stable, loving, Christian homes for children and youth in need. Jack even honored AGAPE with a generous bequest from his estate to continue his legacy of caring for others as Jesus cared for us.



*At this time of loss, we extend our condolences to Jack's family and friends. He is, and will continue to be, missed. May we all be comforted in knowing that Jack Baker was a quiet giver, asking nothing in return – choosing instead to lay up his treasures in Heaven.*



## SPENCERS CELEBRATE ADOPTION!

By Kimberly Scott

In 2017, the Spencer family took a step out on faith and followed their hearts to serve as foster parents for children in the North Carolina foster care system.

They went through numerous emotional ups and downs throughout their journey to follow God's command of loving your neighbor as yourself.

The Spencer family showed immense grace and love in situations that felt impossible at times. Their biological son, Cullen, exhibited genuine unconditional love and acceptance -- welcoming numerous children into their home and fearlessly sharing his parents' love and time with other children.

To the Spencer's surprise -- something they really didn't expect -- was to receive an opportunity to love and care for a baby girl who would two years later become their very own little miracle!

Welcome Home MARYN!

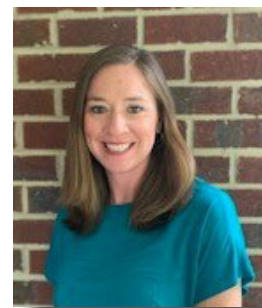


*Photos Courtesy of the Spencer Family / Photographer: Amy Jarrett*

## WELCOMING NEW STAFF:

### Daniela Perez

We are excited to introduce Daniela Perez, who joined our Staff in May as a new AGAPE Social Worker!



After dedicating the past few years to raising her own children, Daniela said she is looking forward to working with families in the Triangle and Eastern North Carolina as they prepare to foster.

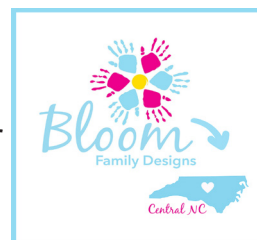
*"I'm so excited to be joining the Agape team!"*

Daniela has a strong belief that it takes a village to raise a child. She expressed that she feels blessed to have the opportunity to provide that kind of support to families and children in the foster environment.

In her free time, Daniela enjoys cooking, taking walks with her dog, and attending her daughter's soccer games.

## BLOOM BAGS! By Staci Stepp

Bloom Family Designs is a 501(c)(3) organization that creates beautifully designed rooms for adopted and foster children at no financial cost to the family.



Run by a fellow foster mom, Bloom Family Designs knows first-hand there is a lot that goes into bringing a new child home. Their hope is that their services will help each adoptive/foster family have more means and time to prepare for what truly matters -- creating a home full of hope, love, and security for each child.

*... continued on pg.3*

## AGAPE UPDATES

as of May, 2020

18

FOSTER CHILDREN  
IN CARE

3

YOUNG ADULTS  
18-21YEAR OLDS

23

LICENSED  
FOSTER FAMILIES

16

FOSTER FAMILIES  
IN TRAINING

4

PENDING  
ADOPTIONS



## WELCOMING NEW STAFF: Esther Schmidt

We are pleased to introduce Esther Schmidt too! She also came on board as an AGAPE Social Worker in May!

Even before attaining her Master's degree in Counseling, Esther Schmidt was uniquely qualified for her new role as an AGAPE Social Worker. Having been adopted as an infant, herself, Esther has a personal understanding and passion about foster care and adoption.



Shortly after adopting her, Esther's family moved to Nairobi, Kenya. She eventually returned to North America to attend university.

*Esther has commented that growing up in East Africa gave her rich and profound experiences.*

Esther is insightful, empathetic, and attuned to others. She cares deeply about the children and families with whom she has worked.

Esther will be relocating to the Piedmont soon to work AGAPE families in that region of North Carolina.

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## BLOOM BAGS! . . . continued from pg.2

Since the organization is not currently in the position to go into homes and create rooms, [Bloom Family Designs of NC](#) has launched a campaign called Bloom Bags. These bags will be filled with room essentials to help comfort a child as they transition into a new home. Each bag will have at least one sheet set, book, stuffed animal, and night light.

Bloom Family Design is asking for help to fill these bags. They have an [Amazon Wish List](#), with most items being \$20 or under!

*AGAPE of NC is very excited about some of our families receiving Bloom Bags in the future!*

For more information about Bloom Family Designs, or if you would prefer to donate monetarily, visit the organization's website: [www.bloomfamilydesigns.com](http://www.bloomfamilydesigns.com). You can also find them on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) @bloomfamilydesigns\_nc.

## GIFTS

March 2020 to May 2020

### *In Honor of* All the Amazing 2020 Graduates!

Given  
Anonymously

### *In Memory of*

**Ms. Enid Padgett**

Given By  
Roosevelt Drive Church of Christ

**Mrs. Karen Carleton**

Given  
Anonymously

**Ms. Nora Lee Mays & Ms. Novie Roddy**

Given By  
Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Mays

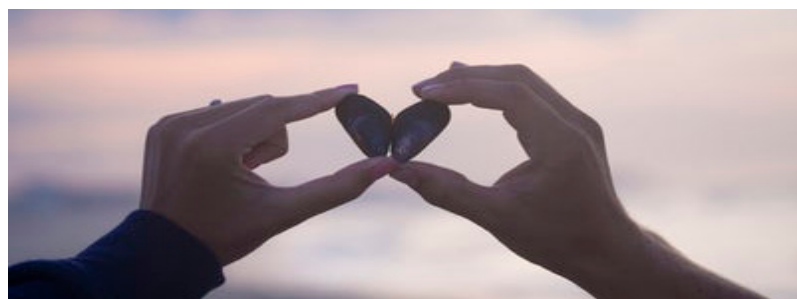
**Mrs. Elise McCullough**

Given  
Anonymously

*When you can . . .*

Please Donate to AGAPE of NC  
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or send your check to:  
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Retirement Plans & Estate Planning.





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## OUR MISSION

AGAPE of NC exists to provide professional social services as a compassionate Christian outreach to strengthen children and families.

## OUR VALUES

Children deserve Christian families, care and compassion, excellence in the provision of services, best interest of clients, financial integrity, responsible stewardship and ethical Christian standards.



FIND US @ AGAPEOFNC

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Encourage Others to help us save money  
by subscribing to our newsletter at:  
[AGAPEOFNC.ORG](http://AGAPEOFNC.ORG)

*From Jack Baker's late mother, Mrs. Edna Baker*

## Recipe for Life

*1 cup of good thoughts*

*1 cup of kind deeds*

*1 cup of consideration for others*

*2 cups of forgiveness*

*2 cups of well-beaten faults*

*Mix thoroughly and add tears of joy, sorrow, and sympathy for others.*

*Fold in 4 cups of prayer and faith to lighten other ingredients and raise the texture to great heights of Christian living.*

*After pouring all this into your daily life, bake well with the heart of human kindness.*

*Serve With a Smile!*



## DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Kimberly Scott

Dear Father God,

Thank You for giving us the strength to endure hard seasons. Continue to fill our hearts and minds. Heal those who are ill in body, mind, or spirit. Protect those who serve You and others. Empower all who walk with You. Let us know Your encouragement to calm our fears, anxieties, and sometimes, feelings of helplessness. Give us confidence to trust in Your Plan. Lord, help us unite Your Church and restore our communities to live in harmony as You intended. Let us be humbled as we remember the grace and mercy You offer to everyone. May we follow Your beloved Son, Jesus, to share such Love each day. In His Sweet Name, May we always honor and glorify You!



*Matthew 22:36-40*

*~International Children's Bible*

*36 The Pharisee asked, "Teacher, which command in the law is the most important?"*

*37 Jesus answered, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind.'*

*38 This is the first and most important command.*

*39 And the second command is like the first: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.'*

*40 All the law and the writings of the prophets depend on these two commands."*