



Carroll "Dean" Mills

March 18, 1963 - October 14, 2025

This is Dean's testimony and legacy — written in his own words to point us toward Jesus. Please read and share with friends or family who may also be blessed by it.

An open letter from Dean -

Upon reading this, I will now be in the arms of Jesus for which I will undeniably be overjoyed. Yes, missing DiAnn, family & friends, but the Bible tells us nothing experienced here on earth can compare to what lies ahead.

My request is likely unusual to most but one I hope you will consider honoring. In lieu of a typical funeral, memorial, celebration of life type service, I wish to request that each person with which I had a connection to instead attend a local Bible-believing congregation for an occasion of worship, praise, and Bible-led preaching/teaching.

My first most desire is for you to be where Jesus is the focus and glorified. In lieu of any flowers, while enjoying a time of worship, if you are confident that the congregation is having a positive impact for the Kingdom of God, then consider donating your time or money to aid in their efforts. My family and friends will be doing the same at their respective churches, and I hope you will join wherever you might reside.

Now for those with interest in what is typically shared in an obituary or handed out during a more traditional service, I'll share the following and switch to third person:

Carroll Dean Mills was born on March 18, 1963, in Saint Louis, MO and placed in the Baptist Children's Home where he was quickly retrieved for adoption and picked up by his new family Robert Mills & Carolyn Maxine Farr on April 3, 1963, which coincidentally was his maternal grandmother, Nina Prue Farr's birthday. His job, day 1 was being a preacher's kid and so the journey began. Travels commenced from MO, OK, CO and back to OK as his dad pastored small congregations, some congregations like in southwest CO were still considered a mission field at the time.

Summer of 1965, we added to our posse with an adopted sister, Roberta Louise. Many fun memories with the expanded family as we enjoyed camping the great outdoors plus participating year-round in Southern Baptist venues such as Annual Conventions, Glorietta, local summer camps, RA's, GA's/Acteens.

Dean's musical journey began in CO and with Mother and Grandmother musically inclined his interest was immediately noticed. He had learned enough to play the piano for church services in Cortez, CO by age 6. Upon returning to OK, he found more advanced teachers and was accomplished enough to accompany all the choirs and ensembles in Poteau Junior High and High School from 7th grade thru his Senior Year.

He won a piano competition at Southeastern Oklahoma State University that supplied a full tuition scholarship where he ended up getting a bachelor's in computing science with minors in accounting and music. Although he never intended to perform or teach music, he knew he would always use his God-given talent within a local church. That remained the case until recent times

would no longer permit. What joy he had in contributing in a small manner to a tremendous variety of musical works well over a 50-year span.

Dean met the love of his life in Houston, DiAnn Gail Barrett, while attending Metropolitan Baptist Church and they were married on November 24, 1993. The marriage came with a bonus of 4 sons, three of which still lived at home: Ben, Brian, Brett & Beau. DiAnn frequently said if she had more, she would be Broke.

Times were never the same for Dean. Mixed in with many good times were also ones we hope never happen. That was the case with son Brett who in July 2021 was killed due to an auto/pedestrian accident. Grandkids have been a joy to experience thru all the ages.

Dean having the opportunity to come alongside to support DiAnn's Writing/Speaking/Mentoring/Coaching/Editing business was a dream come true and one that, although started out informal and part-time many years ago, after a release from his corporate job in 2017, became a full-time effort. Dean gave thanks for the blessing of siblings and extended family whose love and prayers encouraged him through the years with all endeavors.

Back to first person — Last, but certainly not least, my spiritual journey and getting acquainted with Jesus began during a summer Texas Youth-Led tent revival to Cortez, CO where my dad pastored. There was something that triggered in my heart of understanding where it all made sense and I was baptized shortly thereafter.

My love for and desire to know Jesus has increased more and more over the years. Certainly, there were periods of being slack, but I always knew of my grounding and remained confident in my Savior.

How fortunate I've been to conclude my journey this side of Heaven under the great spirit-led leadership of Champion Forest Baptist Church and the Biblical-Literacy class. Words can't express my deep appreciation for being weekly led to dig deeper into God's Word and increase my relationship with Jesus in more meaningful ways.

"12...but I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me."

II Timothy 1:12 (ESV)

Finally, please consider this Good News!

"3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures..."

I Corinthians 15:3-4 (ESV)

A Final Blessing

"The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:24-26 (ESV)

Tribute Wall

GM

“ From friends Gary and Nancy Manuel - It has already been a little over 2-weeks since Dean left this earth and headed for heaven.

His warmth; his smile; his presence; and his musical talent; especially his wonderful piano playing will be missed by many. He and Diann shared the same wedding anniversary day as ours. We have always remembered and have kept ya'll in our thoughts and prayers - on November 24th.

Dean, we miss you and always will.

Gary and Nancy Manuel - October 30, 2025 at 11:37 AM