

**Thalia Deaver Retires After 25 Years as Associational Clerk**

Thalia Deaver has served the Columbia Metro Baptist Association as clerk for 25 years. In her role she has served with directors of missions, moderators and countless other volunteers who have served in the ongoing work of the association. And, it turns out, she’s had a stellar attendance record.

“I have only missed one meeting that I can recall in 25 years of service. I always looked forward to the time when we would get together to meet,” Deaver says.

Director of Missions George Bullard will recognize Deaver during the Jan. 12 worship service at Denny Terrace Baptist Church, where she is a member.

“Thalia Deaver is a true servant of God and His Church. She faithfully serves her local church, the ministry needs of family and friends and has, over the past quarter of a century, been a loyal and dependable servant of the Columbia Metro Baptist Association as our clerk. She is dependable, committed and has been a true gift to our association,” Bullard says.

A West Columbia native, Deaver and her husband joined Denny Terrace Baptist in 1960 when they built a house nearby “in the country.” She has been a consistently active member, serving as church clerk for 39 years and as secretary and treasurer for about 25 years. Deaver is a choir member, Woman’s Missionary Union director and her four children were baptized at Denny Terrace Baptist.

“I have done just about everything but preach and play the piano – I can’t do that! I go every time the door opens. In fact, most of the time I’m unlocking the door,” she admits with a laugh.

Deaver began her work as associational clerk after retiring from a career in insurance, continuing to use the short-hand and note taking skills she possessed in a new way. At that time the clerk position, like the moderator, rotated annually. Deaver says each year she was asked to serve again until a few years into the role she became an annual fixture.

“The meetings were such a special time for me to be present and do what I could for our association. Some of the most enjoyable times were when I was able to see the enthusiasm and excitement in the group for special mission events. When new pastors came in, they were full of excitement and ready to get things done. It was also exciting when the mission building was renovated,” she says.

During her tenure Deaver was pleased to watch Columbia Metro Association grow to be almost 100 churches strong and to “see the churches working together to glorify God.” She says she still sees God working through the association as it looks toward the future.

“Like everything else, things change. I’m 87-years-old but, as my favorite Bible verse says, ‘I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,’” she says.

In her second retirement, Deaver plans to devote more time to caring for her siblings and enjoy fun times with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

“My family is in church, and I am so pleased at that legacy,” she adds.

Cookie Adams, member of Kilbourne Park Baptist Church, has been elected to serve as the new associational clerk.