



## Steven Lawson

September 9, 1954 - August 19, 2018

Steven Earl Lawson, 63, died unexpectedly of natural causes on Sunday, August 19, 2018, at his home in New York City.

Steve was born in San Diego, California, on September 9, 1954, the son of George and Doris Mattocks Lawson. He attended Pacific Park Elementary School in Fullerton, California, and French Junior High School in Topeka, Kansas. He graduated from Topeka West High School in 1972. Steve started playing the piano at the age of four and took piano lessons first from his mother and then from the church organist. At age 12 he began playing the piano and organ at the First Southern Baptist Church of Topeka. Steve accompanied the church's youth choir as well as choirs at school. During high school, Steve studied the pipe organ with Max Elsbury at Grace Episcopal Cathedral in Topeka. His first professional position as organist was at the First Christian Church of Topeka, a position he obtained while still in high school.

Steve graduated from Oklahoma City University in 1979 with Bachelor of Music degree. He studied with Wilma Jensen and Antone Godding there. While in Oklahoma City, Steve was the organist at the First Baptist Church. He continued his studies with Dr. Jensen when she joined the faculty of Indiana University, Bloomington, and graduated in 1981 with a Master of Music degree. While at Indiana, Steve accompanied the University Singers, where he had the opportunity to play for conductors Alan Harler, Jan Harrington,

Margaret Hillis, and Robert Shaw. He was also accompanist for the voice studio of noted singer and teacher Elizabeth Mannion. Steve began studying the carillon in 1979 with Indiana University Carillonneur, Dr. Linda Walker Pointer. He earned a minor in carillon playing from IU. He was a member of the Guild of Carillonneurs in North America (GCNA) and performed as carillonneur at Arlington National Cemetery in Belgium and Holland.

After graduating from Indiana University, Steve served as organist at Christ United Methodist Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. In 1983 he moved to New York City to begin a career in information technology starting at the Rogers and Wells law firm and later as director of information technology for J. P. Stevens & Co., Inc. Steve sang in the choir, substituted as organist for weddings and funerals, and served as assistant carillonneur at the Riverside Church in New York City. In 1984 he accepted the position of organist and choirmaster for the Church of Our Savior in Manhasset, New York. In 1986 he was appointed director of music for Saint Luke's Lutheran Church in New York City. While at Saint Luke's, Steve was responsible for the installation of a new pipe organ built by E. F. Walcker and Company of Germany. A photograph of the organ appeared on the cover of *The American Organist* journal in July 1990. The journal also included a detailed description of the organ, which he authored.

Since 1997, Steve was the assisting organist at the Episcopal Church of the Heavenly Rest in New York City. He also worked as a freelance organist and accompanist in New York City. Steve was active in the New York City Chapter of The American Guild of Organists, having served variously as registrar, webmaster, and editor of the Concert Calendar. He was the creator of "The New York City Organ Project: Documenting the organs—present and past—that have been installed in the five boroughs of New York City." This extensive website-based catalogue was a labor of love for Steve who began the work in 1999. He was also a member of the Saint Wilfrid Club for Organists, the

Organ Historical Society, and the Anglican Association of Musicians.

Steve is survived by his parents, of Topeka KS. He was predeceased by his sister, Mary Ellen Lawson, on December 20, 2017.

A memorial service and celebration of Steve's life will be at 11 a.m. Saturday, October 6, 2018, at the Episcopal Church of the Heavenly Rest, 1085 Fifth Avenue at 90th Street, New York City NY 10128.

Memorial contributions may be made payable to the Church of the Heavenly Rest for a music fund in Steven's honor.

# Previous Events

## **A Celebration of Life**

OCT 6. 11:00 AM (ET)

Episcopal Church of the Heavenly Rest  
1085 Fifth Ave at 90th St  
New York City, NY 10128

# Tribute Wall



“ *Steven Lawson*

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January 28, 2023 at 12:08 PM