



Kathleen Mallory Brief Biography

Growing Up Years

Kathleen Mallory was born on January 24, 1879, near Selma, Alabama. Brought up in church, Kathleen's home life provided the highest example of Christian service. Her father, H.S.D. Mallory, served five years as president of the Alabama Baptist State Convention, and her mother excelled in making their home a haven of hospitality. Kathleen professed faith in Jesus Christ at age 10.

While a student at Goucher College in Baltimore, Maryland, Kathleen met Janney Stillwell Lupton, a medical student who became enchanted with this Southern girl's store of anecdotes learned from her own physician grandfather. They eventually became engaged. Following graduation, Kathleen taught school in Demopolis while Janney finished his internship in Washington, D.C. The couple exchanged letters daily.

Tragedy struck when Janney contracted tuberculosis; however, he remained well enough to begin his medical practice in Hendersonville, North Carolina, and made plans with Kathleen for a summer wedding. His condition drastically worsened in winter 1907. He fought the illness until his death on March 23, 1907. Kathleen went home to Selma to grieve and ultimately to set a new course for her life.



Adapting to a New Course

While First Baptist Church of Selma challenged Kathleen to accept some leadership responsibilities, her father successfully persuaded her to serve as superintendent of the Dallas County WMU. She traveled by horse and buggy over unpaved roads, and often encountered opposition to missions and to women who wanted to talk about missions. There were no mission study books or WMU materials.

In 1908, Kathleen accompanied her father to the Alabama Baptist State Convention in Roanoke, where the women met separately from the men. There she read aloud a letter from a missionary to China. As the letter expressed the needs for more workers and more support through prayer and giving, Kathleen was deeply moved. She wrote that she felt her Lord was saying, "As the Father hath sent me, so I send you." Her interest in the furtherance of missions education would never be the same.

Soon after her missions call from the Lord in Roanoke, Kathleen became statewide leader for Young Women's Auxiliary (YWA). In 1909, she became Alabama WMU's corresponding secretary-treasurer, a position in which she observed a noticeable growth in women's knowledge of missions and willingness to pray aloud and give testimonies in front of groups.

Expanding Role in Southern Baptist Life

Kathleen's delightful appearance and consecrated character soon earned her the nickname "The Sweetheart of Alabama Baptists," but her influence spread beyond the state. In 1912, Kathleen became corresponding secretary-treasurer of WMU, SBC, and her 36 years of diligent service in that position demonstrated her life theme, "Take up your cross."

She frequently traveled outside the state to speak under difficult circumstances. She was an extraordinary writer, preparing many widely-read articles and leaflets, exchanging handwritten letters with missionaries and editing *Royal Service* magazine.

“Substance and self” are all a Christian has to give, and these gifts should be “fragrant with self-denial.”

—Kathleen Mallory

At the 1915 Southern Baptist Convention, Kathleen and fellow Alabamian Maude Reynolds McLure made an appeal on behalf of the WMU Training School in Louisville, Kentucky. Amid opposition to women speaking publicly, Kathleen and Maude's challenging message was greatly influential in breaking down obstacles to women's service in missions worldwide.

As corresponding secretary-treasurer of WMU, SBC, Kathleen traveled at her own expense to China and South America. Upon her return to the United States, she passionately urged women to pray more fervently for missions to lost people and for overburdened missionaries. She regarded prayer as the Christian's deepest joy and the highest form of Christian service.

Kathleen promoted work with every ethnic group and taught that every woman ought to be a soul winner and a generous giver. Tithing was a minimum. Her apartment was frugally furnished, and items from her travels to foreign lands were sold for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. She wrote that "substance and self" were all a Christian had to give and that these gifts should be "fragrant with self-denial."

A Spiritual Giant

Kathleen retired from full-time service in 1948 and later died in her native Selma on July 17, 1954. Yet her lasting legacy of sacrificial giving and intense devotion to prayer continues to inspire Alabama Baptists decades later.

Alabama WMU honored her as the namesake of the Kathleen Mallory Mission Offering for 66 years before combining that offering with the Alabama Baptist Disaster Relief Offering and expanding them to include other Great Commission Ministries with the launch of the Myers-Mallory State Missions Offering in 2016.