

## OBITUARY FOR SUSAN BETH BUSSARD: BORN 17 JULY 1947 – 7 AUGUST 2025

Susan Beth Bussard, nicknamed “Susibeth” by her parents was born and raised in Dallas, Texas on 17 July 1947. The Lord took her home on August 7, 2025. Many background details and anecdotes of the life she lived are chronicled in her book: *The Crossings: A Memoir of Live Well Lived* which was published in June 2021. The memoir had been a work in progress since 2012, but after her husband Ron Ruiz passed away from a stroke in Feb. 2020 and COVID shut down the country, including the church. She prayed to the Lord asking, “What shall I do now, Lord?” There was never a clearer answer to prayer: “Finish the book!”

Susan grew up in Dallas where she graduated from Woodrow Wilson High School and later from the University of North Texas with bachelors and master’s degrees in English literature with a minor in Latin. She taught English and Latin for 29 years in the Mesquite ISD.

Upon retiring from teaching, she once again responded to a clear answer to prayer: “Lord, where shall I live the rest of my life?” In October 1998, she flew into Colorado Springs, rented a car and visited a longtime friend who had relocated to Salida, Colorado. She stayed over the weekend in the Springs to attend worship at First Presbyterian Church on October 4, which happened to be World Communion Sunday. When the choir entered the Sanctuary and began to sing the introit, she began to weep and thanked the Lord for showing her where to make her new home. Susan returned to Dallas, placed her house on the market, and proceeded to complete her last teaching year. In the summer of 1999, Susan packed up and moved to Colorado Springs. With the Lord in charge, she found a job teaching Latin at The Classical Academy to grades three through six. She taught Latin at TCA through the 2004/2005 school year. During that transition, she joined First Pres and the Sanctuary Choir, now affectionately known as “Big Blue.”

In the 2000s, now living a wonderful life in Colorado, Susan took up hiking and downhill skiing in her mid-fifties. On spring and fall breaks, she would often pack the car with hiking gear and provisions and drive herself to Rocky Mountain National Park or west into Utah to hike the national parks there. Susan liked to push herself on difficult hiking trails. The Lord always accompanied her and probably saved her from injury or even death more than once. On March 3, 2013 while skiing a favorite run on Monarch Mountain, Susan took a fall that resulted in a plateau fracture under the kneecap of her left leg. Her prayer, “Thank you Lord for letting me ski 10 years!” By this time, she had met Ron Ruiz. They married in 2005. Ron was baptized at First Pres and joined the church before the wedding. He and Susan sang in the choir together and served on the Deacon Board. Ron passed away in February 2020. Susan continued to live in Colorado Springs and serve the Lord at First Pres.

Susan loved to travel in the United States and overseas, starting as a child. In 1959, Susan accompanied her mother Sue on an ocean voyage trip to Sweden, the account of which is chronicled in the memoir. In January 2025 while on a cruise to South America and Antarctica, Susan was stricken with congestive heart failure. This life-changing event did not cloud the knowledge that she continued to be extraordinarily blessed.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Jim and Sue Bussard, husband of fourteen years Jim Baldwin (1946-1993) and second husband also of fourteen years, Ron Ruiz (1945-2020). She is

survived by her brother James Dillon Bussard, stepson Danny Ruiz, many cousins, nieces and nephews and countless friends.

Copies of her book *The Crossings: A Memoir of Lives Well Lived*, are available at the reception in the plaza to anyone who would like a copy.

In lieu of flowers, please contribute to the First Pres Organ Fund.