

# **\$215,000 Raised for Rachel Held Evans' Family**

Nearly 5,000 people have donated \$215,000-plus to a GoFundMe page for Rachel Held Evans' family.

Evans died May 4 after brain swelling and seizures due to an allergic reaction, leaving behind her husband, Dan, and two young children.

Pentecostal Christian Sarah Bessey, a dear friend of Evans, initially started the page to cover Evans' expenses while she was in the hospital.

"Rachel was slowly weaned from the coma medication. Her seizures returned but at a reduced rate. There were periods of time where she didn't have seizures at all. Rachel did not return to an alert state during this process. The hospital team worked to diagnose the primary cause of her seizures and proactively treated for some known possible causes for which diagnostics were not immediately available due to physical limitations. Early Thursday morning, May 2, Rachel experienced sudden and extreme changes in her vitals. The team at the hospital discovered extensive swelling of her brain and took emergency action to stabilize her. The team worked until Friday afternoon to the best of their ability to save her. This swelling event caused severe damage and ultimately was not survivable," Dan Evans said.

In the wake of Evans' death, many people have turned to the fundraising page as a way to memorialize the controversial author and speaker.

"I am so grateful for Rachel's wisdom, courage and intelligence. She is a true woman of valor. Her books have meant so much to me, encouraging me in my relationship with Jesus (and Church). Praying for her husband and dear children

and the Christian community who needs voices and hearts like Rachel's," one person posted in the comments.

Another said: "Rachel's voice and thoughtfulness meant so much to my spiritual life. I will truly miss her humor, candor, honesty, and willingness to share her personal journey. I honestly don't know what I would have done without her writings at pivotal moments in my walk. My thoughts and prayers go out to Dan and her children."

Evans was a polarizing figure in modern Christianity. In her death, many prominent Christians have penned tributes or posted to social media that while they may have disagreed with Evans' liberal theology, they respected her as a person.

"Thinking what it was about @rachelheldevans that could cause many on other sides of issues to take their hats off to her in her death. People are run rife with grief for her babies, yes. But also I think part of it is that, in an era of gross hypocrisy, she was alarmingly honest," Bible teacher Beth Moore tweeted.

Ed Stetzer of Wheaton College wrote, "It is no secret that Rachel and I landed on two different sides of the line on more than one occasion. I worked at LifeWay for several years, and you can Google to learn why that might be important if you don't know. But even amidst conflict (that was often quite personal, in that it mattered personally to both of us), she never stopped engaging directly. The effort that it takes to deal with people one-on-one is tremendous, and she did not run from it."

It's this unique legacy that multiple commenters mentioned in their donation notes.

At the time of reporting, the GoFundMe page had tripled its \$70,000 goal with donations continuing to pour in.