



## Agnes Christine Black

October 3, 1933 - July 18, 2016

Chris Black, a resident of Traverse City for over 52 years, died on July 18, 2016 after a brief stay at Munson Hospice House. She was born in Ashland, Wisconsin on October 3, 1933, to Agnes M. (Cunningham) Zak and Matthew J. Zak. Chris had one brother, Francis Thomas Zak, who preceded her in death.

Chris, her parents and brother moved to Detroit when she was a young girl, and enjoyed their life there surrounded by her mother's family; aunts, uncles, and her maternal grandmother, who had all emigrated from Edinburgh, Scotland. Chris honored her father's Polish heritage, but it was the legacy of Scottish culture, humor, love of games, and a famous sweet tooth that were passed down to her children and grandchildren, and for which she will often be remembered.

Chris completed school at Cass Technical High School. She was a gifted artist and illustrator and after graduation went to work in the display department of Kern's Department Store. On a skiing trip to Boyne Mountain, Chris met her husband of 46 years, James R. Black. They were married on August 10, 1957 at St. Mathias Episcopal Church in Detroit. Jim and Chris had two daughters, Lise and Elizabeth, before moving north to Alpena, and then to Traverse City in 1964. There they had their third daughter, Catherine, and enjoyed the small town life they relished. Chris was a stay at home mother to her three girls, while also supporting her husband's accounting career. The family skied together and enjoyed camping throughout Michigan and across the U.S. As a parent she was creative and nurturing; drawing cute animals on lunch bags, teaching her children to observe and respect nature, helping with Brownies and other activities, and even floating family pets in bathtub boats to entertain the girls.

In the 1980's, Chris returned to school and completed her Associates Degree in Commercial Art at Northwestern Michigan College. She was employed as a graphic artist by Century Group, Dingman Advertising, and Chateau Grand Traverse Winery.

Throughout her decades of living in Traverse City, Chris was an active volunteer. She gave her time and support to Habitat for Humanity, Dennon Museum, Munson Hospital, the State Theater, and many other organizations. She enjoyed her years singing with Sweet Adelines, and a quartet, "The Sweetarts." She also sang with the Grand Traverse Choral for many seasons.

But nowhere was Chris more involved and dedicated than at her church, Grace Episcopal. Serving others gave her joy, and it is another legacy she has passed on to her loved ones. Throughout her membership, Chris has served the parish through involvement in; ECW (Episcopal Church Women), Vestry Leadership, Church Choir, Bible Study, Sunday School, Alternative Gifts, many outreach projects, and as a Diocesan Convention Representative. She always enjoyed cooking and contributing to the Cookie Walk, luncheons, and fundraisers. Chris shared her artistic talents every year using her skills to create signs, posters, banners, programs and decorations for decades of celebrations, spring dinners, church bazaars and fundraisers. Fun fellowship was also part of Chris' days at Grace; particularly travel and outings with the Itchy Foot Club, and more recently, her special group of friends at Friday Game Group.

Chris' particular passion and work at Grace was in support of feeding the hungry. Locally and globally, Chris worked tirelessly to eliminate hunger. She volunteered with Grace Food Pantry, the Manna Food Project, CROP Walks, The Heifer Project, Letter Carriers' Food Drive, and Bread for the World. Perhaps most significantly, Chris initiated Friday Lunch at Grace Church with a small group of church members. She committed herself to planning, staffing, and preparing a meal each week for local community members in need, until finally retiring in just a few years ago. This ministry of not only serving food, but also sharing fellowship, has continued.

Chris' other passion in life was for travel. And not only did she just go to many intriguing places such as France, Jerusalem, Malta, Nova Scotia, and Ireland; she prepared by studying the destination's history, learned about its people, thoroughly relished each trip whether rough or smooth, and was often the one leading a group on the journey. Chris instilled her appreciation for other cultures in her family; she took her children to Venezuela, Russia, and Denmark. Even in her last decade Chris treated the entire family; children, spouses and grandchildren to trips to St. Thomas (where she snorkeled at 79 years of age) and the Smokey Mountains. In 2013, she completed her longtime dream of taking her children and granddaughters to Edinburgh where she showed them the home where her mother lived, the church where she worshiped, and finally, The Castle in which her great-grandmother was born.

Chris was preceded in death by her parents, her brother, husband James R. Black and a niece, Pamela (Zak) Thomson. She is survived by her daughters; Lise Black (Philip Naylor) of Mattawan, Elizabeth Black, and Catherine Collins (fiancé Scott Collins) of Traverse City. Also surviving are her seven grandchildren; Russell Drouillard (Lisa Devries) of Batavia IL, William Drouillard (fiancée Vigita Gritenaite) of Ft Wayne IN, Paul Miron (fiancée Mary Blauw) of Grand Rapids, Margaret Miron of Traverse City, Maxwell Collins of Salt Lake City UT, Zakery Collins, and Brittney Collins of Traverse City. Also surviving are her nieces and nephews; Dana Zak, Cynthia Zak, Debra Zak Lewis, Greg Zak, and Andrea (Zak) Linglebach.

The life of Agnes Christine Black will be celebrated with a service of Holy Eucharist, presided over by Reverend Carlton Kelley, on August 7, 2016 at 4pm. Visitation will be held one hour before the service at the church; Grace Episcopal Church, 341 Washington St., Traverse City. Memorials may be directed to Grace Episcopal Church Food Pantry or the Rector's Discretionary Fund.

# Cemetery

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**Grace Episcopal Church**  
**Columbarium**  
341 Washington St.  
Traverse City, MI, 49684

# Events

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- AUG**  
**7**

**Visitation**

03:00PM - 04:00PM

Grace Episcopal Church

341 Washington, Traverse City, MI, US,  
49684
- AUG**  
**7**

**Memorial Service**

04:00PM

Grace Episcopal Church

341 Washington, Traverse City, MI, US,  
49684

# Comments

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“ I remember the time your family lived next door to us on Pinegrove Ave. I also saw your Mom several times at the old Cottage Restaruant. We would always catch up on both of our family's. I send my condolences to each of you and will keep you in my prayers. Pat Clingan

**Pat Clingan** - July 22, 2016 at 07:22 PM

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“ Worshiping our Lord Jesus Christ with Chris was always a special blessing. and will continue to be a very sweet lasting memory...see you soon oh faithful servant.....Daryl Collins

**Daryl Collins** - July 22, 2016 at 01:07 PM

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“ Remembering Aunt Chris's wonderful and gentle soul will remain in our hearts forever. May she rest in peace. Love Cindy



**cindy zak** - July 22, 2016 at 10:57 AM

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“ Thinking of you all during this difficult time. Praying that you will find comfort and peace as you reflect on your lives together and strength and endurance during the days ahead.  
- Andrea

**Andrea** - July 22, 2016 at 10:07 AM

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“ We are so sorry for your loss. You are in our thoughts. Brad, Cindy, Garrett Bloom

**cindy** - July 20, 2016 at 09:18 PM