



Alyce Jean Peterson

August 8, 1935 - November 22, 2017

Alyce Jean (Smith) Peterson died peacefully at home, embraced by her loving family on November 22, 2017. Alyce was kindness, serenity, and grace personified. Throughout her 82 years of life, everyone who met her immediately felt her beauty and strength, and melted in the warmth of her engaging smile. Even while living with brain cancer, she only thought of others and continued to have a tremendous impact on her world.

Born in London, England, on August 8, 1935, to Edgar Harold Smith (of London) and Nelle Breen (of Holland, MI), Alyce lived her first two years with her missionary parents in Nigeria, Africa. Determining it was not safe, Ed and Nelle brought Alyce back to Holland, MI, where she was raised, along with her brother, Paul, by her grandparents, John and Jennie (DePorter) Breen.

Alyce graduated from Holland Christian High School in 1953 and then went to Calvin College, where she met Richard Peterson. They entered their 61-year marriage three years later at a service officiated by her father in Holland. Following training at Blodgett School of Nursing in Grand Rapids, MI, Alyce began a nursing career that spanned decades, specializing in labor and delivery. During her career, she helped bring thousands of babies into the world, many to women with few resources and little prenatal care; she trained new nurses and formed life-lasting relationships with colleagues. In her 40s, Alyce went back to school to earn her Bachelor's Degree in Nursing.

Rich's career in the U.S. Navy as a mathematician and engineer took them across the country, from Hawaii, where first son Jeffrey Dale was born, to Annapolis, MD, where they lost their second son, Phillip Edgar, as a newborn. In Indiana, they were blessed with Valerie Jean, and ultimately they landed in Southern California, where daughter Nancy Joy and son Brian David joined the family. They raised their family in Sunland, California. In California, Alyce worked at Serra Memorial Hospital and was very involved at Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Sun Valley. Rich and Alyce lent their beautiful voices to several choirs over the years and enjoyed traveling to Hawaii, Europe, and over time made countless road trips around the country to visit their children and grandchildren. After retirement, Rich and Alyce designed and built a home in Glen Arbor, MI, near lifelong friends and family. There, Alyce was an active member of the Glen Lake Community Reformed Church, the Glen Lake Women's Club, and the Glen Lake Library. She loved to

be productive, always volunteering and staying busy with reading, handwork, and writing letters. Alyce loved to spend time with her family and dear friends, some of whom go back to childhood.

Alyce/Mom/Grandma will be immeasurably missed by her husband, Richard; son Jeffrey, his wife, Sandy (Sterkenburg) Peterson, and children Scott and Julia (Grand Rapids); daughter Valerie Harkins, her husband Gordon, and their children Amy and Declan (Yorktown Heights, NY); daughter Nancy Peterson, her husband Bill Garcia (Johnson City, TN), and son Phillip Goldfarb (Baltimore, MD); son Brian, his wife Lori (Shimizu) Peterson, and their children Kyle and Katelyn (Stevenson Ranch, CA); brother-in-law Glen Peterson (Grand Rapids); sisters-in-law Romaine Jesky Smith (wife of the late Paul Smith), Elsie (Stonehouse) Peterson, Nancy (Peterson) Crater, Mary (Burkhalter) Peterson, and Mary Ruth Smith; many nieces and nephews; and a loving extended family in England.

A Celebration of Life service will be held on December 11 at 11 a.m. at the Glen Lake Community Reformed Church at 4902 W. MacFarlane Road in Glen Arbor. Friends may greet the family one hour prior to the service. A second service will be held in California in early 2018; details forthcoming.

Rather than flowers, Alyce and her family would be honored by memorial contributions to the following charities:

For Nature: The Leelanau Conservancy at <https://leelanauconservancy.wufoo.com/forms/p2x4bk8097jftn/>

For Pregnant Women: Elizabeth House at <http://www.elizabethhouse.net>

For the Nigerian People: Nigeria Crisis Fund at <http://www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisis/>

An online guestbook is available at <http://www.reynolds-jonkhoff.com>, where you may share your memories with the family.

Rest now, Alyce Jean, in peace and in the warm arms of your Heavenly Father and in the hearts of all those who will forever love you and hold you close.

Events

DEC **Visitation** 10:00AM - 11:00AM

11

Glen Lake Community Reformed Church
4902 County Road 616, Glen Arbor, MI, US, 49636

DEC **Celebration of Life** 11:00AM

11

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Comments



“ Tom and I want to express our grief over the death of Alyce. We have not been in touch recently, but we have such fond memories of our friendship from our California days. Alyce was such a caring person, and allowed us to become a part of your lives. She even offered to help with our oldest son's delivery. Unfortunately, you were in Michigan when he decided to show up! We wish we could share our thoughts in person, but know that we loved her and treasured our friendship. Peace to all of you.

Tom and Dar

Dar Pettinga - December 01, 2017 at 04:49 PM



“ Alyce was one of the nicest persons I have ever met. She was always so thoughtful and never said an unkind word about others. We should all be like that. I shall miss her presence. My sincere deepest sympathy to all of her family for the loss of a great woman.

Ellie Giffin - November 29, 2017 at 02:56 PM