



Obituary for Ferne (Ward) Francis

Ferne (Ward) Francis, 82, went home to be with Jesus on August 24, 2017 at 12:25 a.m. surrounded by family. Jesus had been Ferne's lifelong friend. Ferne was born March 10, 1935 the oldest daughter of Ollie Ward and Nilah (Basore) Ward.

Ferne was a lifelong Midland County resident. She was a 1953 graduate of Midland High School. She married Sherely T. Francis on June 13, 1959. Her husband predeceased her in 2002. She and Sherely shared 43 years together and had two sons Brian Francis and Gregory Francis. Ferne was a lifelong member of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana) and grew up attending the Mt. Haley Church of God. She and her family were members of the Eagle Ridge Church of God in Midland.

Ferne and Sherely were strong advocates for higher education and encouraged both of their sons to not only attend and graduate from college but to also pursue advanced degrees. Ferne was a homemaker and an entrepreneur. She was a distributor and owned her own business selling household and nutritional products. Ferne volunteered with many organizations throughout her life. She was a den mother for Cub Scouts and a room mother for her sons' classes. Her husband, Sherely, was a Gideon and she was also active in the Gideon Auxiliary. Ferne and Sherely also volunteered for the City Rescue Mission of Saginaw.

Following the loss of her husband Ferne's needs shifted to dealing with her grief. Ferne volunteered with Heartland Hospice in their Grief Support Program. Ferne was instrumental in establishing the Grief Support Group which continues to meet at Eagle Ridge Church of God and has done so for the last 13 years. Ferne became passionate about helping people deal with loss and change and was not afraid to approach anyone to do so.

Ferne's hobbies and interests included being self-taught in the areas of health and nutrition. She and her family, especially her grandsons, enjoyed many camping adventures at Charlevoix Family Church Camp and St. Louis Campmeeting. She was active in Salt and Light at Eagle Ridge Church of God and volunteered in the office. She was especially proud and boasted of her grandsons' success Zachariah (who is a Senior Network Engineer for Google) and Joshua (who owns and operates Francis Builders of Midland).

Ferne is survived by her sons Brian Francis of Midland, Gregory (Dana) Francis of Midland; grandsons Zachariah (Jessica) Francis of Thornton, Colorado and Joshua (Tasha) Francis of Midland, She is also survived by her sister Sharon (Ward) Hammond of Midland. Ferne is also survived by numerous nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her parents, her husband and her brother-in-law Carlton Hammond. Ferne was also predeceased by all of her husband Sherely's sibilings and their spouses.

Ferne's family wishes to thank the doctors and staff of DaVita Dialysis of Midland for the care provided to Ferne for the last 6 years. They also want to thank the doctors and staff of the MidMichigan Medical Center's Wound Treatment Center especially Dr. Travis Taylor; and most recently, to the staff of MidMichigan Medical Center and Medilodge of Midland for the care of and compassion for Ferne and her family during her recent hospitalizations and illness.

Funeral and Committal Services for Ferne will take place at 11:00 A.M. Tuesday August 29, 2017 from the Eagle Ridge Church of God 2808 Waldo Rd., Pastor Lowell Geisel will officiate with burial in Homer Twp. Cemetery. Fern's family will receive friends at the Ware-Smith-Woolever Funeral Home 1200 W. Wheeler St. on Monday from 5-8 P.M. and at the church on Tuesday from 10:00 A.M. until time of service. Those planning an expression of sympathy are asked to consider the Eagle Ridge Church of God or the Charlevoix Church Camp.