

Celebration of the Life of
Jo Ann Miller Robitaille

June 23, 2022 12:30 PM



You can shed tears that she is gone
Or you can smile because she has lived
You can close your eyes and pray that she will come back
Or you can open your eyes and see all that she has left
Your heart can be empty because you can't see her
Or you can be full of the love that you shared
You can turn your back on tomorrow and live yesterday
Or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday
You can remember her and only that she is gone
Or you can cherish her memory and let it live on
You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back
Or you can do what she would want: smile, open your eyes, love and go on.

by David Harkins

PRELUDE

WELCOME

GATHERING HYMN

ELW 787

On Eagle's Wings

BAPTISMAL REMEMBRANCE

Eternal God, maker of heaven and earth,
who formed us from the dust of the earth,
who by your breath gave us life,
we glorify you.

We glorify you.

Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life,
who suffered death for all humanity,
who rose from the grave to open the way to eternal life,
we praise you.

We praise you.

Holy Spirit, author and giver of life,
the comforter of all who sorrow,
our sure confidence and everlasting hope,
we worship you.

We worship you.

To you, O blessed Trinity,
be glory and honor, forever and ever. **Amen**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. O God of grace and glory,
we remember before you today our sister, Jo Ann.
We thank you for giving her to us to know
and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth.
In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn.
Give us your aid, so that we may see in death
the gate to eternal life,
that we may continue our course on earth
in confidence until, by your call,
we are reunited with those who have gone before us.
through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

EULOGY READING

Daughter Sara Sexe

REMEMBRANCE SLIDE SHOW

READINGS

by grandchildren Allison Morris and Payton Sexe

FIRST READING: ROMANS 8:35,37-39

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SECOND READING: JOHN 14:1-6

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

HOMILY

Pastor Jessica Obrecht

SPECIAL MUSIC

Erica Gettis singing Amazing Grace

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come, thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

COMMENDATION

Let us commend Jo Ann to the mercy of God,
our maker and redeemer.

Into your hands, O merciful Savior,
we commend our beloved Jo Ann.
Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you,
a sheep of your own fold,
a lamb of your own flock,
a sinner of your own redeeming.

Receive her into the arms of your mercy,
into the blessed rest of everlasting peace,
and into the glorious company
of all the saints. **Amen**

Rest eternal grant her, O Lord;
and let light perpetual shine upon her.

BENEDICTION

May the Lord bless you and keep you.
May the Lord's face shine on you
and be gracious to you.
May the Lord look upon you with favor
and give you peace.
In the name of the Father, and the Son,
and the Holy Spirit.
Amen

Let us go forth in peace,
in the name of Christ. Amen

SENDING SONG

Sunshine on My Shoulder by John Denver

SERVING TODAY

Officiant	Reverend Jessica Obrecht
Readers	Sara Sexe, Allison Morris and Payton Sexe
Singer	Erica Gettis
Accompanist	Lynn Ryan
Ushers	Walt Nuessle and Earl Terwilliger
Tech	Colter McCarty

OBITUARY

Jo Ann Miller Robitaille, 87, passed away in her sleep on June 5, 2022, after being a living example of positivity and persistence. Jo Ann was the finest, most supportive mother, a shining example of what a parent should be.

Jo Ann was born to John Mac Miller and Margaret Eugenia (Donnell) Miller, in Brownwood, Texas on December 14, 1934. She was named after her mother's brother Joe and college roommate Ann. Jo Ann was the oldest of five children, spending her childhood on a ranch in Eliasville, Texas that was built by her great, great grandfather and his brothers. The ranch also housed a mill on the Brazos River, a historical monument. Jo Ann lost both of her parents when she was in her early thirties and as the oldest of her siblings, she undertook the responsibility to help raise some of her younger siblings. She was the last of her siblings to pass away.

Jo Ann attended high school twenty-five miles from her home and rode a small "squished" school bus to Graham, Texas. During her senior year of high school, she was awarded wittiest and class favorite, traits that she carried with her throughout her life. She attended the University of Houston, graduating with a business degree. She taught typing and advanced English at Dickenson High School and the University of Houston after graduation.

Jo Ann had two daughters, Suzanne (Flynn) Sherick, of Missoula, and Sara (Doug) Sexe, of Great Falls, when she was married to Tom Robitaille. Jo Ann had two grandchildren, Allison (Dan) Morris and Payton Sexe, of Great Falls, and recently was overjoyed to welcome twin great granddaughters, Finley and Olivia Morris. She was extremely proud of her upbringing and her family, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, talking about them to whomever was available.

After spending her energy as a homemaker raising her two daughters, in her mid-fifties Jo Ann secured full time employment both as a legal secretary and as a salesperson at Spencer's Gift Shop in downtown Great Falls, often working eighty-plus hours a week. She was active in the First Presbyterian Church, Civ-Airs, Symphony Bridge, and Mary Kay Cosmetics sales. In the early 1980s, Jo

Ann's previously diagnosed Multiple Sclerosis started to be more debilitating, testing her resilience for the rest of her life.

Even through times of hardship and challenge, Jo Ann managed to have a smile on her face most every day. She was extremely optimistic and stated that she was very lucky. She encouraged nearly every single person she ever met and befriended everyone. When asked why she smiled so much, she would reply, "It's good medicine. You can sit there and think about how sick you are and it will make you sicker, or you can be happy and enjoy the things you do have."

Until Covid restrictions prevented her from playing, Jo Ann would play bridge twice a month with her wonderful group of friends who came to her home at Benefis Westview. She made a connection between bridge and her life, stating, "Make do with the cards you have. Pick out the positive things and enjoy them."

Jo Ann's motto was "No matter what happens, you have to keep going. Be nice to people, enjoy them. Always do as much as you can and never complain. If you don't, you are your own worst enemy." She lived that motto, in spite of her life's challenges and was an inspiration to all who knew her. She will truly be missed.

Jo Ann's family would like to sincerely thank the caregivers who assisted and cared for her throughout the years.

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Songs: Because You Loved Me written by Diane Warren, sung by Celine Dion; Country Roads written by Bill Danoff / John Denver / Taffy Nivert Danoff, sung by John Denver; Sunshine On My Shoulders written by John Denver / Michael C. Taylor / Richard L. Kniss and sung by John Denver.