



Barbara A. Nelson

May 23, 1930 - May 22, 2018

Barbara Anne Nelson (nee Betz), 88, May 23, 1930 - May 22, 2018. Barbara Nelson was born in Des Moines, Iowa, to Bessie (Troutner) and Paul Betz. She graduated from Lyons Township High School in LaGrange, Illinois, in 1948, and from Grinnell College, Grinnell, Iowa, in 1952 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in social work. On August 9, 1952, she married her high school sweetheart Robert Scofield Nelson, and they lived together in Marysville, California, where he was stationed with the U.S. Air Force. Their son Jonathan Paul was born in 1953, and when Bob accepted a job with Ford Motor Company, they moved to an apartment in Royal Oak, Michigan. Their daughter Laura Lee was born in 1957, and they soon moved to their first home in Clawson, Michigan, ultimately moving back to Royal Oak in 1965.

A member of the First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak, Barb was also employed as the church's youth director in 1970s and 1980s. She touched the lives of many young people and made life long friendships with many of her "kids" from junior and senior high fellowship as well as providing experiences for the youth as she led several work trips to Ozone, Tennessee. In addition, Barb was responsible for researching the church's Marguerite Gaudine/Eric Sundean stained-glass windows and wrote synopses of them. She and Ruth Goode were successful in registering the windows in the Michigan Stained Glass Census. Barb was a passionate volunteer docent at the Detroit Institute of Arts and participated in the museum's "art to the schools" and "workshop"

programs. She and Bob would drive down to the museum together, as Bob volunteered in "gallery service." As a 51-year member of P.E.O. International (Philanthropic Educational Organization), Chapter 8D Royal Oak, Barb contributed to the organization's goal of providing educational opportunities for female students worldwide. Barb and Bob passed on their love of art, music and human kindness to their children and grandchildren.

Barb enjoyed her family immensely, spending as much free time as possible with them. There were many camping trips to lakes and cottages up north, where hiking, fishing, sailing and outdoor cooking were the norm. In 1984, she and Bob purchased their dream cottage up on Hubbard Lake, Michigan, where they lived during the summers, entertaining family and friends with open arms. Four generations of Nelsons enjoyed the cottage, as the couple was the happiest when grandchildren were visiting. Barb loved tending to her garden at the lake, cooking up a storm of delicious meals for her family as well as feeding the birds, rabbits, squirrels and deer.

In addition to spending outdoor time with their family, Barb and Bob, joined several friends from Royal Oak First Presbyterian Church, in the "Once In A While Camp Club" (OIACC), a group that shared a love for the outdoors and camping. While the group does not camp anymore, they still meet regularly. Barb supported Bob's passions and hobbies, and enjoyed spending time with him as they drove around northern Michigan in Bob's Ford Model A coupe during the summer. Traveling around the world was something that Bob and Barb loved as well, visiting many European countries and the Far East, sometimes by themselves but many times with close friends and family. Barb and Bob continued their adventures as Bob was transferred to Europe by Ford Motor Company for a three-year stint (1990-1993), where they were based in Middlesex, England, just north of London.

Barb was predeceased by Robert, her loving husband of 62 years. She is

survived by her two children, Jonathan (Lynn) of Brighton, Michigan, and Laura Peterson (West) of Centerville, Ohio; three granddaughters, Dorothy Harrison (Gabe) of Fowlerville, Michigan, Hilary Rios (Santiago III) of Carmel, Indiana, and Kristen Perry (Todd) of Brighton, Michigan; two grandsons, Robert Peterson (Auburn, Alabama) and David Peterson (Columbus, Ohio); and five great-grandchildren: Charlotte and Mable Perry; Miranda, Santiago IV, and Emilio Rios; and Ridgely Harrison. Visitation will be Friday, May 25, 2018 from 2-8 pm at the Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Home, 705 West 11 Mile Road, Royal Oak, MI 48067. Funeral will be Saturday, May 26, 2018 at 11 am at First Presbyterian Church, 529 Hendrie Blvd., Royal Oak, MI 48067. Reception will follow in Fellowship Hall. Memorial contributions to the First Presbyterian Church are appreciated. Share your memories at SullivanFuneralDirectors.com.

Cemetery Details

Oakview Cemetery

1032 N. Main Street
(south of 12 Mile Road)
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 25. 2:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Wm. Sullivan and Son Funeral Directors-Royal Oak
705 W. Eleven Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48067
(248) 541-7000
royal@sullivanfh.com
<https://www.sullivanfuneraldirectors.com/>

Memorial Service

MAY 26. 11:00 AM (ET)

First Presbyterian Church of Royal Oak
529 Hendrie Boulevard
Royal Oak, MI 48067

Tribute Wall

KW


“ Barb left a legacy of memories to all who knew her. As a senior-high counselor to her youth group at First Presbyterian, I especially remember our trips to Ozone, Tennessee to conduct Bible school and work projects. Barb set the highest example for us all and I will miss knowing she is in our world. My sincere condolences to her family on their loss.

karen weaver - May 30, 2018 at 08:41 PM

MC

“ Barb was a significant friend through the years in so many ways-or her impact on our children, in the trips to Ozone, encouraging Dick Clapp to make the ozone movie, just laughing together over many happy memories-see was a beautiful lady . We will miss her. The world was a better place because of Barbara Nelson.

Martha clapp - May 26, 2018 at 06:55 AM

 Kevin
Robin
Goddard

“ In the late 70s and early 80s Mrs Nelson made First Presby feel like a family. She always cared so I never wanted to cross her as a teen. One time I did and boy was I disappointed in myself for letting her down. Fond memories 35 years later. She left a legacy in my heart. Kevin Goddard.

Kevin Robin Goddard - May 25, 2018 at 02:28 PM

KW

We couldn't agree with you more Kevin!

karen weaver - May 30, 2018 at 08:35 PM



“ *Barb and I worked together for over a year registering our church's stained glass windows with the Michigan Stained Glass Census. It was a wonderful time. Barb knew so much about our church and art. We also served on a few committees together. What a wonderful beautiful person she was. So sorry fir your loss. May memories bring smiles and laughter and may God bring you peace.*

Ruth Goode - May 25, 2018 at 02:04 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Barbara A. Nelson.*



May 25, 2018 at 12:41 PM



“ *Barbara was a beautiful and friendly soul. I knew her as a docent at the Detroit Institute of Arts for many years. She had time for everyone and was lovely in every way. She will be missed. I am sorry for your loss. Karen Jallos*

Karen - May 25, 2018 at 09:30 AM



“ *Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Barbara A. Nelson.*



May 24, 2018 at 05:21 PM



“ *Lavender Reflections Spray was purchased for the family of Barbara A. Nelson.*



May 24, 2018 at 04:41 PM



“ *Barbara, you will be fondly remembered for all the times you visited us at CMU, for all the stories shared by Laurie, and for your warm and loving acceptance of “you girl”. You will be greatly missed by everyone you crossed paths with, I am certainly glad that you were part of life, so long ago. Love to the entire Nelson family. Diane Jolliffe*

Diane Jolliffe - May 24, 2018 at 12:52 PM



“ *I knew Barbara at the DIA where we were docents together. I enjoyed chatting with her while waiting for tour groups to arrive in Prentis Court. She was such a lovely person, and seemed so balanced and full of life and love for her family, the DIA, and all of her endeavors. I am sorry for your loss. I hope that fond memories and the support of family and freinds will comfort you at this difficult time.*

*Best Wishes,
Margaret Shere*

Margaret Shere - May 24, 2018 at 12:31 PM

CF

“ *Charla and Ray Fales purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Barbara A. Nelson.*



Charla and Ray Fales - May 24, 2018 at 10:03 AM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Barbara A. Nelson.*



May 24, 2018 at 09:54 AM



“ *Joyful Memory was purchased for the family of Barbara A. Nelson.*



May 24, 2018 at 09:37 AM