

Mary Lucille Birdsall

(October 26, 1928 - August 15, 2014)

Mary Lucille (Mary Lou) Birdsall, resident of Swiss Village in Berne, went to her Heavenly home on Thursday, August 14, 2014 at the age of 85. She was born in Fowlerville, Michigan on October 26, 1928 to Rex M. Allen and Beulah (Rickett) Allen. She attended Huntington College in Huntington, Indiana, married Huntington Seminary student, S. Roger Birdsall, and both of them graduated in 1950. Rev. Birdsall and Mrs. Birdsall moved to Boise, Idaho in 1950, where he began his pastoral ministry and she began her elementary teaching career. Their first two children, Connie and Doug, were born there. In 1954 the Birdalls moved to Sylmar, California and welcomed two more sons, Brent and Brian. The Midwest beckoned them back in 1960, and the family moved to Peoria, Illinois, where they lived for the next 22 years. Rev. Birdsall pastored the First United Brethren Church and May Lou taught hundreds of students at Rolling Acres Elementary School until her retirement in 1983. The Birdsalls, affectionately known as "Pastor and Mary Lou" were both life-long members of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. Since moving to Swiss Village Retirement Community in Berne, IN, Mary Lou was a member of the First Missionary Church.



Mrs. Birdsall was an "ideal" pastors' wife and a true partner in ministry with her husband in six pastorates. She was known and loved at church and school for her musical talents at the piano and organ. She continues playing the piano almost to the end of her life for Rotary Clubs in Huntington and Berne, for handicapped persons, and at Swiss Village for the enjoyment of residents and staff. In addition, many people appreciated her easy laughter, pleasant disposition and imaginative story-telling. Being a mother and a grandmother as well as mentoring other young women "who just needed a mother" brought her great joy. Rev. and Mrs. Birdsall frequently traveled internationally upon retirement, including extended mission trips to visit their sons in Sierra Leone, West Africa; Tokyo, Japan; and Kiev, Ukraine. They also traveled together to teach at Bible colleges in Jamaica and Bangalore, India.

Mrs. Birdsall was preceded in death by her husband, her parents, and two brothers, Paul Allen and Gerald Allen. Surviving are four children, Connie (Neil) Potter of Berne, IN; Douglas (Jeanie) Birdsall of South Hamilton, MA; Brent (Sadie) Birdsall of Burnsville, MN; and Brian (Cathy) Birdsall of New York City. Also surviving are 15 grandchildren, Eric Potter, Stacia Birdsall Lee, Stephanie Birdsall Fennell, Mark Potter, Judd Birdsall, Amy Birdsall Boal, Janet Potter, Alec Birdsall, Ike Birdsall, Brooks Birdsall, Masha Birdsall, Tory Birdsall, Beau Birdsall and Jack Birdsall, and 12 great-grandchildren.

Funeral service is at 11:00 am, Tuesday, August 19, 2014 at Swiss Village Chapel, 1350 W. Main St, Berne, In, with her sons officiating. Calling is from 9:00 am to time of services.

Memorials are to be given to Huntington University. To sign the on-line guestbook, visit yagerkirchhofer.com. Burial will be at the Pilgrims Rest Cemetery in Huntington, IN with graveside services at 1:30 pm, Tuesday.

Yager-Kirchhofer Funeral Home online obit (accessed 8/18/2014)