

Remembering the Life of Joan

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved Joan Kaehn, who departed this world peacefully on Wednesday, July 22, 2026, at the age of 89. Joan's final days were spent at Bethany Nursing Home, where she passed away gently and swiftly, surrounded by the love and care of family and friends.

Born on May 3, 1937, in Minneapolis, MN, Joan was the cherished daughter of George Charles and Mary Agnes Kaehn. She grew up in a vibrant household filled with laughter and love, alongside her siblings William, Jacqueline, and Geraldine, all of whom predeceased her. Joan graduated from St. Catherine's High School in Minneapolis in 1955, marking the start of a life filled with dedication and grace.

She married Don Smith in 1958, and they were blessed with six children. Joan's hobbies brought her happiness and comfort throughout her life. She was a talented seamstress, and her passion for sewing has passed down to her grandchildren and great grandchildren. Never content with a bare patch of soil, Joan spread joy everywhere she spent time through her love of gardening. She obtained her Master Gardener Certification, of which she was quite proud. There were two things you could count on when walking into Joan's home - a stack of books by the couch and a puzzle on the dining room table. Some days, you could find four generations huddled around a puzzle helping her finish those last few tricky spots. She was an accomplished cook - two small parts of her legacy are her famous recipes for hot fudge sauce and donut balls.

Joan was a proud Irish spitfire; a spirited woman who got through the best and worst of times with sarcasm and optimism, with a healthy dash of stubborn determination. Even after a car accident limited her memory, Joan was jovial when her daughters teased her about how many times, they got to share good news for the "first time" multiple times.

Joan was an active member of Hope Lutheran Church as well as an employee for a short time. Following her accident, she often proclaimed she was here only by God's grace.

A Minnesotan at heart no matter where she lived, some of Joan's favorite days were spent on a sunny deck or patio. She was always smiling, especially when she was surrounded by friends and family.

Joan is lovingly remembered by her children: Dan (Paula) Smith of Boquete, Panama; Teresa (Randy) Houkom of La Grange, KY; Sue Houkom of Fargo; Anne (Jon) Gossett of Fargo; and Jessica (Chad) Rice of West Fargo. Her legacy lives on in her nine grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. Her family finds solace in knowing that she is now reunited with her son Michael Smith, granddaughter Samantha Stanga, her parents, and siblings.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests that donations be made to NDSU Agricultural Extension Program or the charity of your choice in Joan's memory, reflecting her generous spirit and lifelong commitment to helping others.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the staff at Bethany Homes for their compassionate care and support during Joan's final days. Joan will be dearly missed, but her spirit will continue to inspire those who were fortunate enough to know her.

Joan Kaehn will forever remain in our hearts, a testament to a life well-lived and a reminder to chase what makes you happy.



in loving memory of

**Joan Mary
Kaehn**



MAY 3, 1937 - JULY 22, 2026

Joan Kaehn



Memorial Service

10:00 a.m. Thursday, July 30, 2026

Boulger Funeral Home & Celebration of Life Center

Fargo, North Dakota

Pastor Stefanie Jordheim, *Officiating*

Andria Messelt, *Special Music*

Scripture Readings

Psalms 23 - Amanda Stattelman, Granddaughter

Ecclesiastes 3 - Megan Smuda, Granddaughter

John 15 - Matthew Stanga, Grandson

Special Music

"Oceans"

"Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus"

"When I Reach the Place I'm Going"

"Morning Has Broken"

Reception

Please join Joan's family for fellowship and a luncheon following today's service in the Celebration of Life Center.

Please also join the family for an Irish Wake following the luncheon at 3431 Peterson Parkway, Fargo.

May the road rise up to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
The rains fall soft upon your fields,
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

-Traditional Irish Blessing



Death leaves a heartache no one can heal;
Love leaves a memory no one can steal.