



## Patricia Mae Stephenson

March 5, 1934 - November 1, 2024

Patricia Mae Stephenson, age 90, of Pickford, Michigan, died on November 1, 2024. She was born on March 5, 1934, to Milford and Carmen Ferris of Cadillac, Michigan, the second of two daughters.

The challenges of farm life, particularly in Northern Michigan in the 1930s and 40s, became her childhood experience in Cherry Grove. She worked hard on the farm hand milking the cows before school. Siblings Luella, Paul, David and Dan took on responsibilities as well, but Pat is remembered as one who loved outdoor life – the chores and the joys of appreciating God's world.

As a part of the fledgling Church of the Nazarene in Cherry Grove, Pat was one of the eleven charter members when the church was reorganized in 1949, and her passing marks the last of those still living.

From Nixon School in the elementary years to her graduation as second in her high school class in Tustin (1952), Pat was a focused and diligent student. Following high school, she earned a teaching certificate at the Frankfort County Normal School and at the age of 19 took on the challenge of kindergarten through 8th grade at a nearby country school near Cadillac for one year. She eventually earned her bachelor's degree from Central Michigan University and taught elementary students in several schools throughout her professional life. She preferred first grade and loved to introduce children to

reading.

It was while teaching in the Owasso area that she met Edgar Comandella, a ministerial student at Owasso Bible College. They were married on January 27, 1956, and shared life together for 40 years before his death in 1996. Shortly after their marriage they took on their first pastoral assignment with the small congregation at the Church of the Nazarene in Leroy, Michigan.

In 1968, they moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado, where Edgar furthered his education at Nazarene Bible College and became part of the first graduating class in 1970. Besides teaching elementary students, Pat studied piano at the college so she could play if needed in the church. They returned to Michigan and pastored the Okemos Church of the Nazarene, where they were responsible for building the present church facility – and Pat was one of the construction workers! She also hosted many activities, served as pianist and taught Sunday school classes, as well as teaching in a public school.

Following about 20 years of ministry in Okemos, Pat and Edgar moved to Pickford, to pastor the Nazarene congregation there. In 1993 they built an A-frame house in the woods nearby to use as their retirement home. Following Edgar's passing, Pat married Gary Stephenson in 1998, and the two of them have lived in this setting since their marriage.

It is no exaggeration to state that Pat made a positive impact on many people during her lifetime. One of the honors she was given included the Distinguished Service Award from the Northern Michigan District in 1997. She worked tirelessly in supporting missions (including taking Work and Witness trips), in reaching out to people in need, in organizing and developing plans to accomplish worthy goals. Pat loved to work, and if she saw a need, she did her best to fill it.

Patricia is survived by her husband, Gary Stephenson; brother, Dan (Diane) Ferris; and many nieces and nephews.

Patricia was preceded in death by her parents Milford and Carmen Ferris; her first husband, Edgar Comandella; her siblings, Luella, Paul, and David Ferris.

In lieu of flowers Memorial contributions be made for Missionary Health Insurance thru Pickford Church of Nazarene or Cherry Grove Church of Nazarene.

A Celebration of Life will take place at the Cherry Grove Church of Nazarene Cadillac, Michigan on November 10, 2024, at 3:00 P.M. and at the New Horizons Church of the Nazarene in Pickford, Michigan on November 16, 2024, at 11:00 A.M.

Final Resting Place will be at Cherry Grove Township Cemetery in Cadillac.

Family Life Funeral Homes assisted the family with arrangements.  
Condolences may be left to the fam [www.familylifefh.com](http://www.familylifefh.com).

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

NOV **10**. 3:00 PM (ET)

Cherry Grove Church  
8450 S 29 Road  
Cadillac, MI 49601

## Celebration of Life

NOV **16**. 11:00 AM (ET)

New Horizons Church of the Nazarene  
401 N M-129  
Pickford, MI 49774