

Obituary

Born: Saturday, August 25, 1934

Died: Wednesday, October 30, 2019

Rachel Elizabeth (Leitz) Keely died on Oct. 30, 2019, of natural causes, surrounded by her family at Park Place Nursing Home in Great Falls at the age of 85. Funeral services will be held on Saturday, November 9 at 11 a.m. at Trinity Lutheran Church in Great Falls.

Rachel was born on August 25, 1934, to Oscar and Charlotte (Fairfull) Leitz in Great Falls. She graduated from Great Falls High School in 1953. She volunteered with the Ground Observer Corps during the Cold War, as a part of the United States Air Force Civil Defense Service's Operation Skywatch.

Rachel married Barny Keely at Trinity Lutheran Church, where she was baptized and confirmed, on May 23, 1954. The couple made their home in Ulm, MT where they welcomed son, Ron, in 1956 and daughter, Nellene, in 1958. Rachel was a devoted mother, leading 4H, teaching Sunday school and attending countless wrestling matches and basketball games. Rachel spent countless hours teaching her children, and later her grandchildren, to cook, garden, sew and knit.

Rachel was an active member of the community. She spent years as the secretary of the Power Cemetery where her grandparents and much of her family were laid to rest. Rachel served as the dispatcher and treasurer for the Ulm Volunteer Fire Department. Rachel continued to be an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church for over 50 years. Over the years, Rachel opened her home to many, creating life-long friendships with people visiting Great Falls from all over the world.

Rachel and Barny retired to Choteau in 1995 where they were active members of the Choteau Senior Center, Kiwanis Club and Trinity Lutheran Church in Choteau. They spend many weekends in those years following their grandchildren's sporting events throughout Montana.

Rachel spent the final years of her life residing at Park Place Healthcare Center in Great Falls, where she brightened the lives of both residents and staff.

Rachel is preceded in death by her husband; brother, David Leitz, and a sister, Beatrice Williams. She is survived by her son Ronald (Deborah) Keely and daughter Nellene (Harry) Hickel; grandchildren Anna (Henry) Schafer, Sandra (Steve) Dogiakos and Andrew Sullivan, Jennifer (Russell) Koch and Daniel (Jody Rae) Williams; and seven great-grandchildren. Rachel is also survived by her beloved sister-in-law Margret and many nieces and nephews.

Condolences may be left on-line at www.gorderjensenfuneralhome.com

Service Summary

Visitation

10:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Sat Nov 09, 2019

Great Falls Trinity Lutheran Church

1226 1st Ave N
Great Falls, MT 59401

Funeral Service

11:00 AM Sat Nov 09, 2019

Great Falls Trinity Lutheran Church

1226 1st Ave N
Great Falls, MT 59401

Luncheon

12:00 PM Sat Nov 09, 2019

Great Falls Trinity Lutheran Church

1226 1st Ave N
Great Falls, MT 59401

Graveside Service
2:00 PM Sat Nov 09, 2019

Ulm Cemetery

Ulm , MT 59404