



Esther Marie (Bowman) Gregory

January 1, 1944 - June 7, 2025

Esther M. (Bowman) Gregory Jan. 1, 1944 - June 7, 2025 Esther Marie (Bowman) Gregory, 81, passed away peacefully on June 7, 2025. She was born in Chicago, IL on Jan 1, 1944, the second child of James and Merle Bowman. At age two she traveled to Northern Nigeria (West Africa) with her parents and older brother, (Charles) Ivan. There, her parents worked in education, translation, dispensary work, building, vehicle maintenance, women's issues, agricultural assistance, and church work for the Church of the Brethren. Younger siblings James Russell and Carol Joy joined the family in 1947 and 1950. In late 1959 the family of six returned to the U.S. and lived in Elgin, IL where Esther completed her senior year of high school and then entered LaVerne College, CA. A brother, Maurice Badibanga, joined the family in 1962 as an exchange student from the Republic of Congo. Esther graduated from La Verne in 1965 with a BA in Psychology and Music, along with an elementary school teaching credential. Just prior to her graduation, to her surprise and the pride of family, she was chosen as homecoming queen at LaVerne.

She married Steven W. Gregory of Olympia, WA on June 6, 1966. They subsequently moved to Oak Brook, IL, where Esther taught first grade during the three years Steve studied to receive his Master of Divinity degree. Their daughter, Sondra "Jeanette" was born there in 1969. A son, Thomas Kent, joined the family in 1971 when they resided in Outlook, WA in Steve's first

pastorate. Additional pastoral calls took the Gregory family to Los Angeles and then Pomona, CA. Esther received her Master's degree in Education and worked as the credentialing officer for the University of La Verne Education Department, while Steve served as campus minister. A highlight of that time was when the entire family traveled to meet Esther's parents in Nigeria and make a driving trip north across the Sahara Desert into Algeria, and then into parts of Europe. Camels were a favorite sighting during this adventure.

A final pastoral call took the Gregorys to Boise, Idaho, where Esther taught in the Boise School system. Esther and Steve have resided in the Wenatchee area since 1997, where he operated Gregory's Grove tree nursery and Esther continued to teach school at the Mustard Seed, Lewis & Clark Elementary, and Sunnyslope School until her retirement. Esther was active in the life and ministries of The Sunnyslope Church, serving as pianist and organist, on the church board, Garden Terrace board, and district camp board. With Steve, Esther also traveled on several cruises in Europe and the Norwegian fjords, as well as to the U.K. Scotland, Sweden, Switzerland, and places of interest in the United States.

Those who knew Esther remember her as an excellent musician, beginning as a classical pianist. She performed duet piano recitals in high school and continued to play until very recently. She was a handbell ringer in California and Wenatchee, and sang in a women's choir, "Special Company" in LaVerne, CA, the Boise State University Radio chorale, as well as the Columbia Chorale in Wenatchee. She also sang in small groups with other family members. In early years, Esther accompanied an odd sibling quartet of piano, clarinet, trombone and violin. The entire family remembers singing songs together in the car and on camping trips. She loved soccer, and played in an adult women's league in Los Angeles.

She loved her family and grandchildren. She loved her school children and

developed “bug units” for their enrichment. She will be remembered for her loving warmth, beautiful smile, quick wit, joyful play, and creativity. Esther is deeply missed by her family. She is survived by her spouse, Steven W. Gregory; a daughter, Jeanette (Gregory) Tangen (John) of Wenatchee; a son, Thomas Kent Gregory; three grandchildren, Amber Gregory of Wenatchee, Grace Tangen of Spokane, and Jane-Ivan M. Tangen of Wenatchee. She is also survived by brother Jim R. Bowman (Sally), of Corvallis, OR, sister Carol Bowman (Ben Green) of Wenatchee, and Maurice (Bernadette) Badibanga of Fontana, CA, as well as numerous nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her parents, James B. and Merle A. Bowman, and her elder brother Charles “Ivan” Bowman.

A Celebration of Life will take place at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 28, at the Sunnyslope Church, 3330 School Street, Wenatchee, WA.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests that gifts of remembrance be sent to "On Earth Peace" (PO Box 188 - 601 Main St, New Windsor, MD 21776-0188 (www.onearthpeace.org) or Heifer International (www.heifer.org), organizations that Esther loved and supported.

Please express your thoughts and memories on the online guestbook at jonesjonesbetts.com. Arrangements by Jones & Jones – Betts

Previous Events

Celebration of Life

JUN **28**. 11:00 AM (PT)

Sunnyslope Brethren Church
3330 School Street
Wenatchee, WA 98801

Tribute Wall

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“ Remembering Esther and sending lots of love and prayers for God's comfort to Steve and the whole family - Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford

Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford - June 20, 2025 at 02:24 PM