

Bette Messner – AD 1974 Nursing

Bette Jean Messner, 63, McVille, ND, passed away peacefully in the presence of her husband and sons early in the morning of September 18, 2017 at the Nelson County Health System Hospital in McVille, ND.

Bette Jean Thompson, daughter of John and Esther (Haugen) Thompson of rural Hannaford, ND, was born December 16, 1953 in Cooperstown, ND. She was baptized and confirmed in the Eidfjord Lutheran Church, of rural Hannaford, ND. She attended elementary school in Sutton, ND, and graduated from Glenfield/Sutton High School in 1971. She graduated from North Dakota State University with an Associate Nursing Degree and became a licensed Registered Nurse (RN) in 1974. She began her lifelong career as an RN in June of 1974 at the McVille Community Hospital. She would go on to provide excellent nursing care to the residents of McVille the surrounding area for more than 40 years.

On July 28, 1979, Bette was married to Bradley Messner at Eidfjord Lutheran Church. They bought a house in McVille and in 1981 they began a family. Bette and Brad had three boys - Joshua, Dustin, and Jacob. At home, Bette's life was dedicated to teaching her boys the values taught to her by her father and mother, and the Church. She had a genuine compassion for those less fortunate; the destitute, the ill, the dying, and the grieving. She felt a duty to protect and care for the innocent - especially animals, children, the infirm, and the elderly. She had a tender heart for small children and animals, and both found it easy to trust her. She was reserved in expressing her faith but modeled her life on the teachings of Jesus Christ.

During Bette's more than 40 years in health care she developed a reputation for providing excellent nursing care in every situation. Whether performing life saving interventions in the emergency room, supporting rehabilitation, providing end of life care, or examining a child's bumps and bruises, her nursing skills, confidence, and demeanor brought a sense of calm to her patients and co-workers. When Bette was working, people knew they were in good hands. She used her knowledge and experience to train and mentor many aspiring health care providers. She had the opportunity to work with doctors who came to McVille from around the world. She enjoyed learning about their cultures, education, and life experiences. She was a better nurse because of the great professionals she worked with and they were better because of her.

Bette's battle with Lewy Body Dementia likely began around 2012, though it was not fully diagnosed until 2014. She continued to work in a reduced capacity until January of 2015. In her final year at the hospital she helped to train her own replacement as the Director of Nurses. Though her abilities were declining, her direct care skills remained

until she could no longer work. Bradley cared for Bette in their home for several years with the help of her sister Audrey. In July 2017 she entered the hospital in McVille and was placed in hospice care. Bette and her family struggled and grieved with each new stage of the disease progression. "I love you" and "Goodbye" have been said a thousand times knowing that tomorrow things would be worse and not better. Today she is at peace.

Bette's family would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the staff at the hospital for the exceptional personal care and support they provided Bette and her family.

Survivors include her husband, Bradley of McVille, ND: children, Joshua (Erin) Messner of Falls Church, VA, Dustin (Christine Mader) Messner, Richfield, MN, Jacob (Kayla) Messner of Grand Forks, ND: grandchildren Benjamin and Emma Messner, Owen, Carter, and Hadley Messner; siblings, Muriel Hedrick, John Thompson, Audrey Thompson, Jane Tucker, and Joan Thompson; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her parents John and Ester Thompson, and her sister Kathy Fuglesten.

Funeral Services will be held at 11:00 a.m. Friday, September 22, 2017 at Sheyenne Lutheran Church, rural Pekin ND. Burial will follow the Service at the church cemetery.

A Prayer Service will be held at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, September 21, at Sheyenne Lutheran Church. Visitation will precede the service, beginning at 5:00pm.