



Norma Jean Church

March 5, 1932 - February 4, 2025

Norma Jean Church, 92, passed away February 4, 2025, at her home with loved ones by her side. Jeannie was born March 5, 1932, in Alton, IL to Cletus and Mary (Webber) Grenzebach. She married Russell Dean Church on June 12, 1954, at Cherry St. Baptist Church. They were blessed with 60 years of marriage before his passing in 2015.

She graduated from St. Joseph's School of Nursing in 1953. 'Churchie' loved being a nurse and cherished her 40 years at Alton Memorial Hospital, especially connecting with people. When she met someone, she would ask their last name and try to determine whether she had taken care of them or a relative, whether a relative of theirs had worked at the hospital, or maybe grew up near McKinley Blvd. Her career was in Pediatrics before starting the Ambulatory Surgery department with a treasured group of ladies. She was known as a very good and kind nurse, as well as a wise and patient mentor who always had a sweet smile on her face. 'Churchie' worked hard but always had time for a laugh. Kids and parents adored her.

Her face lit up at the sight of children, as well as animals and birds. She had a soft spot for the 'poor animals who were just trying to survive', who have certainly been missing her food scraps.

Jeannie enjoyed boating and skiing on the Mississippi and drives up the River Road to Russ's hometown of Grafton and Marquette Park. They planted hundreds of trees from the State on land they owned between Fieldon and Rosedale. At home, they could often be seen outside doing yardwork. They

were hard workers, whether at work, in the house, or in the yard. She enjoyed sewing, cooking, and looking through her cookbooks.

Her adventurous spirit was fulfilled with trips across the country and abroad with family and friends. She was a master shopper and bargain finder, wearing out anyone who accompanied her. Russ could often be seen sitting on a bench in a mall, waiting for her to come out of a store.

She was a loving and devoted Mother and Grams, staunchly supporting schooling, music, and activities. Her 'discount math' skills and scientific curiosity live on in her daughter and grandson. Grams adored her grandson, Eero.

In addition to her daughter Stephanie (Austin Hein), and grandson, Eero Hein, she is survived by her dear younger sisters, Patricia (Philip) Johnson and Judy (David) Stauder, and nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Visitation will be from 9:00 a.m. until time of funeral at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 8, 2025, at Gent Funeral Home in Alton. Reverend Bradley Donoho will officiate. Burial will be at Valhalla Memorial Park in Godfrey.

Memorials may be made to Alton Memorial Health Services Foundation - Templin Scholarship Fund, Altonmemorialhealthservicesfoundation.org/donate or One Memorial Drive, Beeby Wing, G-421, Alton IL 62002 or Main St. United Methodist Church, Alton, IL.

Online guestbook and information may be found at www.gentfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Valhalla Memorial Park

Godfrey, IL 62035

Previous Events

Visitation

MAR 8. 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

Gent Funeral Home
2409 State Street
Alton, IL 62002

Funeral

MAR 8. 10:30 AM (CT)

Gent Funeral Home
2409 State Street
Alton, IL 62002

Tribute Wall



“ *Mrs Church is one of my Pediatric Heros. She worked there when I started in '78 and was great with the kids and parents. I learned much from Norma Jean and always looked up to her. I especially remember her constant smile and caring nature.*

February 19, 2025 at 05:45 AM



“ *Stephanie, Austin and Eero,
We are so sorry for your loss. We have so many wonderful memories of Jeannie. She was so fun, cheerful and kind. I loved working with her in Ambulatory Surgery. Steph I'm so grateful for our Zoom call for her Birthday several years ago. Will be thinking of you all.*

Terry and Peggy Tinnin

Peggy Tinnin - February 18, 2025 at 05:07 PM