



Mrs E. Hepler

August 18, 1915 - April 20, 2011

Mary Elizabeth (Updegrave) Hepler went home to be with her Lord and Savior, Wednesday April 20, at Sun Hospice Center, Sunbury. Mary was born in Sacramento, PA on August 18, 1915, a daughter of the late Curtin G and Bertha (Klock) Updegrave.

Mary moved to Gratz in 1942 and Married Benjamin I Hepler. They ran the family farm for several years before buying it and making it their own. They raised two sons, Curtis G. Hepler, and James "Jolly Jim" Hepler. Mary was a very hard working and industrious woman. To help make ends meet in the early days she would bake pies, cakes, cookies, sticky buns, breads, and grow produce in her backyard garden then sold them to neighbors and friends and at the local farmer's market. She continued those skills throughout her entire life sharing her culinary skills and her beautiful roses with friends and neighbors throughout all of northern Dauphin and western Schuylkill Counties.

Mary was in the business of touching lives. She was a member of Simeon United Lutheran Church, Gratz for over 60 years. During that time she taught Sunday School and numerous other special courses until she was 92, served on the Church Board until age 90 and sang in the Choir into her late 80's. Mary's great love of life knew no boundaries, she was all about having fun and serving her Lord, her family and her community. She was well known for her extensive hat collection, of which she chose one to wear every Sunday to

church with a perfectly coordinated dress or suit.

Mary was a member of Simeon's Ladies Willing Workers, the Wives Club, the Gratz Senior Citizens, the Elizabethville Senior Citizens, the Gratz Civic Club, Berrysburg Farm Women's Group #14, and the Valley Girls Red Hat Society.

Mary and her daughter in law Karen Hepler had the opportunity to travel extensively throughout the United States with the E'ville Seniors Group for the past 20 years. Mary also enjoyed traveling to Israel, Europe, Hawaii and enjoyed numerous cruises. She was employed as a housekeeper by the late Dr. Arthur and Helen Horn for 24 years. Mary was and avid walker and could be seen walking on the Gratz Fair Grounds for several decades.

After her husband Ben's death in 1994, Mary kicked her culinary skills into high gear as she began baking thousands and thousands of cookies for her son Jolly Jim to give to his clients and friends as Christmas gifts. She also produced thousands of her signature Easter peanut butter eggs and continued both projects until her early 90's. She enjoyed using those skills to entertain family and friends with many many special meals over her entire lifetime.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband Ben who she shared life with for over 52 years. A brother Mark who died at age 9 and her sister Ruth Farr.

Surviving are her two sons, Curtis G. Hepler and his wife Shirley of Hallstead; James F. Hepler and his wife Karen of Gratz. Three grandchildren, Brian C Hepler and his wife Trudi of Hallstead; Kathy Roe and her Husband Tom of Hallstead; Bradley A Hepler and his wife Catherine of West Chester. Five great grandchildren, Benjamin, Brett, and Krystal Hepler, Abigail and Adam Roe all of Hallstead.

Celebration of life services will be held at Simeon United Lutheran Church, North Center St, Gratz, Monday April 25 at 3:00 PM, with Rev. Barry Ridge officiating. The family will receive friends from 2-3PM. In lieu of flowers the family asked that donations be made to Simeon United Lutheran Church, Sanctuary Fund, PO Box 478, Gratz, PA 17030.

James A. Reed Funeral Home, Pillow is in charge of the arrangements. www.reedfh.com

Tribute Wall

BR

“Curt & Jim Our thoughts and prayuers are with you and your families. Your mother lived a good life and will long be remembered. Keep all the memories alive in your hearts. God Bless you all. Karl and Barb Roadcap

Barb Roadcap - March 29, 2013 at 09:06 AM

RS

“Mary and I were friends since school , and I will miss her friendship and visiting with her on phone.

Ruth Snellgrove - March 29, 2013 at 09:06 AM

PS

“Our prayers are with you all at this time. Mary was a wonderful lady and we enjoyed visiting with her at Brad and Katherine's wedding. God Bless!

Pastor Richard and Janice Spering - March 29, 2013 at 09:06 AM

DM

“To Mary Helper Family,
A word of deepest sympathy.
In the loss you have to bear...
May he who understands all things
Enfold you in His care.

Dennis and Phyllis Matter - March 29, 2013 at 09:06 AM

JL

“ message to the family: To Curtis and wife and family and to Jim and Karen We wish to send our deepest sympathy to all of you on the passing of a great lady! You were lucky to have your mother with you for many ,many years. A lot of memories for you to hold on to unto you see her again in a greater place. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of you now. Hardy, Jean and Barbara Love

Jean Love - March 29, 2013 at 09:06 AM

RS

“ It was a pleasure to know Mary and I enjoyed listening to her stories about her life. She was easy to clean for and I wished she would have left me do more.

Ruby Scheib - March 29, 2013 at 09:06 AM