



Kathryn Bontrager

March 7, 1951 - March 28, 2026

Kathryn Bontrager arrived at her earthly home in Indiana on March 7, 1951, to parents Elam and Pauline and sister Elaine. She moved to Florida in 1986, and on to her heavenly home on March 28, 2026. Her life was filled with loving the Lord, family, friends, and church. She enjoyed working, traveling, shopping, and evenings playing games with cousins and friends. She generously and joyfully served those whom God placed in her life, often taking time to plan specific details for special celebrations. An abundance of friends enriched her life – church friends, travel friends, friends who were like family.

In her youth, her parents' home was shared with foster siblings – Brett Reed, Mike Reed, and Wendy Lawrie – and other children and young people who came and went through their doors. In the same way, Kathy's home was a special place for many, including three sweet girls who lived with her at various times in their childhood – Ashley Leedy, Shannon Waring, and Katrina Redding. Over the past 24 years, Dr. Gene and Susanne Myers became like extended family as she cared for their home and walked alongside their daughter, Lillian, as she grew to adulthood.

When she received a cancer diagnosis in January 2025, Kathy found peace in acknowledging that God, in His sovereignty, had allowed this to be part of her story and He would walk through it with her. Deuteronomy 31:8 became her anchor and comfort:

“It is the LORD who goes before you;
he will not leave you or forsake you.
Do not fear or be dismayed.”

During her final weeks, Kathy received many texts, cards, and visitors. She was continually accompanied and cared for in her home by family members and close friends, in particular, sister Elaine Gingerich, cousin Almeda Mast, and close friend and nurse Kathy Galer. In her last days, her room was filled with love, tears, conversations, the prayers of many near and far, the presence of family, and the kindly and sweetly performed medical care of the licensed nurses in the family: Kathy, Kristin, and Kezia.

With deep sadness in her absence, wonderful memories of a life well lived, and joyful gratitude for the end of her suffering, Kathy’s family grieves with hope filled expectation of a reunion in heaven. She was preceded in death by her parents, Elam & Pauline (Frey) Bontrager, dear friend Stella who arrived in heaven just a few days before her, and other relatives.

Remaining to treasure her life are her sister, Elaine and husband Dale Gingerich; nephew Paul & Ruth Ann (Schlabach) Gingerich and their sons Drew and Logan; nephew Michael & Rebeca (Miller) Gingerich and their daughters Kezia, Elian, Sofia, and Soraya; niece Charlene and her husband Jeremy Sitkowski and their children Akira and Jalen; nephew Gareth & Kristin (Peters) Gingerich and sons Gage and Wriglee.

Viewing Thursday, April 2nd, 2026 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Palm Grove Mennonite Church, 1087 Beneva Road, Sarasota, FL 34232. Funeral will be Friday morning 10:00 am.

Burial: Bethel Mennonite Church, 2985 Bethel Ln, Sarasota, FL 34240.

Cemetery Details

Bethel Mennonite Cemetery

2985 Bethel Lane
Sarasota, FL 34240

Previous Events

Visitation

APR 2. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Palm Grove Mennonite Church
1087 Beneva Road
Sarasota, FL 34232
palmgrovemennonitechurch@gmail.com

Funeral Service

APR 3. 10:00 AM (ET)

Palm Grove Mennonite Church
1087 Beneva Road
Sarasota, FL 34232
palmgrovemennonitechurch@gmail.com

Tribute Wall

FM

“ Fresh Start Ministries purchased the Divine Peace Bouquet for the family of Kathryn Bontrager.



Fresh Start Ministries - April 01 at 08:01 PM

FM

“ Fresh Start Ministries planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Kathryn Bontrager.

Fresh Start Ministries - April 01 at 08:01 PM



“ Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Kathryn Bontrager.



April 01 at 07:36 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Kathryn Bontrager.

April 01 at 07:36 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Kathryn Bontrager.*



March 31 at 11:12 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Kathryn Bontrager.

March 31 at 11:12 AM



“ *Garden of Sweet Memories Casket Spray was purchased for the family of Kathryn Bontrager.*



March 30 at 07:46 PM