



Virginia "Ginny" Gunther Davidson

February 23, 1921 - August 4, 2014

Virginia Gunther Davidson died on August 4, 2014 in Greer, SC following an illness of several years. She was 93. Her family is grateful for her long and generous life as mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, active lay leader in her church, and skilled advocate for children and families in New York.

Known by friends and coworkers as Ginny, she was the first child of Edwin L. Gunther and Dorothy Smith, born February 23, 1921 in Mount Vernon, NY. Her only sibling, Dorothy Jean "Dot" Giles, of Altamont Springs, FL, survives her.

The Gunthers were a musical family, playing various instruments at a professional level and in their home. Ginny's father and grandfather, Emil A. Gunther, established a successful music publishing business and her grandmother, Lydia Wuest Gunther, gave her piano lessons. A self-professed "tom boy" playing with her neighbors, all boys, in Tuckahoe, NY, Ginny found enjoyment in playing the piano in later life.

As a young girl desirous of getting to know God, Ginny sought out St. Luke's Episcopal Chapel (Tuckahoe) to which she walked regularly, and where she was Confirmed on May 29, 1936, having been Baptized earlier that month. Throughout her life she continued searching for where the Lord Jesus was leading her and following His guidance as she grew into a mature Christian.

Graduating from Eastchester High School on June 19, 1938 as a tall and intelligent young woman, Ginny continued her education at Cedar Crest College, Allentown, PA, graduating in 1942 with a double major in Business and Sociology. Playing bridge at nearby Lehigh University, she met and married Charles Parker Davidson, III, her faithful husband of over 50 years, on November 26, 1942, in St. John's Episcopal Church, New Rochelle, NY. Parker, as he was known, predeceased her in 1996.

Having worked for the armed forces as a secretary prior to their marriage, the newly-weds moved to Delaware where Parker was employed as an industrial engineer in the US Navy (Naval Engineer, Lt.(jg) in various capacities in SC and VA. Their first child, Carol, was born in Charleston, SC early in 1945.

Following WWII they eventually moved to Kenosha, WI where their two sons, Charles P. Davidson, IV, and Stephen Crane Davidson were born. During this time of full time parenting and homemaking, Ginny established the first neighborhood nursery, with the mothers rotating in their homes. She became an Associate in the Episcopal Order of the Community of St. Mary in 1955, in which she found a strong Christian Community and great support in her walk with the Lord. Moving to Milwaukee brought the family to Christ Episcopal Church, Whitefish Bay. Bridge and a local square dancing group added to their entertainment, and when Parker's work took them to Frostburg, MD, Ginny continued parenting and serving in voluntary capacities as a Cub Scout den mother, lay leader in church, as a member of AAUW and the PTA.

It was in the small town of Frostburg, that Ginny found delight in being able to receive a national newspaper every Sunday. Frequently, she would spend her afternoons sipping tea with Dr. Jae Kim who worked at the nearby miner's hospital as they discussed events of the world as well as the town. Ginny also

presided over regular Sunday evening meals with the local Episcopal priest and the local family practitioner who was Jewish. The evenings of stimulating discussions gave her great joy. During the weekend days, she could often be found flying through the ironing to the tune of classical music on the public radio station, any of a number of Broadway musical records or even late on a Sunday evening tuning into Perry Como. In MD, Ginny worked for Allegheny County's Human Services Department, the beginning of her career in social work. A well rounded person, she found pleasure in family, church, work and social life and brought that joy with her wherever she went.

When Parker's work took them to Schenectady, NY, she was employed by the Schenectady County Dept. of Social Services, graduating from SUNY Albany with her MSW. She earned the title of ACSW and served as Supervisor for the Schenectady County Child Protective Services, attending to the dire needs of families and children struggling with abuse and neglect; receiving a commendation letter from the Commissioner of the Schenectady County Social Services' for developing the first comprehensive Child Protective Services' Program and for her "innovative ability to involve the entire community in a cooperative and meaningful approach to combat child abuse and neglect."

Working with the then Family Court Judge Howard A. Levine, they established the first Law Guardian Program in the nation, for which Ginny received the Liberty Bell Award on Law Day in 1980. This same year Ginny was a founding member of the Federation on Child Abuse and Neglect, an educational and advocacy organization of local groups and individuals from 45 counties in NY, now called Prevent Child Abuse New York. In 1993 she received the Federation Special Friend Teddy Bear Award for her "tireless and dedicated efforts as a Founding member and Advocate for Children." Ginny was also a founder of the Schenectady County Citizens Task Force on Child Abuse and

Neglect and taught social work courses at the College of St. Rose as an adjunct professor.

Throughout her years in Schenectady, Ginny was an active lay leader in the Episcopal diocese of Albany and the first woman to hold the office of Senior Warden at Christ Church. At the invitation of the bishop, the Rt. Rev. David Ball, she toured the diocese with him, giving her personal faith testimony. Among many other attributes, Ginny was often referred to as a “real lady” and “prayer warrior!”

After retirement, she and Parker joined eldest son “Chuck” and his family in Bethel, CT. Following Parker’s death, Ginny continued to be a prayer warrior in the Episcopal Church, living with Chuck and Jan during their moves to Kansas, Long Island, and finally Greer, SC. There, she joined St. Andrew’s (Anglican Church of North America) in Lyman. Until her last illness, she continued to drive and was active in the YMCA water-arthritis class. One of Ginny’s grand daughters published in her Mom’s Blog: “My grandmother is one of the greatest people I know! She just LOVES, seemingly without judgment or fear. To know my grandmother is to be loved by her.”

In addition to her sister, Ginny is survived by her three children, their spouses, and her five grandchildren and two great grandchildren: Carol and Michael Tessman (Clare and Aaron) of Wakefield, RI; Charles Parker IV, and Jan Davidson (Rebecca and Kerri) of Greer, SC; and Stephen Crane Davidson (Charlie) and JoAnn Mariko Davidson of Jesup, GA, step-children, nieces and nephews, as well as God-children. Everyone is grateful to have enjoyed Ginny’s loving presence and her profound witness to her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for so many years!

The Funeral and Holy Communion Service will be held on August 23rd at 11am in St. Andrew’s Anglican Church in the Chapel at Living Waters Funeral

Home & Crematory, Lyman, SC. A Memorial Eucharist will be held at Christ Church, Schenectady, New York, September 6th at 12noon. In lieu of flowers the family requests you honor Ginny Davidson by your contribution to the Prevent Child Abuse New York organization. Webaddress: <http://www.preventchildabuse.org/contact-us/> or Prevent Child Abuse New York, 33 Elk St, Albany, NY, 12207.

Tribute Wall



“ *Living Waters Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Virginia "Ginny" Gunther Davidson*



Living Waters Funeral Home & Crematory - September 02, 2014 at 12:00 PM

MS

“ *Marion Sullivan lit a candle in memory of Virginia "Ginny" Gunther Davidson*



marion sullivan - September 01, 2014 at 08:12 PM

CD

“ I heard today that the world has lost this great, great lady. I met Ginny way back in '79 when I was a family worker at Christ Church Day Care Center and she headed up a child protective services unit that focused on the real, intended mission of that service - care for children and families in the face of sometimes overwhelmingly awesome challenges. She cared for her staff, the community, parents and children. Ginny was also a founding board member of the organization I now lead, then known as the Federation on Child Abuse and Neglect, now with the new name of Prevent Child Abuse New York. We have appreciated her support, her mentor-ship of so many valued colleagues, and the pioneering force that she always was.

Our heartfelt condolences to her entire family, and also to her many friends.

Christine Deyss

Christine Deyss - August 21, 2014 at 12:39 PM

CT

Thank you, Christine! I was sorry, I didn't meet you at the Memorial Service at Christ Church. We were grateful for your flowers at the funeral in SC & your condolences. We are especially thankful for how you are continuing the vital work in this important field! Sincerely, Carol (Davidson) Tessman

Carol (Davidson) Tessman - October 30, 2014 at 01:46 PM

SP

“ Back in 2003, when Kerri and Michael were getting married I had the pleasure of spending some one on one time with Ginny. I can't remember what our tasks were but there were some errands or maybe it was simply driving from one event to the other that we were paired up together for. Not having spent much time with Ginny before that I was wondering what will we talk about... Will this be an awkward day....??? It was very quickly I found out after getting in the car that there was nothing to worry about. Ginny was so engaging and interesting, talking about current events and giving me things to think about from the world of business as I was just graduating from b-school. I remembering the time going so fast, feeling animated and reluctant when the day came to a close.

Reading her obituary drives home how she radiated that vibrancy throughout her life. It's a lesson to all to be involved in family and community and the rewards are great.

My deepest condolences to the entire Davidson/Gunther family and all the lives she touched in her special way. Xo

Susan Passarotti

Susan Passarotti - August 08, 2014 at 09:45 AM

MS

I LOVE YOU GINNY MARION SULLIVAN

marion sullivan - September 01, 2014 at 08:14 PM

CT

*Hi Susan,
Thank you for your remembrances, comments, & condolences!
Dear Marion, You were one of Mom's other Daughters! She & Dad always LOVED YOU! It was so GREAT to be with you & your husband at the Memorial Service at Christ Church!*

Carol (Davidson) Tessman - October 30, 2014 at 01:55 PM