



Ramalee Pearson

May 21, 1926 - July 31, 2014

Spirit Lake, Iowa

Ramalee Elaine Pearson, 88, died Thursday, July 31, 2014, in Tempe, AZ. A Memorial Service will be held at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, August 11th, at the United Methodist Church in Estherville, Ia., under the direction of Schuchert Funeral Home, Spirit Lake, IA.

Ramalee was born on May 21, 1926, in Buffalo, Kansas, to Estell Knight and Lola Love Resler. Her paternal and maternal grandparents were Lillie Josephine Ursula Gaston and Harlan Resler as well as Mary Ann Wadsworth and Ansel Reed Love, respectively. Her deceased siblings were Ansel Harlan born in Leonardville, Kansas, in 1917, Elizabeth Joyce born in Westmoreland, Kansas, in 1921, and Elinor Louise Resler born in Scranton, Kansas, in 1922. Her father, the Rev. E.K. Resler, was a pastor in the Kansas Methodist Conference for 42 years and was Conference Treasurer for 12 years. He held pastorates in Eastern Kansas included Whiting, Topeka, Perry, Pleasanton, Wathena, Marysville, Yates Center, Strong City, Cedar Vale, Altoona, Scranton, Leonardville, Buffalo, Altamont, Silver Lake, Westmoreland, and Oketo. Ramalee graduated from Marysville High School in 1944.

She graduated with a B.A. in Speech & Dramatics from Baker University, Baldwin City, Kansas, in 1948, where she was an outstanding member of the Baker Players, sang in the Baker University Choir, and was active in Methodist College Fellowship. As well, she became a lifetime member of the Phi Mu Sorority.

On August 25, 1950, Ramalee and Richard L. Pearson were married in Wathena, Kansas.

In 1951, she graduated with a Master of Arts with an emphasis on Religion from Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. A highlight of the Ninety-Third Annual Commencement was the awarding of a Doctor of Humane Letters to the famous American writer, John Dos Passos.

In 1953, her husband was appointed the pastor of the St. Ansgar-Little Cedar Methodist churches and was ordained on October 10, 1954, by Bishop F. Gerald Ensley, and in 1960 he was appointed to the Crescent Park Methodist Church, Sioux City, IA.

While in Sioux City, she designed costumes and directed the Living Nativity, an outdoor Christmas pageant, and participated in the construction of Crescent Park's Christian education building. Her husband was a member of the board of directors of St. Luke Medical Center, and he served on the boards of the local chapter of the NAACP, the Sioux City Council of Churches and the local Iowa Civil Liberties Union. In addition, Ramalee taught Christian Education classes at Morningside College.

In 1965, Ramalee now having four young sons, with trepidation gave her blessing for her husband to depart for civil rights work in the Deep South with the Delta Ministry at Hattiesburg, Mississippi, which was sponsored by the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches.

In 1968, her husband was appointed pastor of the Estherville United Methodist Church, Estherville, Iowa, where he led the campaign to erect a new church-in-the-round to replace the old church building that had been condemned. Owing to her husband being ill for the last service in the old building, Ramalee stepped in and preached the final sermon heard in that grand edifice. While in Estherville, Ramalee taught Speech and Drama at Iowa Lakes Community College and indulged in her favorite pastime, the theatre, playing the lead role of Rose in the beloved musical "Gypsy."

Ramalee loved her duties with the Chancel Choir too. She saw her oldest two sons leave for college at this time and relished their return for family holidays.

Subsequently, her husband served as senior pastor of Asbury United Methodist Church in Bettendorf, Iowa, from 1973 to 1978, where he organized the annual Good Friday Walk through the streets of Bettendorf, comprised of hundreds of persons following a Christ figure carrying a cross reenacting the path Christ walked on Good Friday. At this time, her third son graduated from high school and left for college.

In June 1978, her husband, Richard, was asked to serve as senior pastor of First United Methodist Church in Des Moines, Iowa, by Bishop Lance Webb, and in 1979 he was invited by President Carter to attend a White House briefing on SALT II. During her time in Des Moines, Ramalee relished in her role as the Educational Loan Fund Officer while working at the P.E.O. Headquarters, a philanthropic organization that celebrates women's' advancements through awards, grants, loans, and scholarships to better themselves and achieve high aspirations. She saw her youngest son graduate from high school and head off to college.

On August 8, 1980, she attended Commencement with her husband as he was presented the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by Morningside College, Sioux City, Iowa, for outstanding leadership in the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church, particularly his "professional commitment to ministry and the betterment of mankind, and his unstinting service to the communities in which he has lived and served."

In 1984, Bishop Wayne Clymer appointed her husband to serve as the District Superintendent of the Sioux City District, and in 1988 Richard was appointed to serve as the senior pastor of Grace United Methodist Church, Spencer, Iowa. In Spencer, Ramalee kept a full schedule of church activities, finding time too to plan for eventual retirement with her husband at the Iowa Great Lakes and Arizona.

On May 17, 1992, her husband retired from his active ministry and delivered his last sermon "Reflections on 40 Years in the Ministry." Both Ramalee and Dick remained active in their commitment to the community both in Monarch

Cove, Spirit Lake, Iowa, and Friendship Village, Tempe, Arizona. In retirement, many rounds of golf were happily played, a favorite activity for both Ramalee and Dick's Survivors include four sons, Timothy R. Pearson of Atlanta, Georgia and Saddle River New Jersey, Thomas L. Pearson, Tulsa, Oklahoma and Park City, Utah, Philip K. Pearson, Spirit Lake, Iowa, and David L. Pearson, Chicago, Illinois

Flowers and memorial gifts addressed to "Monarch Cove, Ramalee E. Pearson Memorial" may be directed to the Schuchert Funeral Home, Spirit Lake, Iowa. Additionally, the family would appreciate any personal messages and memories be submitted by email to ppearson@technn.com.

Finally, Ramalee lived the words of Ruth to the fullest with her husband. "Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me."

Tribute Wall

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“ *Mrs. Pearson,
You have always been an inspiration to the dedication you had
toward your sons, especially my friends Tim and Tom.
You will be missed. Rest in peace,
Wayne Stowell*

Wayne Stowell - August 08, 2014 at 02:00 PM