

## **In Memory of Kay (Ullrich) Wells**

### **December 27, 1941 - June 9, 2023**

*Kay's daughter, Heather Wells, posted this loving tribute to her mother on Facebook.*



Mom is no longer in pain, and she now enjoys perfect love, peace, and joy. Her body left this world Friday night, but her spirit lives on.

My mom lovingly served people from the kitchen. We delivered made-from-scratch cinnamon rolls and sourdough bread to families in need, and not a week went by during her healthy years when people didn't rave about her culinary skills, to go along with her numerous other strengths.

Mom was a devoted preacher's wife and created the curriculum and staffing for Sunday school classes. She and I spent countless hours in the garage with an overhead projector designing visual aids (before the days of Google Slides or PowerPoint), and she knew how to make them come to life. Little ones' wide eyes were glued on her as she captivated them with her storytelling.

People regularly share testimonials about how she transformed their lives with her teachings, and, more importantly, by the example she set. My dad liked to say that Mom could converse with a fence post because she had never met a stranger and knew how to make newcomers feel welcome. Who wouldn't want to talk to a person with that gorgeous smile of hers? And she knew how to laugh with her whole body.

I am grateful to my core for her genuine heart, the example of service to others she personified, and the life lessons that helped mold me into who I am.

Because of my mom and various experiences with her, I learned:

- People are multi-faceted. Mistakes or struggles do not indicate the quality of one's character. Forgiveness, grace, and perspective are paramount.
- Find what's good. Instead of judging a book by its cover, take the time to read the pages.
- The most profound personal growth often comes through trials, not on the mountaintops.

- Adversity equips us to serve others on a more profound, empathetic level.
- Providing unconditional love does not require us to lose our self-respect. Boundaries are essential.
- No one “makes me feel” a certain way. I am in charge of how I handle situations.
- Self-compassion makes it possible to love others more fully.
- Everyone deserves to have a voice.
- Authenticity is much more meaningful than a shiny persona.
- Sweeping legitimate issues under the carpet instead of addressing them does not create enduring peace.
- Keeping up with the Joneses isn't worth it. A values-driven life is one worth living.
- Tasks one person can accomplish easily might be a challenge for someone else, and vice versa. Even if we’ve traveled on a journey similar to another person, everyone’s story and responses are valid and unique.
- Quality of life matters and can change in the blink of an eye. Relish the small moments.
- Contemplating loss enhances gratitude.
- Love and presence trump “perfect” parenting. Kids learn by watching their caregivers, including what they model beautifully and their inevitable missteps.

I request continued prayers for my precious dad and all those who are grieving the loss of Mom. I have had many heart-to-heart talks with Dad to prepare him as much as humanly possible for what was to come, and he is a man of devout faith, but he still lost the love of his life. We sang, prayed, hugged, held hands, and reminisced all day. Uncle Ray and Aunt Sharon drove for several hours so they could support Dad and me tonight. They love and serve well and are two of the most phenomenal people I have ever known.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude for the time you all have taken to encourage and pray for us. You have brought us so much comfort, and I believe you also helped Mom’s body let go peacefully. Saying thank you isn't adequate to express what I wish I could convey right now. I'm sending you all love.