

Mary Helen (Bauck) Zitzow, age 92, of Perham, MN, died Tuesday April 28, 2026, at Perham Living surrounded by family.

Mary Helen was born at St. James Hospital to Edward and Helen (Groves) Bauck on September 16, 1933. She was baptized on November 9, 1933, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Perham. She was confirmed in her faith on May 18, 1947. She graduated from Perham High School in 1951, went on to college at St. Olaf and Macalester earning a Bachelor of Science degree in 1955. In 1974 and 1981, she went back to school earning certifications in Special Education and Behavioral Disorder.

On May 7, 1955, Mary Helen married the love of her life, Marlin Zitzow. Together they raised six wonderful children.

Mary Helen began teaching for the Perham Public School District in 1968 until 1998, most as a Special Education teacher. During those years she also volunteered to sell tickets for sporting events.

Mary Helen was an active member in her church, St. Paul's Lutheran in Perham, which was a very important part of her life. She served as choir director for 47 years, church office secretary for 20 years, LWML, council secretary, started the bell choir, and many other groups. She was a volunteer librarian for the Perham Public Library for 43 years, served on the library board, and an organizer for Mrs. Jaycees.

Mary Helen had many hobbies: she loved to sew and knit for herself and her children, reading, going for walks, playing piano and singing, watching sports especially the Vikings and the Twins, and going to the lake where she spent many years on North Little Pine as a child and an adult. She loved to put puzzles together with whoever came over to the house. Most importantly, she had a passion for cheering on her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren in whatever activity they did.

Mary Helen is survived by her six children: Kay (Steve) Melgard, Diana (Joe) Saenger, Karen Laughlin, Dona Mae Zitzow, Debra Zitzow, and Kent (Ann) Zitzow; eight grandchildren: Kelly (Stacie) Melgard, Casey (Sarah) Melgard, Krista (Ryan) Dahn, Andrea (Andrew) Darsow, Erin (Dave) Swyter, Jon Laughlin, Ashley Zitzow, and Daniel (Hannah) Zitzow; twelve great-grandchildren: Madyson, Brock, Mackenzie, Lucas, Mara, Chase, Joshua, Elizabeth, Wyatt, Abigail, Milo, and Meadow; brother Bill (Sanu) Bauck; sister Elizabeth Foster; brother-in-law Lester (Frances "Cookie") Zitzow; sister-in-law Marilyn Zitzow; and many nieces and nephews.

Preceding Mary Helen in death were her parents; her husband Marlin; son-in-law Bob Laughlin; brother and sister-in-law Jerry and Lois Bauck; in-laws Richard and Mary Zitzow; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law: Lyle Foster, Evelyn and Norman Ponto, Ellsworth and Violet Zitzow, Dennis Zitzow, and Joseph Zitzow.

Memorials may be given to St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Perham – Radio Ministry, General Fund, Music, Capital Campaign or St. Paul's Lutheran School. St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 500 6th Ave SW, Perham, MN 56573

Celebrating THE Life OF



Mary Helen Zitzow

September 16, 1933 - April 28, 2026

The LORD is my *Shepherd;*
I shall not want.

He maketh me to
lie down in green pastures:

He leadeth me beside the still waters,

He restoreth my
soul:

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness
for His name's sake. Yea though I walk through the
valley of the shadow of death.

I will fear no evil:
for Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies

Thou anointest my head with oil; My cup runneth over

Surely goodness & mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life;

And I will dwell in the house

of the LORD *forever.*
- Psalm 23



GOD saw you were getting tired
When a cure was not to be.
He closed his *Arms*
around you and whispered,
"Come To Me."
In tears we saw you sinking,
we watched you fade away.
Our *Hearts*
were almost broken,
you fought so hard to stay.
But when we saw you sleeping
so peacefully, free from pain,
we should not wish you back to suffer that again.
So treasure her, Lord, in your garden of rest.
For here on earth,
She Was The Best.

Funeral Service

Monday, May 11, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
Perham, Minnesota

Officiants

Pastor Del Stohs
Pastor Gary Rehborg

Musicians

Erin Swyter
Doug Dreyer

Casket Bearers

Kelly Melgard - Casey Melgard
Krista Dahn - Andrea Darsow
Erin Swyter - Jon Laughlin
Ashley Zitzow - Daniel Zitzow

Honorary Casket Bearers

All of Mary Helen's Great-Grandchildren

Interment

St. Paul's Lutheran Cemetery
Perham, Minnesota