



Jo Anne Cooper

May 20, 1943 - May 13, 2026

Jo Anne Cooper, age 82, of Charlotte, Michigan, a woman whose compassion, joy, and faith touched the lives of countless people, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, surrounded by her loving family. Jo was born May 20, 1943, in Decatur, Illinois, the daughter of Jerome Thomas and Mary Louise (Heatherton) Wayne.

Jo married Larry Cooper in 1967, and together they built a beautiful life centered on love, family, and faith as they lovingly raised their six children. Jo had a nurturing spirit and a heart especially devoted to mothers and families. She possessed a rare gift for making everyone she met feel seen, valued, and encouraged, and she was deeply loved by all who had the privilege of knowing her. A gifted writer and "word nerd," Jo expressed herself with grace and poetry, finding beauty in stories and everyday moments. She was a true foodie at heart: She loved preparing delicious meals for her family and others, and in later years enjoyed binge-watching Jacques Pepin cooking shows and reading back issues of Bon Appetit magazine. Jo also found joy in reading, being outdoors, and visiting Lake Michigan beaches and campgrounds with her family. As a gifted plant whisperer, she could breathe new life into all kinds of plants and trees, beautifying the world with greenery and flowers as well as with her radiant smile and melodic laugh.

Known as "Grandma Jo" in her previous career and volunteer work, Jo

dedicated herself to strengthening families through her work with MSU Extension in the Building Strong Families program. She was passionate about helping others become confident, capable, and loving parents, a calling that brought her great fulfillment. In retirement, she volunteered at Shared Pregnancy in Lansing, where she was honored with their Lifesaver of the Year award recognizing the compassion and encouragement she so freely gave to expectant mothers.

Above all, Jo loved the Lord and lived her faith each day with sincerity and devotion. A faithful Catholic, she was a shining example of Christ's love in action. Her kindness, wisdom, and unwavering trust in God inspired those around her to deepen their own faith and seek Christ more fully. Her legacy of love, service, and steadfast faith will continue to live on in the hearts of her family, friends, and all whose lives she touched.

Jo is survived by her devoted husband, Larry; children, Holly Cooper, Jerry (Liz) Cooper, Tina Cooper, Amy Cooper (Shane Smith), Jeanne Cooper and Steve Cooper; siblings, Cale Wayne, Tom Wayne, Kate Wayne, Dan Wayne, Steve Wayne, Pete Wayne and Paul Wayne; 12 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her parents and her sister, Mary Wayne Pyles. Jo was a wonderful and beloved wife, mother, sister, mentor, and friend to everyone who knew her, and she will be greatly missed by all.

Friends are encouraged to support Jo's family by attending services or sharing memories on her Tribute Page at www.prayfuneral.com. Visitation is Tuesday, May 19, 2026, from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm, with a rosary service at 7:45 pm, at Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte, Michigan. A Mass of Christian burial will be on Wednesday, May 20, 2026 (what would have been her 83rd birthday), at 11:00 am at St. Mary Catholic Church in Charlotte, Michigan, with Rev. Fr. Dwight Ezop officiating. The funeral Mass will be webcast so you may watch it from any computer, smartphone, or mobile device that has internet access. Go to w

ww.prayfuneral.com and select Tributes, then select Jo Anne Cooper. Click Photos and Videos (if you're using a smartphone, tap Media), then Webcasting Video anytime starting one hour before the service.

If desired, memorial contributions may be made to Shared Pregnancy Women's Center or Boys Town. The family is in the care of Pray Funeral Home, Charlotte.

Cemetery Details

Millerburg Cemetery

Millerburg Hwy & Valley Hwy
Charlotte, MI 48813

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 19. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home
401 W Seminary St
Charlotte, MI 48813

Affirmation Service

MAY 19. 7:30 PM - 7:45 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home
401 W Seminary St
Charlotte, MI 48813

Rosary

MAY 19. 7:45 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Pray Funeral Home
401 W Seminary St
Charlotte, MI 48813

Funeral

MAY 20. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. Mary Catholic Church
807 St. Mary Boulevard
Charlotte, MI 48813

Burial

MAY 20. 2:00 PM (ET)

Millerburg Cemetery
Millerburg Hwy & Valley Hwy
Charlotte, MI 48813

Tribute Wall



“ *Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Webcast in memory of Jo Anne Cooper*



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - May 20 at 08:40 AM

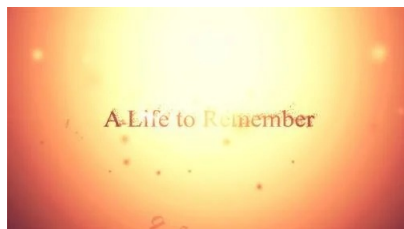
SG

Sending love to the Cooper Family. Love, Sheila

Sheila Gonzales - May 20 at 03:15 PM



“ *Pray Funeral Home, Inc created a Tribute Video in memory of Jo Anne Cooper*



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - May 18 at 10:30 AM

DW

“ *A wonderful person and sister. So grateful and blessed to have so many treasured moments together as we traveled life's journey. Thanks for the memories dear sis! Your brother - Dan Roy*

Daniel Wayne - May 19 at 06:54 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.



May 19 at 06:41 PM



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

May 19 at 06:41 PM



“ Heather, Brian, Jojo and Wren Corrigan purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.



Heather, Brian, Jojo and Wren Corrigan - May 19 at 04:12 PM



“ Jo's smile would light up a room and your soul!

We were honored to call her a friend and to journey through this life with her while she was here, and we rest assured that we will see her again in the hereafter.

Tammy & Mike Parker



Parker Family - May 19 at 01:15 PM

GL

Dear family, we are sending love and prayers and thanksgiving to have shared your family. Your mom and I shared so much at that dining table...I will see her again and she blessed each of us from where she is! Keith and Georgia and family

Georgia Lichon - May 19 at 09:06 PM



“ *Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.*



May 19 at 12:43 PM



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

May 19 at 12:43 PM

TR

“ *Tom & Sheila (Wane) Roth purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.*



Tom & Sheila (Wane) Roth - May 19 at 09:39 AM

TR

“ Tom & Sheila (Wane) Roth planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Jo Anne Cooper.

Tom & Sheila (Wane) Roth - May 19 at 09:39 AM

OF

“ Our Cursillo family purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.



Our Cursillo family - May 18 at 08:16 PM

LJ

“ Lindsay Wayne & Jude purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.



Lindsay Wayne & Jude - May 18 at 05:47 PM

TS

“ The Steinberger sisters purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.



The Steinberger sisters - May 18 at 02:26 PM



“ Rainbow Of Remembrance Spray was purchased for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.



May 18 at 12:45 PM



“ 45 files added to the album LifeTributes



Pray Funeral Home, Inc. - May 18 at 10:24 AM



“ Larry and family, please know that Monica and I have you in our prayers. We were able to spend a good deal of time with Jo at the lay family reunion in Ohio. She was truly a kind and loving woman, firmly faithful to our Lord. I rest assured that she now spends her moments in the presence of our Lord. We lit a candle for Jo after Mass today and will continue to do so regularly as we remember her and others who have left our presence to return home.

Love Brian and Monica Heatherton

Brian Francis Heatherton - May 17 at 06:52 PM



“ Love, Bill & Bonnie purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.



Love, Bill & Bonnie - May 17 at 03:31 PM

DS

“ I have known Jo Cooper for about 14 year. I met her through her husband Larry who made his Cursillo. Back in 2013 - 2015. We started a small group at St Mary's in Charlotte. Jo attended the meetings with her husband Larry. Jo's deep love for Jesus touched everyone profoundly. She became an honorary member of the group. I have long been in awe of how the Holy Spirit speaks through not only her words but through her heart. I became a Deacon in January of 2024. Her influence inspired me greatly. I can only hope in my own little way that I carry her spirit of the Love of Jesus, making people see Him the way Jo made Jesus known to others through her loving heart, which was ever so deeply united to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Jo, I will always carry you my heart as I minister to Souls expressing to them the importance of the Love Jesus in their lives. I LOVE YOU SO MUCH JO, PLEASE PRAY FOR KAYE AND I.

Peace in Christ,

Dcn. Michael and Kaye Schasser

Deacon Michael and Kaye Schasser - May 16 at 11:14 PM

MB

“ Larry, Jerry and Liz, Holly, Tina, Amy, Jean, and Steve, I'm so very sorry for your loss; for the loss of this wonderful woman from all our lives. What a joy she was to be around! Indeed, she made everyone feel seen and loved, something I experienced many times. May the Lord bring her quickly into the full joy of His presence, and pour His grace into your hearts to comfort you and give you greater faith, hope, and love.
~Margo

Margo Brown - May 16 at 08:29 PM

MB

“ Jo was a wonderful friend to our whole family. I also had the good fortune to work with Jo at the Family Growth Center. I cherish memories of laughter, of praying together, and sharing the ups and downs of raising children. My heart goes out to Larry, Holly, Amy, Tina, Jerry and Steve and I pray Gods comfort for each of them.

Margie Betz - May 16 at 02:41 PM

LJ

“ Love, Aunt Kate and Julie purchased the Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses for the family of Jo Anne Cooper.



Love, Aunt Kate and Julie - May 16 at 01:06 PM