



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. 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 www.

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

Upcoming 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 (ET)

Pray Funeral Home
401 W. Seminary St.
Charlotte, MI 48813

Rosary

MAY 19. 8:00 PM - 8:30 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. 3:00 PM (ET)

Millerburg Cemetery
Millerburg Hwy & Valley Hwy
Charlotte, MI 48813