



## Norma Kelly Dean

July 1, 1941 - February 7, 2022

Norma Kelly Dean's fascination with butterflies revealed a metaphor for her colorful bright light, big personality, and unforgettable presence. The powerful symbolism of the butterfly framed her life in extraordinary ways.

### The Making of a Butterfly

Norma Kelly Dean was born July 1, 1941, as the 2nd child and daughter of Marion Louis and Mable Lee, in Louisville, Kentucky. Norma gave her life to the Lord as a young child at the Greater St. James A.M.E. church, where she would attend as an active member through her college years.

She attended Central High School in Louisville and furthered her education at Knoxville College in Knoxville, Tennessee receiving her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education. It was no wonder that she would catch the eye of sophomore and football star John Dean in her first year of college. He would be her forever love. Their marriage of 58 years took them to St. Louis, Missouri. Ultimately, they would land in Detroit, Michigan, and make that their home.

### Wings of Inspiration

In Detroit, Norma would begin an impactful career as an esteemed Educator

in the Detroit Public Schools District (DPSD). She would hold many roles in the DPSD. Norma worked at Ferry Elementary School, Winterhalter Middle School, Custer Elementary School, Schulze Elementary School, and Hally Open Middle School as a Guidance Counselor. She later became the head of Guidance and Counseling at Southwestern High School before retiring in 2000.

Those students fortunate enough to have Mrs. Dean as their teacher or counselor were forever linked to her. They felt tremendously blessed by her unmatched wit, sage counsel, and most importantly, her belief that every young person has great potential. One could often hear her saying “You are not good; you are wonderful, great, and anything but merely good!” One of Norma's most rewarding moments over her 35-year career was running into former students that took heed to her message of having great potential. They were always eager to share their life successes and how her belief in them helped them overcome challenges leading into adulthood.

Her belief in being outstanding and great was ever-present in her life. Norma would continue her education and attain a Master of Education from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She further deepened her knowledge and skills by achieving an Education Specialist Degree at Wayne State University.

### Butterfly Kisses

Hundreds of people affectionately call her Mommy and Momma because of her authentic love for young people. However, her passion for others was matchless compared to her deep love for her family.

Norma deeply loved all of her siblings and extended family. One of her favorite pastimes was spending quality time with her baby sister, Sandra L. Perkins. They would shop for hours and enjoy countless family-styled Derby

celebrations in Louisville while giggling all day from their secret and inside jokes.

When Norma and John had their eldest daughter Kelly, Norma would gain a daughter and best friend; and just when her heart was full, along came her son Erik, who quickly stole her heart and was her pride and joy. Later, Norma and John would welcome their lovely daughter-in-love, Charity, and two beautiful grandchildren, Elijah and Lauren. After receiving the gift of grandchildren, she soon became affectionately known by her family and close friends as Missy.

She loved her family fiercely and always made time for family. She thoroughly enjoyed planning and engaging in birthday celebration dinners, family trips, game nights, impromptu family talent shows, family reunion activities, soccer games, dance recitals, graduations, and more.

### Exquisite Colors of Hope

Norma believed in the quote of her hometown celebrity, Muhammad Ali, "service is the rent we pay for room on this earth." Her firm belief in the hope of a brighter future for vulnerable youth and their families fueled her community service. She realized that aligning her caring power with others could change the lives of children.

In 1990, she became a Top Ladies of Distinction Chapter member. She used her skills, talents, and influence to help alleviate the myriad of problems confronting youth. Although she fed her desire to serve the community through her membership in the Top Ladies of Distinction, she decided to deepen her collective community service impact.

In 1989 she was initiated and became a member of the illustrious Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. She enjoyed her beloved sorority immensely and was always ready to participate in many of its collective community service activities. Now, her impact of community service would permeate beyond the United States into a global effort serving those in need.

As a devout member of Hope United Methodist Church, Norma's service to God and His people was paramount in her life. Throughout her years of Christian experience, she counted it a joy to praise God by serving in the choir and volunteering whenever she could.

### Flickering and Fluttering

Norma had one central motto for her life, "Fun! Fun! Fun!" And she lived her life out loud and in living color. With FunFun being an essential part of her life, Norma indulged in a range of adventurous feats that she found FunFun and exhilarating. Her unique and fearless activities included Zip lining, Race Car driving, Scuba Diving, and Sky Diving at the tender age of 70.

Upon retirement from DPSD, Norma pursued other passions and interests. She attained her Real Estate license, Travel Agent certification, Limited Licensed Professional Counselor and started an event planning business. Her new ventures were executed with excellence and created memorable experiences for her clients.

### A Butterfly Takes Flight

On February 7, 2022, Norma peacefully made her transition. She is survived by her devoted sister, Sandra L. Perkins, loving children, daughter Kelly A. Dean, and son Erik A. Dean (Charity). She was a doting grandmother to grandson Elijah C. Dean and granddaughter, Lauren R.A. Dean, and the

caring owner to the family dog, Monsieur, and a host of nieces and nephews.

She is preceded in death by her parents, Marion Louis and Mable Lee Kelly, siblings Barbara A. Humphrey, Peggy J. Stevenson, Marion LaRon (Ronnie) Kelly, and husband John F. Dean. We will deeply miss Norma's unmatched zest for life, sparkle, and effervescent portrayal of a most beautiful butterfly.

"Butterflies cannot be confined. Her wings will grow; she'll find the sky."  
-Christy Ann Martine.

Live Stream at Hope Methodist

<https://www.hopeumc.org/>

In lieu of Flowers, the family asks for donations to United College Fund in memory of Norma Kelly Dean.

[https://secure2.convio.net/uncf/site/Donation2;jsessionid=00000000.app20014a?df\\_id=5320&5320.donation=form1&NONCE\\_TOKEN=D4A5FE6319011EA A95C072370B484899](https://secure2.convio.net/uncf/site/Donation2;jsessionid=00000000.app20014a?df_id=5320&5320.donation=form1&NONCE_TOKEN=D4A5FE6319011EA A95C072370B484899)

# Previous Events

## Family/Friends Time

MAR 4. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Hope United Methodist Church  
26275 Northwestern Highway  
Southfield, MI 48076

## Memorial Service

MAR 4. 11:00 AM (ET)

Hope United Methodist Church  
26275 Northwestern Highway  
Southfield, MI 48076

# Tribute Wall



“ *Norma Kelly Dean*

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September 27, 2022 at 08:40 PM



“ *Norma Kelly Dean*

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September 27, 2022 at 06:52 PM



“ *Missy, always the life of the party, believed in living while there was time. As co-parents and co-grandparents, we shared a special bond (Her son married my daughter). I loved her so much and she loved all that was mine - my husband, my children, and even the grands that we did not share. She was especially proud of our relationship and would make sure others knew that we were unique. Missy was sassy, prissy, and daring. She made an impact on my heart. I will miss her and love her forever. #missingMissy*

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**Crystal Jones** - March 03, 2022 at 10:18 PM