



## Esther A. Dawson

April 6, 1919 - September 11, 2023

Esther A. Dawson of Cadillac passed away Monday morning, Sept. 11, 2023. She was 104.

Esther lived a very long and wonderful life here on earth and said for the past 20 years "God can take me anytime, I'm ready!" She loved many and lived a full life. She was known for her fun and generous spirit, fabulous cookies and for being a very active lady. She understood life was a gift and celebrated all special occasions with zeal and food.

Esther was born April 6, 1919 to John and Augusta (Duschinske) Mathes in Detroit. She grew up during the great Depression and recalls cherishing her one doll and her family. She always said "we were very close, all we had was each other and that was good enough." She graduated high school.

The love of her life, James Dawson, her husband of 54 years, said he fell for her when he saw "her great ankles!" They dated 4 years and Esther was ready to get married so she asked him if he would like to get married! They were married June 28, 1941 and lived in Livonia. They had four children- Sandy, Gary, Ken & Mike. Her children meant the world to her. Once they went to school, she worked as a bank teller. She was known as a fun lady who hosted many gatherings/parties.

In 1978 Esther and Jimmy moved to Cadillac to retire. Esther volunteered at Mercy Hospital in the Peppermint Shop for a total of 31 years. She was a member of Zion Lutheran Church where she enjoyed helping out at the sock & underwear table during Project Christmas for many years. She faithfully gave to the church food pantry recalling the days when "we didn't have much."

She enjoyed bowling, golfing, camping and biking. She was on her bowling team for over 20 years. She was on several golf leagues too. Ludington State Park was a favorite place for camping. Esther and Jimmy moved from the home they built on Stone Ledge Lake to a smaller home in Cadillac. When the weather was nice, Esther would bike around Lake Cadillac sometimes twice a day. After her husband died in 1996, her bowling team became like family. Esther enjoyed meeting new people and would happily engage anyone in conversation. Esther loved flowers, gardening, raking leaves, shoveling snow and mowing her lawn. She even "snuck out" to do these things when she had people her family hired to do such work. Her family will fondly remember how she lovingly made cream puffs served only with ice cream and Saunders Hot Fudge.

Some of her favorite spots were her backyard, her sun room and her basement, where she put together many Thomas Kinkade puzzles. Out of the house, the bike path, any golf course and Maggie's Restaurant were her "go to's". Esther will forever be adored and remembered for her love of life, her energy, her love of good chocolate, Lipton tea from her tea pot and cup collection and her enjoyment of doing cross word puzzles. She adored big dogs, especially yellow labs. She had a tender heart for little girls and made sure any young girl in her life had a doll. She was an extraordinarily beautiful woman inside and out. She made a difference in the lives of many people.

She is survived by her children: Sandy (Barry) Radawiec, Gary (Allison) Dawson, Ken (Karen) Dawson and Mike Dawson (Marnie McCoonaghy); her

grandchildren: Connie (Tom) Schepers, Ron (Stephanie) Radawiec, Nicole (Colby) Lawrence, Ashley Dawson, Natalie (Eben) Dawson Sargent, Lance (Ellen) Dawson, Dan (Molly) Dawson, Amie (Greg) DuRocher; 10 great-grandchildren with one due in March and four great-great-grandchildren with one due in January.

Esther was preceded in death by her husband, James M. Dawson; brothers: Al, Wallie, Barnie; her sisters: Betty Tessmar, Trudy Brandau, Eleanor Carie and Helen Knowles,

Her shared secrets to living a full life- loving God, helping others, eating chocolate everyday and staying active.

A celebration of life will be held 1:00 PM Sunday, October 1, 2023 at Zion Lutheran Church in Cadillac with Pastor Scott Torkko officiating. Her final resting place will be Maple Hill Cemetery in Cadillac.

Memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital or Hospice of Michigan Cadillac Chapter. An online guestbook is available at [www.petersonfh.com](http://www.petersonfh.com).

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

OCT 1. 1:00 PM (ET)

Zion Lutheran Church  
350 Pearl St  
Cadillac, MI 49601  
(231) 775-9821

# Tribute Wall



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

September 29, 2023 at 04:01 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Esther A. Dawson.



September 29, 2023 at 04:01 PM



“ Fairest of All was purchased for the family of Esther A. Dawson.



September 28, 2023 at 10:45 AM



“ Esther, you were always such a joy to spend time with: eucher, visiting, recalling memories, etc. You will forever be missed.

**Carlton and Shelby Plyler** - September 15, 2023 at 10:49 AM

AD

“ We miss you so much Ms Esther! You have no idea! There is only one woman in this world that I'd share my husband with and that is you. First time I did your nails, I told you that we have the same birthday and my name is April and you just said “then how come I am Esther?” I still giggle every time I think about it until this day. I love everything about you and I would have love to have more time with you and I'm sure everyone around you feel the same way. You're an extraordinary woman that brings joy to whoever was lucky enough to have crossed path with you. If I was gonna live until 104, I wish I still have your sense of humor and your gratitude towards life like you did. There is just so many things I wanna say to you, listen to your funny stories and different point of view about life but guess now I'm gonna have to wait. Rest in peace Ms Esther, see you again some day!

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**April Dao** - September 14, 2023 at 10:22 PM

AM

“ I am so glad I got to send her a birthday card She was beautiful & I enjoyed all Connies sharing of visits I know you all will miss her I wonder if a long life is in store for Sandy

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**Alice Mills** - September 13, 2023 at 04:55 PM

BH

“ Good friends are like stars, You can't always see them, but you know they are there! FRIENDS FOREVER

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**Barbara R HAZLETT** - September 13, 2023 at 03:19 PM

EM

“ Esther was a fun and always cheerful lady. I so enjoyed chats with her at Zion. She is missed already. Peace to her family.

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**Elsie Moore** - September 13, 2023 at 11:14 AM