

**GRAVESIDE SERVICE AT SPUR CEMETERY
FRANCES EILEEN GRAVES MARTIN
June 16, 1922 to September 15, 2015**

CALL TO WORSHIP

And Jesus said, "Come unto me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and in me, you will find rest for your souls." "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

PRAYER OF ADORATION

Eternal God, we give you thanks for the great company of all those who have kept the faith, finished their race, and who now rest from their labor. We praise you for those people dear to us whom we name in our hearts before you and on this day, we give you thanks for Frances Martin, for her love of family, Bridge, smoking and playing Skip-Bo with her grandchildren, her independent nature and her spit-fire personality, her abiding sense of faith, and the many ways her youthful, engaging and forthright presence enriched the lives of those she touched. At this time, show us your grace, so that as we again face the mystery of death we may see the light of eternity. Help us to live always as those who are prepared to die. And when our days here are ended, enable us to die as

those who go forth to live, so that living or dying, our life may be held in Jesus Christ our risen Lord, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

A time to be born and a time to die: a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted,

A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance;

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose;

A time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

A time to love, and a time to hate, a time for war, and a time for peace.

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven. **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

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. Ye 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 annointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. **Psalm 23**

It is fitting on this day that I read about the qualities of love expressed in **I Corinthians, chapter 13**. “Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. Love is not rude, it is not self-seeking, love is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. Love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. All the special gifts and powers from God will someday end but love lasts forever.

SONG: “How Great Thou Art” Sung By Leo Day

THE LIFE OF FRANCES EILEEN GRAVES MARTIN

We are gathered here today to say our sad and love-filled good-byes to Frances and to give this very determined, fun-loving and kind-hearted woman with a beautiful smile and often used index finger a most proper send-off. Frances loved life, lived her many

years on this earth her way and knew deep down that life was truly a gift from God. Even though Frances did not want a big fuss made over her on her 93rd birthday in June, she was so grateful for all the presents, cards and visits she received and when I went to see her that day, she showed me each card and gift and told me who sent her what and who had visited and who was going to visit and then said, “Oh Elizabeth, I’m glad I made it for all of this fun because yesterday things weren’t looking very good for me and I wasn’t sure if I would even make it to today!”

Her hospice nurse, Peggy, said, “Frances was very independent right up to the end and while I might make suggestions to her about her care, I always knew that Frances was going to do what Frances was going to do regardless of what I might say.” Frances was also a very private woman who never talked much about the emotional side of life and when I began visiting her, I knew that I needed to respect the ways she had always lived, related to others and dealt with hard times. We had great fun and light-hearted conversations when we went outside for her to smoke and it was humorous to hear her stories about her life or her comments about her family, the staff or other residents at Library of Legacies Assisted Living Facility in Slaton where she received loving care these last three years!

While I wanted to follow Frances lead, not get too personal or ask anything that would make her uncomfortable, in my last few visits I also wanted to make sure she was okay and at peace with her living and her dying. Two weeks ago, when Barbara let me know that Frances was not eating or drinking much and more importantly, hadn't had a cigarette in a week, I went the next day to visit as I knew this was not normal for Frances and she was probably beginning her transition from this life into her heavenly beginnings.

When I arrived, Frances was resting and I sat on her bed and used the white board to communicate. Through my writing and her speaking, she let me know that she was getting weaker and was also scared of "not being here." I asked her if she had been seeing Everett and Hoss and she got a big surprised smile on her face, nodded her head and said, "Yes, I have. They are not here right now but they are here with me often now." I let her know that many people like her who are getting closer to going to heaven have told me how they too have begun to see their loved ones in heaven and I think this is God's way of helping us not to be afraid." Frances smiled and thanked me for letting her know about these things. I thanked her for the fun we had this last year and told her I would always remember her kind-hearted and honest ways, our conversations and bird-watchings when she smoked, and

told her I would look out for her family whom I knew she was still worried about. One last time I hugged her and with tears in both of our eyes, she pointed her finger at me and said, “It’s going to be okay, Elizabeth. I’m going to be okay!”

As we remember Frances’s grand and rambunctious life on this day and give her back to you, O God, we do so with hearts of gratitude for the great gift of her life. Frances is preceded in death by her parents, her loving brother, Hauley Graves, a cherished son, Everett Martin Jr. or Hoss, as he was known, a dear granddaughter, Jaime Martin, her beloved husband of 65 years, Everett and many of her friends and loved ones. Frances is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Barbara and Charles Hardin or “Barb and Charlie” as Frances called them, her son and daughter-in-law who were “always going somewhere,” Larry and Nan Martin, her daughter-in-law, Sharon Martin, who Frances claimed as her own when Hoss died, seven grandchildren, John, Holly, Aimee, Misty, Kasey, Katie and Jennifer; 10 great-grandchildren, and many dear family and friends.

Frances was born on June 16, 1922 in King County, Texas to Harry “Babe” and Ella “Dump” Graves and I didn’t even ask how they got their nicknames! Babe and Dump were hard workers and go-getters who operated Babe’s Café and Texaco for many years.

I guess its good they didn't name it Dump's Café! Barbara told me that since Guthrie Schools were not accredited in the early 1940s and Frances and Hauley wanted a college education, Babe and Ella bought a small house in Lubbock near Lubbock High School so their children could get a good high school education. As Ella never learned how to drive, she took Frances and Hauley on the bus to Lubbock every Sunday, cared for them at their home in Lubbock while they went to school at Lubbock High and then on Friday after school, they all took the bus back to Guthrie.

As a result of her parent's support and their emphasis on getting a good education, Frances was able to attend Texas Technological College, now Texas Tech University, and graduated with a degree in Business. Frances' claim to fame was when she was chosen as a "Tech Beauty" one year and got to ride on a float full of "beauties" in the Homecoming parade. Ever the modest woman, Frances always said it was not her beauty but the number of friends she had that got her elected! And through the years, Frances kept in touch with many of her friends and former roommates at Tech!

Frances met Everett Martin one day when she rode to Spur with her father, Babe and her Uncle George. They stopped in at the drug store where Everett was working during his summer break from Highlands University in Las Vegas, New Mexico where he

played football and was working on a degree in physical education. Soon after their meeting, World War II began and Everett put his education and love affair on hold to serve his country in the Army Air Corps. When Everett returned from the War, Frances and Everett were married in the 6666 Ranch House where her Uncle George Humphries was ranch manager at the time. They moved to Las Vegas, New Mexico so that Everett could complete his degree in physical education and industrial arts. His first job as a football coach was in Lamesa and four years later, Everett and Frances moved their young family to Spur and purchased the Gulf Oil Distributorship where they worked together until their retirement in 1983. It was truly a family business—Hoss and Larry learned to drive trucks when they were in middle school and Everett would have the truck loaded with diesel and leave it at the school parking lot for the boys to drive to its destination when they finished school. Frances taught Barbara to do some of the bookkeeping for the family business as well as much of the cooking and cleaning at home as Frances much preferred her business responsibilities and Bridge playing!

Larry was the youngest Martin child and I heard that on at least one occasion, Hoss and Barb expressed great concern to their mother about how they were the responsible children and Larry never had to do all the things they were expected to do. Frances

very kindly told Hoss and Barb that she would take their concerns into consideration! Barbara and Larry said whenever they travelled in a car with their parents, they all tried to lie on the floorboard of the car to escape the fog of smoke from Everett's cigars and Frances' cigarettes!

Barbara said Frances was a very talented at playing the piano and could have been really good at it but she much preferred playing cards, reading her mystery novels, or smoking to practicing the piano! When she wasn't working, Frances loved to play Bridge several times a week with her fun friends. Jennifer, Larry and Barbara all have memories of the classy, opinionated, loud and rowdy women Frances played Bridge with for years and said that they could tell you off and you might not even know it!

Jennifer remembers that her Grandmother was a sharp shopper who intentionally planned her shopping experiences and was most proud of all that she was able to buy on sale! The grandkids all loved to spend the night with their Mawmaw and the girls played dress up in Barbara's old prom dresses and matching shoes and accessories until Frances ordered Barb to clean out her closet! I was told that Everett was a pack rat and whenever he went out of town, Frances would go through his stuff and throw much of what

she considered disposable into large garbage bags and call Hoss to come and take it all to far away dumpsters!

When their retired, Everett and Frances purchased property in Cloudcroft, New Mexico and usually spent 6 months out of the year there for approximately 15 years. Several of their close friends also bought nearby properties and some of Everett and Frances' happiest memories were spent there with old and new friends. Frances read, played Bridge, and watched the hummingbirds while Everett played golf and did odd jobs for friends and neighbors. All of their grandchildren loved to go to Cloudcroft and Frances taught them how to play Uno, Skip-Bo and other fun games and was adamant about not cheating and always playing by the rules that she made everyone aware of!

Frances received much comfort, strength and reassurance from the relationships she had with her beloved family, her many dear friends, and her loving God. Frances was baptized in the river at Guthrie as a young girl and was a member of the Methodist Church in Guthrie. When her great-grandson, Parker, was baptized a few years ago in Post, she was so proud and showed me the order of worship for his baptism service! When she married Everett, he was a Baptist and they joined the Baptist Church in Spur and it was important to Frances that her children were raised in the church.

Although Frances' grave hearing loss made it impossible for her to get anything out of going to church, her very strong Christian beliefs and faith in our loving, forgiving and generous Lord sustained her in times of great loss and comforted her from beginning to end.

Frances was a loving mother who taught her children how to live, love and be their own person. She never meddled in their lives, even if she might have wanted to do so—she let them live their own lives and learn from their own mistakes always being there to love and support them through the hard times. Frances was an incredibly strong-willed and tough woman who rebounded from adversity with much dignity and grace, all very privately. She overcame a broken hip, a broken knee, and even survived colon cancer! Frances loved her grandchildren and great-grandchildren and they all loved her! Their Mawmaw had a ritual of compressing their cheeks during their good-bye hug!

Her granddaughter, Kasey said, “Mawmaw was an amazing grandmother, all of us thought so much of her and loved her so very much. It was always a joy to get to go see Mawmaw and I looked forward to every visit with her. She'd write us letters and we'd write her back, and I loved her pound cakes. She was just so genuine and seemed to care about everything that was going on

with us grandchildren. She loved working the newspaper crossword puzzles and reading books and I think this is what kept her mind so sharp. To me she lived an absolutely amazing life and was such a strong woman! She'll be dearly missed but I'm comforted knowing she's in heaven and reunited with my Pawpaw and her other loved ones.”

It is obvious here today that Frances was a hard-working, fun-loving, remarkable and beautiful woman who truly left her mark on us and on this world. It has been said, “That which we do for ourselves stays with us. That which we do for others lives on and is immortal.” Frances’s life was never boring and her marvelous sense of adventure and fun as well as her great care for others brought much richness and depth to the ordinary experiences of her life and the lives of those she touched. Through her determined nature, her devotion to others, and her gift of connecting with other people, Frances knew how to make the most of the precious and fragile gift of life we are each given to live.

While Frances’s death leaves us with sadness; her grand presence in our midst leaves us with great reminders of the significance family, friendship and faith have in our lives. Although her journey through this life is now complete, her loving presence will continue to give us strength, fond memories, many smiles and an

enduring sustenance for each of us on our own sacred journeys. Frances left us this week with a lot of life in her years and a lot of love, peace, gratitude, and acceptance in her heart.

“Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me and the God of peace will be with you.” **Philippians 4:6-9**

PRAYER

God of Life, Death, and Resurrection, we gather today to give you thanks for Frances Martin, for the gift of her life and for the many ways her faithful and unique presence will encourage each of us to make the most of our limited time here on this earth. We ask that you will be with her family and friends in this time of grief -- offer comfort, strength, peace, love, and hope in ways that continue to affirm life and nurture faith. But we feel more than loss and sadness on this day. We realize, dear God, that our hearts are also filled with an essence of life we would not now have without our having loved and been loved by Frances. We are grateful for the values, abundance, faith, friendship, care and nurture we have received from being a part of her life. Thank you, God, for the gift

of Frances and for blessing us through her. As we leave her grave, may our sadness and grief be touched by a sense of the joy she had for life, for people, and for You, O Lord. May we be blessed by the remembrances we will always have and like Frances, may we be open to the adventure of life and the joy of the journey. In the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, let us now pray, “Our Father, who art in heaven...” Amen.

SONG: “The Wonder Of Wonders” Sung by Leo Day

Our Lord, Jesus Christ said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give you peace. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. Go in peace, my peace be with you.”

COMMENDATION AND BENEDICTION

As family and friends of Frances Martin, we commend her spirit into your tender hands, O merciful Savior. Give rest, O Christ, to her with all your saints, where there is neither pain nor sorrow nor sighing, but life everlasting. Receive Frances into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of all who dwell in eternal light. May your kingdom of peace come quickly as we commit her body on this day to the ground: earth-to-earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, says the Spirit. They rest from their labors, and their works follow them.

We go today from this grave with great thanks for the life of Frances Martin and with the peace and assurance that she is at rest in our Lord's loving, eternal arms. May we know God's presence as we remember Frances' life and love, and may we feel God's love as we continue to live the gift of life we have each been given.

Let us go now with the love of God, the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit, now and forever more, Amen