

Gaye:

Thank you all for coming to celebrate the life of our mother, Dorothy May Dahlstrom Gronlund. We have each written a few thoughts about our Mom. I have focused on the things I admired about her. Robin, the things she learned from her. Jamie, some favorite memories. And, Gregg, will close with more about her musical life.

I deeply admire that she was always a working Mom. In the early fifties, it wasn't common for women to work outside the home. She was a teacher in the schools and then a piano and voice teacher. And, she had an active career as a singer and conductor in churches and synagogues, opera, musicals and community choruses. She accomplished this while she raised four children, supported Dad's career, ran a household, and moved many times around the country. But what really impressed me was when at age fifty she went for her Masters in Vocal Performance at University of South Florida. She taught at the college level and with her private students well into her seventies. When I interviewed her for Story Corps, she told me that teaching had been the greatest joy in her life. So many students, including the four of us and many of her grandchildren, would agree that we saw that joy in the dedication she showed to all her students.

Mom could still sing in her beautiful, operatic soprano voice until just a couple of years ago. She loved the musical activities at her assisted living program and was often asked to sing by the performers. She loved the music here at Bethesda and was so proud that granddaughter, Kristen, sings in the choir. Our family is deeply grateful to Stuart and the choir for giving her such beautiful music today.

Mom was a leader. She chaired many committees in the arts and in her church life and led musical soirees and performances. Even in the last days of her dementia, she would talk of how she had to tell everyone

what to do! She was excellent at organizing tasks, laying out plans, and coordinating actions. I wonder if my siblings remember our Saturday morning chore cards? She even organized her children to get the house cleaned.

Mom was a beloved and delightful Nana to her eight grandchildren and a great grandmother to nine great grandchildren. Now we have a 10<sup>th</sup> on the way. Uno games, trips to Disney, Universal and the beach or pool, too many hugs and kisses, and being woken up by her high soprano singing “Good Morning” are a few of the memories all the grandchildren share. Mom, Nana, you will be missed.

When Robin thinks about what she learned from our mother, she thinks of excellence, kindness, faith, and fun. Whether Mom was singing, directing a choir or teaching voice or piano, everything was done at the highest level of excellency. Her voice students would come to her to prepare for contest and always received superior scores.

Mom was always kind and friendly to everyone she met. Whether it was a store clerk, someone walking down the street or a fellow church member, she always had a smile and a hello. Everyone loved her and gravitated towards her. She was also so good to Robin’s husband, Randy. When his dad passed away (his mother had already passed years before), Randy said “Now I have no parent. No mother or father.” Without hesitation, Mom said “I’ll be your parent now. You have me.” Her words meant the world to Randy and are ones both he and Robin will never forget.

She and our Dad were faithful members of Bethesda for many years and before that many other churches. Mom greeted, read scripture during services, sang and served on many committees. She was also an honorary member of The MOB. Our family is grateful for the welcoming

home that Bethesda became for both our parents who are inurned in the Columbarium in the beautiful garden here.

She loved to play golf and cards, to travel and to watch all sorts of sports. She savored a good stiff scotch or two before dinner and loved to have her back tickled. So if you visited it was a requisite.

Robin says rest well, Mom. You did your job. You made your mark on this world and made it a better place and left your children, grandchildren and great grandchildren with many happy memories of you.

Gregg:

Jamie remembers when she was around nine or ten she had terrible growing pains in her legs so much it kept her up at night. Mom would lay in bed with her and put her legs between hers. Jamie cherishes the memory of the warmth of those legs and the comfort she felt.

When she was a teen Mom would take Jamie and other siblings with her to church in the mornings to her singing job wherever that may be. On the way, she would sing in the car. Jamie remembers how loud it was and how much as a teen she hated it. However, today she cherishes Mom's beautiful talent which now lives on in her children, grandchildren and greatgrandchildren.

Jamie reminds us that anyone who knew Mom knew her grace and style. She always had perfect hair and makeup no matter if she was going out or not. Lipstick was a must and her dress and jewelry were always stylish. And let's not forget the hats she wore to church. She was one classy lady.

Jamie and Mike will never forget the time they took her to see Neil Diamond. There she was dancing in the aisles

with them and singing along with all the songs. Mom loved every minute.

Jamie holds these and countless other memories dear to her heart as we continue this journey of life without our mother. Her memories will help her through for sure.

As my sisters have said, Mom's greatest gift was music.

I recently saw a Broadway musical about the group, The Temptations. A line towards the end of the show struck me: "Nothing Lasts Forever, except the music!" Mom's music will last forever. Her music lives on in all her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and in her students, choir members, and audiences. I heard from several parishioners here at Bethesda that on Sunday mornings they would try to sit near Mom to hear her beautiful voice sing the hymns and other parts of the service. Fortunately, we have several recordings of her and will play one at the garden reception after this memorial.

One song I remember Mom singing frequently when I was growing up is called "Love Is Where You Find It." Some of the lyrics went like this:

- Take It, take a chance now, For romance now, Tell someone that you care.
- It may hide from you for a while, It may come tonight in a smile!
- Love is where you find it, Don't be blind, it's all around you, everywhere!

Mom encouraged all of us to take chances, and to find, and to share love.

She also would encourage us to be thankful. Daily she would express her gratitude to others around her. She wouldn't say her thanks, she would sing it. I can still hear her, in her assisted living facilities, singing to her caregivers, Thank you, Thank you very much! Anyone who heard her couldn't help but smile.

My wife, Lorie, and I took Mom to see many operas and other musical performances. I remember at the end of Amahl and the Night Visitors, Mom sat and wept tears of joy and awe. Recently, Lorie and I saw a new opera and tears streamed down my face near the beginning when the character sings: "Each new day is a reason to sing!" That could have been Mom's mantra.

The last words Mom said to me were, "I want to go home." She's home now, but if Mom were here, she would say to us all: Love! Be thankful! Sing! If you don't sing, make a joyful noise. And remember: Each new day is a reason to sing.