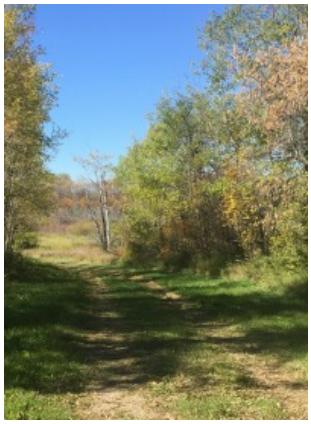

REMEMBERING

Mary Lotte Buhler

March 2, 1930 - June 16, 2025

Celebration of Life

Monday, June 30, 2025 at 11 a.m.

Northview Community Church

32040 Downes Road

Abbotsford

As we begin our Mom, Mary Buhler's, story, we reflect on a life of service. We saw her caring for and feeding the family many delicious meals and treats; her Butter Tarts were famous. Her love and talent for cooking and baking led her to bake cookies for Vacation Bible School and decorate many fancy birthday cakes for us as children. Mom also liked to sew. Among her many accomplishments were handmade beach blankets for the Grandchildren a few years ago. Singing and music were also among Mom's passions. She sometimes played the Omnichord, accompanying a lady who led music at the Menno Hospital. Even in her nineties, she still fed us and crocheted blankets to keep busy. Up front are the most recent blankets from first to last. Richelle's is unfinished; she worked furiously to the very end.

Mom was always ready to visit us kids and her grandchildren, even if it meant traveling to Taiwan and China, where Tim and Cindy lived for several years. She always had huge, sometimes painful hugs for everyone. Painful because she squeezed her glasses between us. She wanted to feed everyone, and never stopped jumping up from the table to serve or from the couch to show us something she was working on. We used to say she was like the energizer bunny.

She loved to play tabletop games with her children and grandchildren, such as

Othello and dominoes. She also spent many hours playing dominoes with her sister Ann in the last few years. Another thing she did every Christmas was make gingerbread houses with her grandchildren. She would bake the gingerbread, make the icing, and buy all the candies for decorating. Then, she invited all the Grandchildren over to build a gingerbread house they could take home. Our children have great memories of these times.

Mom also liked going camping with Dad and the rest of us. She said it was like playing house in her trailer. Mom had a good sense of humor and was an easy target for teasing by her sons-in-law, which she would always respond with “Oh, but”. I think that is some translation from her German language.

A few years ago, because of limited computer skills, Mom handwrote her story five times to gift each of us with her story and a photo album. We took the following from her story:

Mary’s large blended family, the Thiesens and Neufelds, immigrated from Russia to Canada in 1925. Mary was born on March 2, 1930, in Beaver Lodge, Alberta. Her childhood years were spent in several towns in Alberta in log houses without electricity, and some with dirt and grass roofs. The houses were lit with coal oil lamps. The family would gather around the lamp on the kitchen table in the evening, performing various chores, reading, and doing homework.

Along with helping with the household, gardening, and farm chores, Mom spent many hours playing with her little sister Ann as a little girl. Their playhouse was a little outside building where their dad smoked sausages. When it was empty, it was their playhouse. She said they made a stove and oven from a cardboard box, where they pretended to make soup. It is interesting to note that soup became Mom’s specialty. She always had soup to serve, even if she received unannounced guests. No one ever left Mom’s home hungry.

Mom got chicken pox in grade 8 and never returned to school afterward. She said her parents didn’t encourage her to return to school but immediately insisted that she find a job. Her first job was housework and cooking for an older lady, and she made $20 in the month she worked for her.

In 1946, she moved with her parents to Chilliwack, BC, where they bought a seven-acre little farm and planted raspberries. She now had to look for another job. She started doing housework and then got a job at an egg grading station where she was paid $12.00 a week. She was allowed to keep $1.00 from each week, and the rest went to her dad. At one point, Mom asked her dad if she could go to Bethel Bible School, which her dad agreed to and paid for. This is where she met her lifelong partner and love of her life, Abe Buhler, our dad. Mom and Dad married on June 10, 1951, when she was 21. Mom and Dad celebrated their 74th anniversary while Mom was in the hospital on June 10 of this month.

After Mom and Dad’s three-day honeymoon in Princeton, they continued to live in Vancouver and both continued working, Mom at Buckerfield’s egg grading station and Dad at a grain elevator.

In the fall of 1952, Mom and Dad quit their jobs in Vancouver and returned to Bethel Bible School. Toward the end of the school year, Mom realized she was pregnant

and gave birth to Linda Marie on October 15, 1953. At this point, they lived on Aberdeen Road, now called Bradner Road. We remember Mom telling us that they had a dog that would pull Linda's clean diapers off the clothes line while drying, dirtying them so Mom would have to rewash them all.

On January 17, 1956, Mom and Dad's second daughter, Rosanna Joy, was born, a little sister for Linda. In the Fall of 1958, Mom and Dad packed their belongings again and headed to Winnipeg, Manitoba, where Dad studied at the Canadian Mennonite Bible College, CMBC.

On December 18, 1958, their third daughter was born, Charlotte Anne. We have been told that Dad missed an exam because of the birth of Charlotte. He really wanted a boy at this point, which is maybe why he often called her Charlie.

After that first year at CMBC, Mom again packed up and moved with Dad to Lost River, Saskatchewan, where Dad was called to be a pastor.

In 1961, Mom finally gave birth to a son, Timothy Edward, born on October 30. Mom was so happy to present Dad with a son. The 1964 to 65 year was spent again back in Winnipeg at CMBC, and then one more year back in Lost River before Dad finished his graduation year at CMBC, which is when Mom again packed up and moved with Dad to Abbotsford, where he was the pastor of Olivet Mennonite Church for several years.

There were a few more moves from Abbotsford to Burns Lake and Burns Lake to Carrot River before they found their way back to Abbotsford, where Mom was at Dad's side, completing their years in Ministry. Because of their Ministry, Mom and Dad moved to many different homes in their 74 years. Still, Mom always enjoyed unpacking and setting up her new home, especially her kitchen.

A few more moves in Abbotsford brought Mom and Dad eventually to Primrose Place, where they have been living independently, with Dad lovingly caring for Mom right to the end. Mom passed away on June 16 at 12:30 am, with her daughter Rosanna at her side.

As we say goodbye to our Mom, we lovingly submit her to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, in whose loving arms we know she now resides.