



## Sue Z. Schlanbusch

October 23, 1931 - September 1, 2025

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Will you let me be your servant? Let me be as Christ to you.

Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

If there was only one word to describe the life of Sue Schlanbusch (Mama Sue), that word would be Service. Sue was born on October 23, 1931 in Detroit, Michigan to Louis and Elsa (Thorpe) Zahn. She was an only child and lived with her parents and both sets of grandparents for most of her youth. As a young child, Sue suffered from asthma and allergies and as such, her activities were more limited than most children her age. When she was in high school her father's work took the family to Columbus Ohio where she attended Columbus North High School. It was during this time she met the love of her life. Sue Zahn met Lowell Schlanbusch playing a game of pool. The pool table resided in the basement of the Zahn's new house. That same table remained in Zahn or Schlanbusch family homes until her death.

After High School, Sue and Lowell continued dating while attending Ohio State University, and were soon engaged. When the Zahns moved back to Michigan, the loving couple did too, and were married on August 5th 1950 in her parents home in Birmingham. The newlyweds lived in Birmingham for the first 20 years of their marriage. Lowell and Sue were married 59 years before

Lowell's death in 2009.

Sue's life of service began by being a devoted and loving wife and mother of four children. Sue had always been drawn to the Church, so it was only natural she followed that path as a means to serve others. Her walk of service with God began its expansion at St. James Episcopal Church in Birmingham where she taught Sunday School, was a member of the ECW and was a devoted Boy Scout Mom to troop 1018. Sue and Lowell established a youth group for 9th graders dubbing it "The Saturday-Niners".

When Lowell had the calling to attend Whitaker School of Theology to become ordained in the Episcopal Church, Sue attended every class with him. Throughout Lowell's ministry, Sue served by his side faithfully at each church they were called. When women were able to be ordained, she was approached by the Bishop but declined doing so, stating she felt she would be of more service as a lay person.

Throughout their years of ministry, Sue served as administrator for each parish. Starting at St. David's, Southfield. St. Alfred's, Oxford. St. Patrick's, Madison Heights. All Saint's, Tamarac FL. After Lowell's passing, she became a member of St. Mark's, Marine City and served as administrator there from age 86-88. But parish ministry was not the only place God called Sue.

Over the course of many years She was involved in Faith Alive Ministry, Marriage Encounter, the Detroit Cursillo Movement, the DeColores Movement, Diocesan Youth Group, and Spark Youth Retreats. She taught Bible Study during lunchtime at the General Motors building. She was a hospital chaplain for a number of years. Sue was part of a clown ministry and served on a number of Cursillo weekends in Milan Federal Men's Prison.

At the Diocesan, Provincial and National levels of the Episcopal Church she

served as a council member for the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer working closely with its founder Helen Shoemaker. For nearly 20 years she served at the Diocesan, Provincial and National level for the Order of the Daughters of the King. An order vowed to prayer and service. Sue was on the National Council from 1991-2000, serving as President from 1997-2000. As President she was honored to be asked to preach at the National Cathedral in Washington DC as well as Bruton Parish in Colonial Williamsburg. Her last position of national leadership was as co-founder and co-president of The Episcopal Community.

She had organized and was leading a prayer group and Bible Study at Grace Episcopal, Mount Clemens until the growing frailty of her health necessitated she stop at 89 years of age.

Sue loved to travel. Her favorite trip was to the Holy Land and Rome. She saw most of the United States including Alaska multiple times. When she was President of the DOK she traveled many places, Honduras being the most memorable. She was an avid reader. She loved to sing, garden, knit and cherished her family and friends.

Affectionately called "Mama Sue", she was truly a mother to all. What greater role of servitude exists than that of a Mother?

She supported and encouraged, laughed and cried, sat with the sick and dying, fed the hungry, celebrated new love and new life, lifted up the broken and fought for the most vulnerable. In short...She brought Jesus to everyone she met.

Sue is preceded in death by her husband Lowell and son in law Richard. She is survived by her children Joan, Lewis (Mary), Sara (Norman), Amy and

Jeanne. Grandchildren Laura, Jeffrey (Alexis), Luke (McKenna), Emily (Myles), Gustav (Alexandra), Noah (Christine), Sophie, Eli and great grandchildren Bo, Sloane and Lucille.

For His Sake...I am but one, but I am one.

I cannot do everything, but I can do something.

What I can do, I ought to do. By the grace of God I will do.

Lord, what will you have me do?

A Celebration of Sue's Life will be held on

October 21, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

St. David's Episcopal Church

16200 W. 12 Mile Road, Southfield, Michigan (248)557-5430

(Reception to follow)

Monetary gifts in celebration of Sue's life

can be given to:

Our Little Roses Home For Girls Honduras

PO Box 530947, Miami Shores, FL 33153-0947

[www.ourlittleroses.com](http://www.ourlittleroses.com).

# Tribute Wall

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“ *Outstanding person and disciple. May she rest in peace with God.*

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**the Rev. Jonathan Sams** - September 19, 2025 at 01:34 AM

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*Nobody who met Sue could ever forget her. I remember her when she was in Honduras, before I became a Daughter of the King. You could feel of love of Jesus and the power of prayer through her presence. She certainly is with our Lord and Savior and serving Him in His External Kingdom. May her family be assured she was a blessing to all those who she ministered to throughout her life.*

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**Diana Frade** - November 04, 2025 at 07:43 PM