



Prudence Z. Dana

December 4, 1944 ~ November 19, 2024 (age 79)

Beloved Christian education director, voting rights advocate, and former Mayor of Oxford, Ohio, Prudence (Prue) Z. Dana, died peacefully on Tuesday November 19, 2024, at her residence at the Knolls of Oxford. She was 79.

Prue was born in Dayton, Ohio on December 4, 1944, to the Rev. Edward A. Puff and Ruth (Meyer) Puff. She attended Wilbur Wright High School and then Miami University, where she became a proud member of the Pi Beta Phi sorority. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1966, followed by a Masters of Personnel Guidance/Higher Education from Syracuse University in 1968.

After completing her graduate studies, she served in the Peace Corps (Malaysia) from 1968-1970, where she worked as a health education volunteer on Tuberculosis control. In 1969, she married fellow Peace Corps Volunteer, Robert Zimmerman, with whom she had two sons. Prue moved back to Ohio in 1974, and shortly thereafter, became the Education Director for the Oxford Presbyterian Church, a position that she passionately held for 31 years. It was there that she was able to inspire and uplift countless young people and their families by leading volunteer trips across the country to assist with Habitat for Humanity projects and to clean up communities following natural disasters. She used her role to join others in various interfaith and interdenominational projects and campaigns, including work with Church Women United, Campus Ministries, and Hillel. She also worked closely with the Presbytery of the Miami Valley in Dayton and was a dedicated camp counselor and program director for Kirkmont Center's Jr Music Summer Camp in Zanesfield.

Prue was a fierce advocate for community engagement, and she spent the majority of her life encouraging others to get involved in their own way – no matter how big or how small. Her commitment to community and civic action extended deep into city and state politics. As the local president of the League of Women Voters, she worked tirelessly to create and distribute Butler County voter guides, organize candidate forums, and to recruit volunteers to work at polling sites during elections both in and around Oxford. Prue was honored to be on the Oxford city council during the 40th anniversary of Freedom Summer in 2004, and as Mayor from 2007-2009, she took pride in supporting issues and causes that helped make Oxford a stronger, healthier, and safer place to live. Prue leaves behind a legacy of tangible accomplishments that can be seen every day in and around the city that she loved and called home for over 50 years. Of all of the projects she worked on, the one that brought her the most joy was her involvement in the local, non-partisan Kids Voting program within the Talawanda School District, aimed at sparking curiosity among students and inspiring young people to become interested in our country's election process.

It was through her work with the LWV board at the state level in Columbus that she met and married her husband, Stephen F. Dana III of Cincinnati. Together they enjoyed traveling

overseas, supporting and attending the Cincinnati Symphony, and visiting with their children and grandchildren in Pittsburgh and New York City.

In her final years, Prue's battle with type 1 diabetes slowed her down, but she took pride in staying as active as possible for as long as possible, often telling people that it was important for her – in the words of her hero John Lewis – to “keep the faith.” To her friends, family, and community, she will be remembered for her genuine, unapologetic style, faith in God, and her ability to bring people together from all walks of life to bring about positive change in the world around them.

Prue is survived by her loving and supportive husband of twenty-two years, Stephen, sons Ephraim and Erik Zimmerman, daughters-in-law Kara Roggenkamp and Shammara Wright, grandchildren Elena Zimmerman, August Zimmerman, Ketly Wright-Zimmerman, and Khendi Wright-Zimmerman, and sisters Elizabeth (Robert) Kelley of Kettering, Ohio and Laura (Edward) Rhodes of Pasadena, California. She was preceded in death by her brother, Bruce Puff, of Kettering Ohio.

Prue was an eternal optimist who saw potential and the good in everyone, regardless of their political views or differences of opinion. She practiced what she preached when it came to caring for her neighbors, and she challenged others to do the same, all the way to the very end. A public celebration of life service will be held on Saturday February 15, 2025 at the Oxford Presbyterian Church. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations be made to McCullough Hyde Hospital's Prudence Z. Dana Diabetes Education Fund, the Oxford Presbyterian Church, and to Kirkmont Center.

A memorial service will be February 15, at 1:00 p.m. at Oxford Presbyterian Church.