

Jane “Janie” Jeanette Thornton Mellinger, beloved wife and mother, was called home by her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on September 8, 2023 at the age of 71.

She was born in Upland, California, on May 17, 1952 to Floyd Weaver Thornton and Mildred Ruth Waters Thornton. Janie is survived by her husband Larry, her two daughters Danae Powers and Erin Mellinger, her sister Judy Corby, and her niece Wendy Vlasak.

Janie’s Education

Janie graduated from Chaffey High School in Ontario, California in 1970. She enrolled in United States International University’s California Western College campus located in the San Diego neighborhood of Point Loma the same year. In July of 1971 she took the opportunity to study abroad and transferred to the USIU campus at Ashdown Park, Sussex in the United Kingdom. Following completion of two quarters of study in England, she returned to her home state and transferred to Westmont College in Montecito, California where she completed her undergraduate studies and received her Bachelor of Arts degree. Janie concluded her student teaching requirements in Escondido, California. The culmination of her efforts and her drive to educate herself resulted in her being awarded both her primary school teaching credential and her California certification as a Spanish-speaking bilingual teacher.

Janie’s Career

Janie was employed for twelve years as an elementary school teacher. In 1989, she retired from teaching to work full time as the business manager in her husband Larry’s chiropractic office where she was well-loved by patients and worked with a remarkable work ethic that never faltered. Despite her increasing medical challenges, she kept working right up until 2021 when her husband Larry retired.

Janie – My glory for 47 years

Janie’s first love is her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She recalled that as a young girl she made a heartfelt confession of faith in Jesus Christ. However, when she was just twelve years old, her heart was broken when her father died suddenly of a heart attack. Janie was extremely confused and devastated by the abrupt loss of her father’s love and care and, subsequently, after this tragic event she stopped giving any significant priority to following Jesus. Years later though, while studying in England, Christian friends re-introduced her to Jesus’ love and sacrifice on her behalf; she again rekindled that heartfelt faith she’d had as a child. Shortly thereafter, in a letter she sent to her mother while she was still in England, she reported that on July 4, 1971 she “completely” surrendered her life and heart’s devotion to Jesus Christ as her Lord and Savior and was baptized as a public statement of her commitment to Jesus Christ three days later on July 7th.

Janie’s continued devotion to Jesus Christ was the foundation for all the love that she extended to her family and friends through her earthly life.

Janie loved life! She dearly loved both her immediate and extended family. She loved working in the office and truly enjoyed all the many meaningful friendships she built there with staff and patients. She loved and treasured her friends and it brought her great joy to be in frequent communication with them up until the last few years of her life when she was unable to use her voice, hands and fingers to do so. Janie loved to sing, she loved to read, and she loved cats and dogs. She loved indoor and outdoor plants and flowers. She *really* loved COOKIES! She loved rainy days and sunny days. Janie especially loved to travel. On the few occasions that she was actually able to travel, she planned every detail with expert precision and delight!

Family and friends often commented on Janie’s addicting laugh. On several occasions, patients would say they liked to call the office just to hear Janie’s laugh over the phone. Janie’s response to people who would kid around with her was infectious. Once a person learned how to provoke a response from Janie, they couldn’t stop trying to do it again because her immediate and exuberant response would result in ongoing surprise and laughter. However, you never wanted to provoke her by misbehaving or acting with ill-intent because you would very soon learn that the tone of her response accompanied by her paralyzing stare could be extremely unnerving.

Janie’s responsiveness, her touch, her smile, and her laughter are now absent from the lives of those she left behind. Waves of sorrow flow over our hearts as we miss her beyond words. For those of us who share her faith in Jesus Christ, we cling to our Lord’s promise to Martha after she told him that she believed her brother Lazarus would be raised “in the last day.” We trust in Jesus’ kind correction to Martha’s statement as He replied, *“Everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die” (John 11: 26).* Jesus purposefully left out Martha’s reference to “the last day.” According to Jesus’ statement, Janie never died! He promised Janie that she would never be separated from His eternal life and love. Therefore, we are greatly comforted by believing in Jesus’ words. By faith, we rest soundly in knowing that Janie is presently living face-to-face with her First Love.

Janie, you’ve always wanted to travel. Jesus, your “First Love” has answered your prayers. On September 8, 2023 you left with Him on your eternal journey. I’m so glad you wisely and perfectly planned this trip years ago on July 4, 1971. I’ll always

love you and will catch-up with you soon – Maranatha! Larry



May 10, 2020 in celebration of Mother's Day

My mom is "my person."

We've certainly had conflicts over the years (mostly during a few of my teenage years).

And I still can say that in 41+ years she's never not been here for me.

She is the one I want to first tell about my exciting life events.

And... She is the one that I know I can go crying to.

Though I sometimes fight against it, my mom is the one I can tell of my truest self.

And I admire her strength. She is a fighter. Through the adversity of life, she stays true to her faith and keeps pushing on.

I've watched her grieve loved ones lost (and still comfort me), loss of her own previous abilities due to her diagnosis (and still have humor) and love her family through it all.

Mom, I love you!

October 17, 2023

In the last few years that have passed since I wrote the above, my mom lost her ability to walk, talk, and use her hands and fingers. This dramatically impacted our relationship as I could no longer easily access her across the miles - talking on the phone and texting became first difficult for her and then nonexistent unless she was listening to a speaker-phone conversation I'd have with my dad.

I made efforts to visit more often and invite my parents over more frequently because, when we were in the same room, Mom would actively follow every conversation as we included her to offer her agreement (or corrections to our bad memories when hers was still flawless!), laughter, and lots of smiles.

Despite the frustration she experienced as her body rapidly declined, Mom remained steadfast in her faith and pushed through every health obstacle with purpose and positivity.

She was *not* happy with me when I told her I'd finished closing out Dad's practice and that she was retired! I thought she'd be relieved to not have to work so much and just relax finally, but she told me she loved her work.

Though she was really struggling physically in recent months, we didn't believe Mom would be gone so soon. I feel that I've been saying goodbye to her in a slow burn as her disease took her away from us a chunk at a time. So, now I weep through my sorrow while rejoicing that she is free of her earthly bonds at last!

~ Danae



My mom was my biggest champion and that, combined with the fact that I've never been accused of having the ability to keep it simple when it comes to the written word, means that I need a bit (definitely putting it lightly 😊) of writing space in order to tell her story and what she means to me in a way that does her justice. However, my big sister, from the time she kicked me in the nose in our tandem stroller when I was a baby because she wasn't happy having to share her space (one of my mom's FAVORITE endearing stories to tell 😊) has not been happy to share space with me and is (par for the course 😊) not sharing this writing space now.

There are just so many things to say about the woman who was our absolute rock and who gave us everything she had every single year since the day she gave birth to us. ❤️ And since we actually do fiercely love and cherish each other, just like our mom fiercely loved and cherished us, we agreed that in lieu of including my words here, anyone interested may visit [this link online](#) which is where my words attempting to celebrate the woman who gave me life can be read. Thank you, Danae . . . Thank you, Dad . . . And, most of all, thank you MOM for giving me this opportunity to share with everyone what my "mommy" meant to me and will ALWAYS mean to me. – Erin