

Esther Judith Weller Watson

December 15, 1928 ~ April 20, 2025

“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies... The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her… She will do him good all the days of her life… She riseth while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household… With the fruit of her hands, she planteth a vineyard… She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms… She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; she reacheth forth her hands to the needy… Her husband is known in the gates… Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come… She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness… She eateth not the bread of idleness… Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her… Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.” — Proverbs 31:10, 25, 28 (KJV)

On Easter Sunday, April 20, 2025, surrounded by her loving family, Esther Judith Weller Watson peacefully returned to her Heavenly Father at the age of 96. It was a beautiful, warm spring day. Born on December 15, 1928, a cold, wintry day just before Christmas; Esther’s life was appropriately framed by two sacred seasons. Her passing on Easter is a tender reminder of the miracle of the Atonement of our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ—a truth she cherished and testified of throughout her life.

Esther was a devoted disciple of Jesus Christ. She lived a life centered in faith, love, and quiet service. A lifelong member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, her testimony was steady and sure, and her influence extended far beyond her own family.

One of thirteen children, Esther was born to Gertrud Margaretha Martin and Gustav August Weller, whom she lovingly referred to as the “perfect parents.” She is preceded in death by her siblings: Johannes Weller, Ruth Weller Melville, Samuel Weller, Rachel Weller Summers, Eve Weller Hirst, David Weller, an infant brother who passed away at birth, Jared Weller, Mary Weller Hair, Sarah Weller Prentiss, and Joseph Weller. She is survived by her younger sister, Miriam Weller Jepsen, who lived next door to her on the family farm for 59 years.

In 1939, at the age of 10, Esther moved with her family from the avenues of Salt Lake City to the verdant pastures of Marion, Utah. She loved the fresh air and beauty of the Kamas Valley. However, as a teenager, she left the farm to help support her large family, moving back to Salt Lake City to work in the family bookstore—Zion’s Book, later Sam Weller’s Books, now Weller Book Works. It was while living with her sister Eve in Millcreek and working at the bookstore, that she met the wonderful Richard Andrew Watson in the East Millcreek Grandview Ward. Reflecting on that time, he said, “I was truly in love with a wonderful girl!”

On August 22, 1952, Esther was sealed to Richard in the Salt Lake Temple. Together, they returned to the Kamas Valley to build a home filled with love, music, and the light of the gospel. Their union was a testament of faith and devotion, and their posterity continues to reflect the strength of their example. Richard passed away on June 6,

1987, and Esther lived without him longer than she lived with him—enduring with grace, faith, and quiet strength. Her life after his passing was a tribute to their shared love and devotion to the Lord. She remained in her cherished mountain home until the time of her passing.

Together, Esther and Richard raised eight children in a home where the gospel was not only taught but lived: Deborah (Harmon) Hatch, Rebekah Carter, Richard Mark (Trudi) Watson, Paul Andrew (Cindy) Watson, Anna Marie (David) Brown, Eve (Brent) James, Mary (Timon) Marshall, and Esther (Bruce) Grover. Esther is lovingly remembered by her many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, each of whom she cherished deeply and prayed for by name. Her granddaughter, Sarah Carter, preceded her in death.

With a profound love for music and flowers, Esther filled her home with hymns and harmonies that lifted and inspired. In her final days, nothing brought her more peace than listening to and conducting beautiful music from her favorite podium chair. Her gardens and home reflected her soul—full of beauty, care, and joy—and stood as a testament to her tireless work and quiet strength.

Above all, Esther's inseparable faith in and testimony of the Savior were the foundation of her life and her greatest gift to her family.

A celebration of her life will be held at 12:00 pm, Saturday, April 26, 2025, at the Rhodes Valley LDS Stake Center, 3038 North State Road 32, Marion, Utah. There will be a viewing prior to the funeral from 10:30 to 11:45 am. Interment will follow at the Marion Cemetery. For those unable to attend, services will be streamed via Zoom. Please click on the "Watch Services" link above.

We rejoice in the eternal truths Esther held dear: *"All these had departed the mortal life, firm in the hope of a glorious resurrection, through the grace of God the Father and his Only Begotten Son, Jesus Christ... filled with joy and gladness... rejoicing together because the day of deliverance was at hand." — Doctrine and Covenants 138:14–15*