



Ronald Jay & Lani Jeanne Smith Nelson

February 21, 2024

Funeral Service Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ERdzlyhfv-I>

Ronald Jay Nelson and Lani Jeanne Smith Nelson were beloved parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and friends. They were unified in life and in death, passing away together in a tragic accident on February 21, 2024, in West Valley City, Utah at the ages of 77 and 78 respectively.

Ron was born in Norton, Kansas on May 15, 1946, to Kenneth Murl Nelson and Bertha Evelyn Bivens. He never met a stranger. He aptly earned the nickname “Bud,” which he carried throughout his life. In his youth he was introduced to the gospel of Jesus Christ. He had a great love for the gospel and the U.S. Constitution. For him, the freedoms found living the principles of both were inseparable and divine. He valued honesty and hard work. These traits were reflected in all he did in life, especially in running his businesses, Nelson Refining Systems and Pioneer Recycling Services.

Lani was born in Honolulu, Hawaii on December 25, 1945, to Don Lavelle Smith and Mildred Jane Erickson. She was a teacher by trade and by choice. She graduated from the University of Utah with a degree in Sociology and received a teaching certificate from Brigham Young University. She served a full-time mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Paris, France Mission. After their marriage, Lani left public education but continued to be a teacher, using her teaching skills to guide and tutor her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. English was her favorite subject and she taught countless children how to read. She enjoyed reading, card games, and dark chocolate. She loved music and liked listening to her grandchild play their musical instruments.

On June 24, 1963, Ron married his first sweetheart, Ursula Kramer in Provo, Utah. Their short time together was spent in Sandy, Utah where they were blessed with five children before Ursula passed away in 1972. Lani’s love and strength enriched this young family and after a short courtship, Ron and Lani were married on January 26, 1973, in the Provo

Utah Temple. Lani was a loving mother and embraced his five children as her own. They had 10 more children and spent the next 51 years loving and caring for their growing family.

Their membership in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was an integral part of their lives. Both served in various organizations and in the temple. They had great faith in Jesus Christ and modern-day prophets.

The legacy they would wish to leave for all their family and friends is to know that they are loved. They are loved by heavenly parents, a Savior, Jesus Christ and by them. That separation in life is not the end. The love and caring Ron and Lani gave while on the earth will continue from beyond the veil.

They are survived by their children, Frank (Joy), Brent (Cynthia), Colby (Autumn), Matthew, Shayne (Tina), Spencer (Jennifer), Melaine (Jacob) Hiatt, Clint (Natalie), Camille (Chad) Farnsworth, Dallin (Brittney), Alicia (Erik) Pearson and Kaylie (Curt) Sundell; 70 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren; son-in-law Max Harding; and daughters-in-law Kimberly DeVries and Keri Nelson. They were preceded in death by their children, Edwin, Mark and Melissa Harding; and daughters-in-law Rebecca and Amber.

Friends and family may come to honor the loving lives of this couple at a viewing on Sunday, March 3 from 6 to 8 at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 9626 N 6800 W, Highland UT. The funeral will be held on Monday, March 4 at 11 am at the same location. A short viewing will be held prior to the services from 9 am to 10:30 am. Interment will be at the Sandy City Cemetery located at 9200 S 700 E, Sandy, Utah.

Cemetery Details

Sandy City Cemetery

700 East 9000 South
Sandy, UT 84070

Previous Events

Viewing

MAR 3. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (MT)

Highland 37th Ward
9626 North 6800 West
Highland, UT 84003

Viewing #2

MAR 4. 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM (MT)

Highland 37th Ward
9626 North 6800 West
Highland, UT 84003

Funeral Service

MAR 4. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (MT)

Highland 37th Ward
9626 North 6800 West
Highland, UT 84003

Tribute Wall

CC

“ I knew Ron Nelson for only a year. We first met in early 2023 when he visited our mine site in Eureka to see about removing some scrap metal. He was a pleasure to work with. We kept in touch over that year. He would call me or visit periodically to catch up on our progress. He had a great sense of humor. I still remember and laugh at the jokes he shared with me.

His honest and charitable nature, as well as his intelligence, were easy to recognize. He spoke very proudly of his wife, children and grandchildren. His great love for, and faith in, God and Jesus Christ were evident. I do miss his presence. I considered him a friend. My condolences to his extended family.

- Chris Carney

Chris Carney - November 16, 2024 at 09:37 AM

CH

“ I know Lani from two different towns in Utah. We first met in South Jordan, where we had callings in primary. Lani was the chorister, and I was the pianist. When I had triplets (1979), Lani's sister crocheted a beautiful dress for Alisyn, and Lani gave the boys adorable outfits. They were blessed in these gifts. Lani and family moved. Eight years later, we became neighbors in Lehi! I was checking out a mini-ranch and knocked on the only close neighbor's door. Who should answer~ but Lani! We hugged, and our friendship flourished!! We raised our children together and were visiting teacher partners. Lani was instrumental in getting me to start writing poetry. Their family were, always, very kind to us. Lani is beautiful, inside and out, and highly intelligent! I feel it was meant to be that Lani and Ron depart this world together. They will be missed by their large family and many friends~ and, of course, by me! Both are examples of Prophet Nelson's comment, "think Celestial." My deepest sympathies go to their families! Christine H.



Christine D Hamilton - March 04, 2024 at 07:43 PM

JP

“ So very many years and so much love. I will miss their wisdom and peace they always shared. I hope to always be tied to their family and happy we are grandparents to a set of grandchildren. No one lived the principles of the gospel more. Love and miss you.

Judy Phillips - March 02, 2024 at 09:16 PM

BW

“ Ron and Lani are my daughter's inlaws. Over the years we became good friends. They were the absolute best people in the world.

Brent and Elizabethe Walton - March 01, 2024 at 10:04 PM

JL

“ It seemed that every time I talked to Ron he bore testimony of the gospel, taught me something about the Constitution, and gave me a sincere compliment. I loved them both and they are already missed.

Jeremy Lee - February 29, 2024 at 11:12 PM

MC

“ Melissa Custodio lit a candle in memory of Ronald Jay & Lani Jeanne Smith Nelson



Melissa Custodio - February 27, 2024 at 07:20 PM

PS

“ I served with Lani at the Temple, Thursday, 3rd shift. I love her! She was a friend and I will miss her smiles and warm greetings! I will miss her. I didn't know Ron and I'm sorry I never got the chance.

Paula Steel - February 27, 2024 at 04:59 PM

SH

“ We Love Ron and Lani and have enjoyed getting to know them over the years. They have really added to our ward family and we will miss them. We often sat by them in church and your dad is so witty with his comments and teasing. Your mom was our choir director and made wonderful insightful comments in our classes.

I was so impressed with their steadfastness in following the gospel through all the ups and downs that life has to offer. They are truly amazing people and full of life and willing to help in anyway that they could.

We will miss them.

-Sandy Howell

Sandra Howell - February 27, 2024 at 12:28 PM

CW

“ We got to spend a few short years with your mom and dad in the Riverton Fifth Ward. They were so loved. Lani was amazing the things she accomplished. Of course that was so evident as she and Ron was able to help raise some of the their grandkids. They were so selfless. I last saw them at Ambers viewing. They were amazing as a couple and they will be amazing as they continue their journey. Prayers of comfort for your family. I loved them and so glad they were a part of us and the example they were to all of us as they live a Celestial life.
Colleen Van Wagoner.

Colleen Van Wagoner - February 27, 2024 at 09:30 AM