

Leona , KS



Helen Ukena Ruch, 96, of Leona, died Monday night, September 19, 2016, at Hiawatha Community Hospital.

She led a full and rich life. Helen was born June 10, 1920, at the family home across the road from the church. She was the youngest of three daughters of John and Elizabeth Ukena, and lived near or in Leona her entire life. She attended Bellevue Country School, Leona High School, and Highland Community College. She worked for many years at the Farmers Bank of Leona and later at the post office in Leona.

Helen was a lifelong member of Bellevue United Methodist Church. The church and music were vital parts of her life. She was the church secretary for many years, sang in the choir, and was the pianist for the Bellevue Men's Quartet. She was very involved in the community as well.

Helen was married to Bill Ruch on January 3, 1942, shortly before he entered the service during World War II. They had a long and happy marriage lasting almost 65 years.

Helen is survived by her two daughters: Cheryl Ruch and Jane Ruch Blocher, both of Shawnee Mission, Kansas; two granddaughters, Lindsay Blocher Laufenburger (Pat), and Abby Blocher Strakal (Steve), both of Castle Pines, Colorado; two great granddaughters, Leona and Emerson, and one great grandson, to be born in the next couple of weeks; nephews Bob and John Veach; niece, Anne Saur; and many wonderful extended family members. Helen was preceded in death by her parents; her sisters, Edith and Bernice; her husband, Bill; and her son-in-law, JB Blocher. A Celebration of Helen's life is planned for 10 a.m. Saturday, September 24, at the Bellevue United Methodist Church near Leona, with Pastor Jerry Petering officiating. Interment will follow at Pleasant Hill Cemetery, nearby.

Friends may call at Chapel Oaks Funeral Home in Highland from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. Friday.

Memorial contributions are suggested to Bellevue Methodist Church or Pleasant Hill Cemetery, which may be sent in care of the funeral home, P.O. Box 33, Highland, Kansas, 66035.

A special message or remembrance may be sent to the family at  
[www.chapeloaksfuneralhome.com](http://www.chapeloaksfuneralhome.com)