



## Mary Margaret Hays

June 8, 1927 - May 9, 2026

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Mary Margaret Hays, a cherished matriarch, who peacefully left this world on May 9, 2026, at the Lutheran Home.

Born on June 8, 1927, in Malden, Missouri, Mary was a beacon of warmth and grace, whose life was defined by love, family, and faith.

Mary was the beloved daughter of Elmer Joseph and Mary Katherine Heck, and she joins them along with her six sisters, one brother, and her devoted husband, Bill Hays, in eternal rest. Despite the profound loss of these loved ones, her spirit remains vibrant through the legacy of her surviving family: four devoted children, eight adoring grandchildren, sixteen great-grandchildren, and five great-great-grandchildren. Each of them carries a piece of her heart, stitched together with threads of love and God's blessings.

From an early age, Mary embodied resilience and determination. Entering the workforce at just 15, she chopped cotton for a man who would later enable her and Bill to purchase the land that became their family farm, a place of nurturing and growth. Mary also applied her skills as a seamstress at the shirt factory and served as a clerk at the local five and dime, always with a commitment to providing for those she loved.

Mary found joy in simple pleasures, like cooking hearty meals for her family and creating beautiful quilts to keep them warm. She cherished quiet moments on her porch swing, where she would reflect on the beauty of nature and the blessings of her life. Above all, Mary delighted in her roles as a mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, showering her descendants with unconditional love and unwavering prayers.

Her life was a tapestry woven with care and compassion, and she will be remembered as a woman who loved deeply and lived fully. Her family offers a heartfelt message: "She stitched together a family covered with love and God's Blessings."

The family extends their deepest gratitude to the compassionate staff of the Lutheran Home for the care and kindness they provided during Mary's final days.

Mary Hays' legacy is one of love, strength, and faith, and she will be profoundly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her. May her memory continue to inspire those she leaves behind.

Visitation will be 9:30 am to 10:30 am Friday, May 15, 2026 at Ford & Sons Mt. Auburn Funeral Home in Cape Girardeau.

Funeral service will follow at 10:30 am Friday at the funeral home with the Rev. Paul Short officiating.

Burial will be at Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery in Cape Girardeau.

Online condolences may be made at [www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com](http://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Cape County Memorial Park Cemetery

2315 Highway 61 North  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701  
(573) 334-1909  
<https://www.fordandsonsfuneralhome.com/>

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**MAY 15.** 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

Ford and Sons Mt. Auburn Chapel  
1001 N. Mt. Auburn Rd.  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

## Funeral Service

**MAY 15.** 10:30 AM (CT)

Ford and Sons Mt. Auburn Chapel  
1001 N. Mt. Auburn Rd.  
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701

# Tribute Wall

AM

“Granny taught me how to can, pickle, freeze, bake, and create so many things. She taught me how to sew on paper before eventually helping me make my own dress, apron, and pillows. She made quilts to keep me warm, and to this day, I still make my bed with one of her quilts.

*She taught me that the worst smell isn't pickling beets — it's dropping a chicken you just wrung the neck of into hot water. She helped me through chicken pox, dog ticks, and chicken mites. She taught me how to make the best homemade biscuits and popcorn balls.*

*We had the best times shopping and traveling together, especially our trip to Hawaii filled with sand, flowers, sunrises, and coffee.*

*Granny loved jokes, and I always tried to have one ready for her. Her laugh was contagious, and I learned to treasure hearing it. Some of the best giggles came from a Branson show or the time I took her through a car wash when there was a fly in the car, and I accidentally soaked her trying to get it out.*

*She let me live and try life — even when some of our kitchen creations were so bad the dogs wouldn't even eat them. She would play school and church with us and even give me offering money during pretend church. Then I'd talk her into driving to Save-A-Lot for a piece of candy.*

*Her arthritis was bad in her neck, so I would look both ways for her before she turned while driving. We shared fried mushrooms and fried okra every chance we got. We made rag dolls together at Silver Dollar City in between shows.*

*She sent me aloe vera plants throughout college and eventually trusted me with African violets after I graduated. Her porch was always full of ferns and plants, and Folgers Black Silk coffee somehow always tasted better sitting beside her on that porch*

*swing.*

*Granny, I know you're walking with Jesus now, but your memories replay daily in my mind and heart. I will carry them — and you — with me forever.*



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**Ashley McDonnell** - May 11 at 09:17 PM