Mary Lauritsen McPherson was born and raised in Wheatland, ND. Mary attended a one-room school house in her elementary years before moving on to Wheatland High School, where she was active in school activities to include the early years of women’s basketball in ND. Following graduation Mary married Gordon McPherson in 1943. Gordon and Mary lived in Abilene, TX while Gordon served in the military. After Gordon’s military service completed, Mary and Gordon moved back to ND before eventually settling in Erie, ND, where they raised 11 children.

Mary began her career at Dakota High School during the first year of the combined schools of Hunter-Arthur-Erie in 1967. During her 45 years at Dakota High School and Northern Cass, Mary prepared meals for the hundreds of hungry students and ensured they were safely driven to and from school and activities as a bus driver. Mary enjoyed each and every student, teacher and staff at the school, and considers every person she came across as a special gift.

During her free-time, Mary enjoyed gardening and painting. Mary was very active in the American Legion Auxiliary, First Presbyterian Church of Erie and Hunter. Volunteering at the Good Samaritan Center in Arthur was a fun and enjoyable time as well.

Mary’s greatest joy was time spent with family; especially with her 15 grandchildren and 22 great-grandchildren. The love and laughter shared each day was a blessing. Mary lived her life dedicated to the service of others with integrity, grace, and an abundance of love. As Mary’s favorite song says, it was always important to live life to the fullest and take “one day at a time.” Mary passed away on March 22nd, 2017.