

Melissa Zahn

Melissa Lynn Zahn, age 33 of Jordan, passed away peacefully at her home on Wednesday, March 7, 2018. A visitation will be held Wednesday, March 14, 2018 from 3-7PM at Ballard-Sunder Funeral Home, 833 S. Marschall Rd., Shakopee. A memorial service celebrating her life will be Thursday, March 15, 2018 at 4:30PM with a visitation starting at 3:00PM all at River Valley Church, 1350 Crossing Blvd., Shakopee. Melissa will be laid to rest at Spirit Hill Cemetery in Jordan. Pastor Aaron Cole will preside.



On March 18, 1984, parents Steve and Sherry Norvitch celebrated the birth of their first child, Melissa Lynn Norvitch. She was the oldest of three children and raised in Mountain Iron, MN. From a young age, Melissa had a type A personality and was determined to achieve her goals. Her younger brother, Phil, and sister, Angie, were kept in line by Melissa—she was always like a second mother to them. The family enjoyed spending time together and with relatives on holidays, vacations and at the cabin.

Melissa attended Mountain Iron-Buhl High School and graduated in 2003. Understanding the importance of education, Melissa earned college credits during high school through PSEO. She continued her schooling at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, earning a degree in education in 2006. This was just the beginning of her journey for higher education—she later earned her Master's from St. Mary's and was preparing to receive her Doctorate this May from Bethel University.

During her 21st birthday celebration, Melissa met fellow UMD student, Brian Zahn. Melissa's energy and personality immediately caught Brian's attention. They dated for three years before exchanging wedding vows on October 11, 2008 at the Chisholm Baptist Church. The couple settled in Jordan to begin their married life. Together they attended concerts, sporting events, and traveled to Hawaii, Colorado, Florida and Punta Cana. When home, Melissa always had a honey-do list for Brian as they renovated and improved their home.

Melissa began her teaching career as a substitute teacher in Chaska, then settled into her teaching role in 1st and 2nd grades at Red Oak, then moved on to be the dean of Red Oak. Recognizing her potential, the school transferred her to Sweeney Elementary as the assistant principal. It was not long before she was promoted to principal. Even though she had great success in her teaching career, Melissa had another dream to accomplish—to be a mother. With the help of a gestational carrier, Melissa and Brian welcomed their son Henry into the world in January 2016. While Henry looks like Brian, Melissa's personality shines through in him.

Melissa spent every day living to the fullest and always recognized opportunities to help others in need. When faced with a six-year journey with breast cancer, she maintained positivity and was committed to encouraging and supporting others going through similar struggles. Melissa's strong faith brought her the peace and strength to fight her cancer courageously and make the most of each day. The bravery Melissa exemplified during her fight against cancer was an inspiration to many others and made the journey easier for her loved ones.

Melissa will be greatly missed by her husband, Brian and their son, Henry; parents, Steve and Sherry Norvitch; sister, Angie Norvitch; brother, Phil and his wife, Kelsey Norvitch, and their daughter, Ellie; grandmother, Joyce Pernu; mother-in-law, Cheryl Zahn; brother-in-law, Jeff and his wife, Beth Zahn, and their daughter, Katherine; brother-in-law, Mike and his wife, Chris; brother-in-law, Scott and his wife, Missy, and their children, Emma, Greta, Owen, and Ava; sister-in-law, Jenny Hoagland and her husband, Chris.

Melissa is greeted in Heaven by her maternal grandfather, Duane "Munty" Pernu; paternal grandparents, Harold and Rita Norvitch; and father-in-law, Gerald Zahn.

Melissa's family extends their appreciation to everyone who has cared for them over the years and during this difficult time. You are invited to share memories of Melissa for Henry at henryz011316@gmail.com.