

**Elvira Bishop**  
**July 4, 1912**  
**February 22, 2002**

Elvira Bishop, author of six books on spirituality, was born on July 4, 1912 and left this life on February 22, 2002. She left behind many people who saw her as friend, grandmother, role model, mystical teacher, and spiritual inspiration.

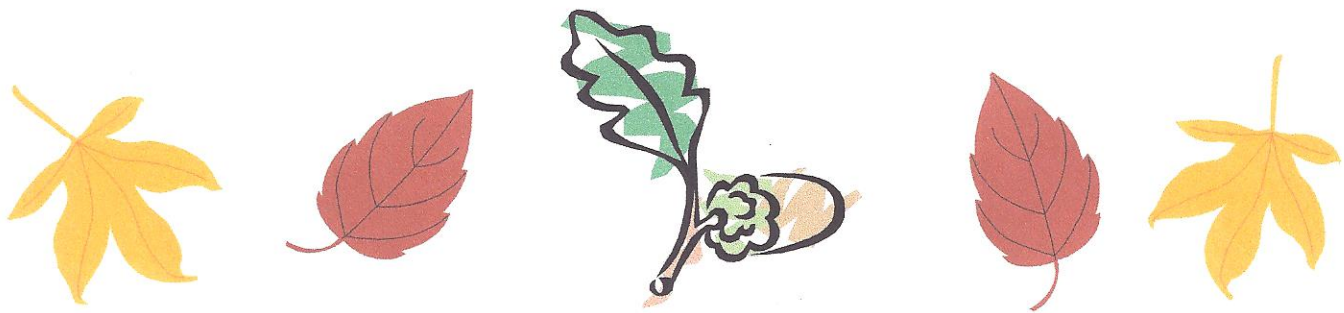
During this life she worked for the United States Air Force and served at bases in Texas, Kansas, Wyoming, Morocco, Spain, and Japan. She served with uncommon excellence, "so far above the usual requirements and grade of her position that she merited special appreciation.... Her loyalty and devotion placed her in the rare category which is considered impossible to replace."

Her spiritual writings began in Japan with the assistance and energies of her "Spiritual Friends." In 1972 Elvira began this extensive work based on her understanding of the Kabbalah and lent a gifted communication to the wisdom of the ages.

During her time at Mesilla Valley Hospice's La Posada, Elvira continued to teach, sharing her understanding and visions of the dying experience as well as her impish humor and clarity of mind. She allowed herself to be cared for by all the loving people who surrounded her, giving all of us the most precious gift—herself. She is, indeed, impossible to replace.

*"I mix myself with the leaves and let the wind carry me to the stars."*

-Elvira Bishop, February, 2002



March 20, 2002

To Elvira's Family and Friends,

We write to share with you recent experiences with our special friend and teacher, Elvira Bishop.

Ann and Barbara met Elvira in the mid-1980's when they were living in Charlotte, North Carolina. Soon after Ann moved to Las Cruces in 1994, Elvira followed her there—where she met Pat. She lived in a quaint little adobe house in Las Cruces for about six months until she was guided to relocate to Roswell, New Mexico. She purchased a house and stayed there until June of 2000 when she returned to Las Cruces and briefly shared a house with Ann's mother. The woman who had been taking care of Ann's mother prior to her death in August 2000 assisted Elvira with house cleaning, grocery shopping, and other errands once a week for a time and then shared the house with her briefly. When she left in August 2001, we moved Elvira to the house on Cochita Lane--next door to Pat--where she was living when she had her stroke on January 10, 2002.

Elvira was hospitalized at Memorial Medical Center until January 16 when she was admitted to La Posada, the residential care center operated by Mesilla Valley Hospice here in Las Cruces. Shortly after her arrival there, she told Ann what a beautiful place she thought it was and asked to stay there until she died. The hospice staff made her comfortable and treated her lovingly. They admired her mind and wit and soon realized that she had much to teach them. While her mind remained strong and clear, her body weakened until she was no longer able to breathe and she died in the late afternoon on February 22, 2002. She was cremated, as she had arranged, and her brother, Roland, requested that her ashes be sent to him for placement in the crypt with their parents. Pat, a Unity minister, presided at a memorial service in our home on Sunday, March 3. Seven friends joined us for this remembrance and celebration of Elvira and all the ways she had touched each of our lives. (So that you may share in the memorial, we are enclosing a copy of the announcement of the memorial posted at hospice, the card about Elvira distributed at the memorial, and a copy of the notes from which Pat spoke during the service.)



During the service Ann talked about her surprise when she first met Elvira and discovered that she looked just like her then recently deceased grandmother. They soon recognized their many spiritual connections and that they had much to learn from each other.

Barbara shared the experience she had with Elvira on the day before she died. Soon after Barbara arrived in Elvira's room that morning, Elvira began talking about "the water" in a fretful way. Barbara asked her what it looked like and she began to describe a river in which the water sparkled with many colors in the bright sunlight. Barbara said that sounded beautiful and she agreed but added that the water could pull you down and hold you under. When Barbara suggested that it also is possible to float on water, Elvira took that idea and began talking about lying on her back and floating with the current of the river. She was a bit fearful and asked Barbara to hold her hand. To keep from holding her back from her journey, they agreed that Barbara would simply maintain contact with her arm. For about four hours, Barbara stood by her bed while Elvira described what she saw as she floated with the current of the river. She described a big oak tree to which she had talked about going many times for peace and comfort and to mingle with the leaves and fly away on the wind. She saw many beautiful flowers, fruit trees, meadows, and mountains. She began to refer to the river as the River of Life and explained that it turned into the River of Death but was still just as beautiful. She finally described arriving at a big, beautiful door. When it opened, she saw a pure bright light and the hand of God reaching out of it toward her. As she touched the hand of God, she saw her parents and brothers standing in the background.

Elvira then began to talk about Ann, Barbara, and Pat going with her through the beautiful door. She was rather annoyed when Barbara tried to explain that the door was as far as they could go with her at the present time. Pat, who had just come into the room, and Barbara had an interesting time trying to explain that it "wasn't their time" to go and that God had other things for them to do here! Elvira wanted to know just what they had to do and wasn't too pleased to hear that they didn't yet know everything that would be required of them! She then returned to her room and began to talk about all the things she wanted to eat—not the least of which were cookies and hot coffee.

Elvira's nurse at hospice commented that she usually thought she was taking her patient under her wing for care, but in this case soon began to think that it was Elvira who had the nurse under her spiritual wing.

Kathleen, who spent many hours reading to Elvira while she was in the hospital and at hospice, talked about their time together as she first read mysteries and later passages from Joel Goldsmith. Elvira would open Goldsmith's book to a page and they would read the passage there—which always seemed to be just what was needed at that time. She then read a few of the passages that had been particularly satisfying to Elvira.

After the memorial, we continued to share our experiences with Elvira over coffer and cookies—a menu we thought she would appreciate! We left full of joy for Elvira's new freedom and appreciation for all that she has taught us—and continues to teach us.

If you are thinking about a memorial for Elvira, we suggest that you consider making a donation to Hospice, either to your local organization or to the Mesilla Valley Hospice that took such good care of her. If you choose the latter, send your memorials to:

Mesilla Valley Hospice  
299 E. Montana  
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Ann

Barbara

Pat

To all of you who took care of  
*Elvira Bishop*

her friends would like to invite you  
to a memorial service for her  
to be held this Sunday afternoon,  
March 3, at 2:00 pm

at the home of Ann Remick-Barlow  
and Barbara Goodnight  
2027 Westwind Road

Please call 526-6040 or 541-6031  
for more information



## MEMORIAL SERVICE

We are gathered here today to reaffirm our faith in life eternal as we bless Elvira on her way into her next experience in living. It is our prayer that from this time forward we may never think of her as limited by time or form, but always as a living soul, ever in our Father's wise and loving care.

Let us pray. Heavenly Mother/Father, creator of us all, in whom we eternally live, move, and have our being, we open our minds and hearts to you that we may be filled with the understanding that brings us the heavenly calm of perfect peace. We thank you for the revelation that there is no separation in Spirit and that through you we are eternally united, one with another. We thank you for the understanding that although Elvira, this beloved friend, has passed beyond our sight, she is still with us in that we are all one with you. Let the peace of your divine compassion fill our hearts as we place her in your eternally loving care. Amen.

One of the greatest challenges that all of us meet is the challenge of change. Surely the greatest and most mysterious challenge of all is the one that we call death. In such a time, we turn to the old, old words of faith to sustain us. Jesus, our great Wayshower said, "Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also..." And another prophet wrote, "If you would behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life. For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one...For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and melt into the sun? And what is it to cease breathing, but to free the breath from its restless tides, that it may rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?"

There are some associations that are so much of the spirit and so little of the flesh that not even death contrives against them. To such there is no barrier of separation. Time and distance have no affect on the depth of such associations. It is as if there is a permanent bond between ourselves and these persons, and indeed there is. In this gathering of friends, we are particularly aware of the love and friendship we have known with Elvira. The inner qualities of love and inspiration and humor which she shared with us are what will always live in us. If anyone would like to share their feelings and memories at this time, you are invited to do so now.

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To Elvira we say, "We know that your faith is a lamp unto your feet. We know that you are secure in God and in life that is endless. We do not say goodbye but rather Godspeed on your way. As the grace of Our Lord Christ abides in us all, we remember that we are always one in Spirit. We loose you and let you go on to new experiences in expression. We behold you as God sees you, a radiant, ever-living, ever-loving child of the Most High, and we release you to your highest good.

Let us pray. Mother/Father God, we know that you are here as everywhere. In her transition, we commit to your care and keeping the soul of Elvira Bishop. We give thanks that you strengthen us and lead us on our way as we make our own adjustments in the days to come. As we turn to face the work that lies before us, we thank you for all the good we have shared with Elvira. We know that it makes us richer and better able to fulfill our part in the challenge of living. We give thanks for guidance, understanding, strength, and peace. We thank you, Mother/Father, for your love and ever-present light on our way. In the name and through the power of Jesus the Christ,  
Amen.