

## In Memory of Rumiko Mitchem

Yun-A Johnson  
November 12, 2020



Name: Rumiko Mitchem

Spouse: Lowell Mitchem

Children: Jinae, Jin, Victoria

Birth Date: August 16, 1949

Blessing Date: July 1, 1982

Ascension Date: October 22, 2020

[Click here to read her prayer journal.](#)

Rumiko was born in Kobe, Japan on August 16, 1949. She was the 6th and youngest child to her parents, Satoshi and Yukiko Fujisawa. Her father was a school principal and piano teacher who was well respected in the community. Her mother was physically ill for many years and sadly passed away when Rumiko was only 14 years old. Rumiko had 2 older brothers and 3 older sisters. She remained especially close with her sisters Yoko and Kumiko throughout life. As a young child, she enjoyed art and music. She had a passion for education and loved children, and thus studied to become a kindergarten teacher. In 1969, she received her teaching certification in early childhood education.

Rumiko joined the Unification movement in the summer of 1969, soon after graduating from school. In 1974, she was among the first waves of Japanese missionaries to come to America. She had various missions in her life in America, including working at East Garden and serving as a nanny to Sun Jin Moon. She also served with the Korean Evangelical Association, the Christina Barnes fine fur business, the Ginseng Tea Company, and the fish business. She was Blessed in marriage to Lowell Mitchem in 1982 at Madison Square Gardens in New York City. In May of 1983, she gave birth to her daughter, Jinae. 2 years later in October of 1985, her son Jin was born.

In 1988, she and her family moved to her husband's hometown of Denver, Colorado. Her daughter, Victoria, was born in October of 1988. Among other things, she was very involved in the beginning of the Women's Federation for World Peace, at one point leading the local chapter. In 1996, she and her husband were assigned as National messiahs to the country of Afghanistan. In that role, she supported numerous activities and trips to help that country's young people hear the vision of our movement. In 1997, after it was not possible to go as a family to Afghanistan, the family made a new start in San Diego.

Rumiko and her family moved to the Los Angeles area in 1999. During her time in Los Angeles, Rumiko obtained her associate's degree in early childhood development with honors at the Los Angeles Harbor College. Over the years she worked at many early childhood centers and schools, including Bethany

Lutheran Child Care Center and the Baxter Montessori School in Los Angeles. She also taught kindergarten and 1st grade on Saturdays at Asahi Gakuen, a Japanese language school for Japanese nationals.

Rumiko became a grandmother in October of 2012, when her granddaughter Sora was born. In 2014, she joined her husband in Houston, Texas where they served together as local pastors for several years. Her second granddaughter, Ayumi, was born in October of 2016. At that time, Rumiko and Lowell retired in Baytown, Texas, and became involved in Home Church Providence, where they made the effort to Bless over 430 Couples in God-centered marriage. They became achievers of this goal by the end of 2018.

In October of 2019, Rumiko learned that she had stage 3 B-Cell Lymphoma cancer. For the last year, she courageously battled this disease, undergoing many different treatments. In February of 2020, she and her husband returned to Los Angeles, where they were able to receive direct support from her daughters' families in her battle with cancer. Despite every effort made to support her recovery, Rumiko's arduous battle with Lymphoma took its toll on her body, and she ultimately succumbed to related complications.

Our beloved sister, Rumiko Mitchem, ascended to her new life on October 22, 2020. During her last hours, it was truly a Blessing that her husband and children were able to be by her side, surrounding her with love and prayers in her last moments. Rumiko was deeply loved and appreciated, and her compassionate heart and thoughtful devotion and consistency will be cherished always.

Rumiko will be most remembered as a prayer warrior and a dedicated wife, mother, grandmother and teacher, who was cherished by anyone who came across her in life. She is survived by her sisters (Yoko Kadota and Kumiko Fujisawa), brother (Masaaki), husband (Lowell Mitchem), children (Jinae Higashino, Jin Mitchem, and Victoria Nishida), son-in-laws (Takashi Higashino and Joshua Nishida), and granddaughters (Sora and Ayumi Higashino). Her thoughtful care and deep love for her family was a precious gift that will live on, and we feel her continued love and presence with us always.

### **Seonghwa Ceremony**

Date: Saturday, November 7 at 2:00 PM

Location: Wayfarer's Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes