

FFWPU USA Blessing and Family Ministry: In Memory of Ikuyo Tokitsu Fernelius

Carina Mendez
May 19, 2025



Spouse: Dan Fernelius

DOB: June 7, 1949

Blessing Date: August 25, 1992

Ascension: April 23, 2025

Seonghwa Ceremony: May 4, 2025 at 11AM PST
at 1715 El Camino Dr. Tempe, AZ 85281

Ikuyo was born on June 7, 1949, in the beautiful countryside of Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan. Her childhood was shaped by both challenge and love. After losing her father at just seven years old, she was raised solely by her mother, a strong and hardworking woman who became one of Japan's top insurance salespeople. Even as a little girl, Ikuyo took on responsibility with grace - cooking, cleaning, and caring for their home while her mother worked long hours. She grew up in a blended family with a stepsister and two stepbrothers, creating memories full of simple joys, like eating raw fish the way others might snack on apples.

In school, Ikuyo's energy and love of life shone brightly. She played center for her junior high basketball team and threw herself into sports and activities with enthusiasm. She and her mother shared a deep love of music, especially the songs of Elvis Presley. Ikuyo saved her allowance to buy a big stereo, and she loved filling her home with music.

After high school, Ikuyo worked as a receptionist at a golf store, where she not only welcomed customers but even learned to play golf herself. Her life took a profound turn when she met a missionary from the Unification Church during high school. She embraced her faith deeply, becoming a full-time church member in 1971.

In 1974, her mission took her across the world to Germany, where she worked tirelessly - preparing meals, fundraising, and offering her bright spirit to everyone she met. A fellow missionary once described her as "a rose - beautiful but with many thorns," recognizing both her warmth and her strength. Upon returning to Japan, she later served as a counselor to younger members and gained seven spiritual children through her love and guidance.

In the mid-1980s, Ikuyo came to Arizona to serve at a lively church center, offering both her bookkeeping skills and her deep motherly heart. In 1989 Ikuyo returned to Japan to take care of her ailing mother. She stayed with her until 1991 when she passed away. During this time Ikuyo served as a business coach helping businesses use ethical principles to be successful.

In 1992, she was matched and blessed in marriage to Dan Fernelius. Together, they built a life of service

and love, whether fundraising at a flower stand, caring for their community, or working with other church members to share their faith.



Ikuyo had so many gifts. She could create wonderful meals even with the simplest ingredients - sometimes with just a toaster oven! She loved opera and would often burst into song, bringing unexpected joy to those around her. In Arizona, she taught Japanese for over ten years, pouring her heart into her students. She also supported her church community by translating sermons and worked hard to improve her English, taking classes at Phoenix College.

Ikuyo loved gardening, cooking, and the delicate art of flower arranging - a passion she carried from her young adulthood in Japan. But most of all, she loved caring for others - her husband, her friends, her students, and even her pets, especially a little dog named Happy, who brought her so much joy.

In her later years, Ikuyo faced tremendous health challenges with incredible courage. Despite the burden of dialysis and declining strength, she never lost her bright spirit. She charmed the nurses and staff at her care facility with her kindness and warmth, becoming a favorite among them. Even after suffering a heart attack and being moved to intensive care, Ikuyo continued to think of others before herself, showing a heart full of grace to the very end.

Ikuyo lived her life with a deep love for others, a cheerful heart, and an unbreakable spirit. Her smile could light up a room, and her presence brought comfort and joy wherever she went. A truly remarkable woman whose gentle heart, strong spirit, and unwavering love touched so many lives.

We are all better for having known her. We will miss her dearly. But we carry her light forward in our hearts, always.

Thank you, Ikuyo, for everything.