



Dorthea Olson

April 3, 1929 - March 6, 2023

Dorthea Rose Anderson James Olson went home to the loving arms of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on March 6, 2023, just shy of her 94th birthday. She was born on April 3rd, 1929, to Christian and Icel Anderson at Mercy Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa, the oldest of four children. She liked to point out that she was the only one of her siblings to be born in a hospital.

Dorthea spent most of her childhood in Fort Dodge, Iowa. She loved school and two of her favorite high school subjects were Latin and Orchestra where she played the violin. When her parents moved to Duluth, she joined them and she recalled many happy times living the country life and going to country school.

Wanting to graduate with her Iowa class (and maybe missing a handsome young man), she returned to Fort Dodge where she graduated and shortly after married Marion James. They were hard workers and built a home and family. They were very active in their little church where Dorthea began her lifelong service to her Lord by using her beautiful voice in singing in the choir, singing solos and duets. She also taught classes in Sunday school and Bible school, often taking the leadership role. Their marriage was blessed with four children: Marion James Jr., Marilee (James) Taylor, Paul (WandaLee) James, and Joel (Patty) James. Shortly after the birth of Joel, Dorthea's childhood sweetheart died after a difficult

battle with cancer. She was devastated and moved her young family to the country outside of Duluth where she could be near her parents.

Continuing an active role in church, she started rubbing shoulders with the tall, handsome, single pastor. Mysteriously, his visitation to church members started occurring more often to this beautiful widow with four young children. It was soon apparent that he was smitten, and to the amazement of all who thought him a confirmed bachelor, he asked her to become his wife. With a bit of trepidation, concerned about the role of being a pastor's wife and putting her children into the role of PKs, she asked the children who gave her an overwhelming YES, and then she said YES!

John and Dorthea began their life together, working side by side in churches throughout Minnesota. While still in Duluth, their marriage was blessed with 3 children: Kriscel (Daniel) Miller, John (Rose) Olson, and Nathan Olson. Moving with a family of now seven children was not easy, but Dorthea put her boundless energy into it, saying goodbye to dear friends, determined to make a new home and new friends. Their journey took them from Duluth to Fosston, Grand Portage, Benson, Rothsay, and finally to Deer River where even in retirement they took on not one, but two country churches.

After 50 years of marriage, Dorthea was again left a widow. Leaving her lake home was a difficult move as she loved working in her flower gardens, walking in the woods and taking pictures of the beautiful sunsets over the lake. Condensing all those years into a small apartment wasn't easy, especially for a saver and a writer (she left behind boxes of journals full of memories). She treasured time with her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren who she loved abundantly.

She is preceded in death by her husbands, a son, her parents, two brothers, one sister and other family members.

She is survived by her loving family: six children and their spouses, 14 grandchildren and 21 great grandchildren, two sisters-in-law, many nieces and nephews. She fiercely loved and fervently prayed for each of you. I have no greater joy than to know my children are walking with the Lord." III John 1:4 (Dorthea paraphrase)

"Mother of seven, now in heaven."

Private family services and interment.