Shirley Ann Berkenpas was born on August 29, 1937, to Jake and Cora (Ver Burg) Cannegieter on a farm east of Rock Valley, Iowa. She attended Rock Valley Community School and spent her entire life in the community she loved.

On December 16, 1955, Shirley was united in marriage to Richard "Berky" Berkenpas. Together they built a life in Rock Valley, where Berky owned and operated a furniture store. During their early years of marriage, Shirley devoted herself to raising their family as a homemaker.

In 1975, Shirley began working as a teacher's aide for Rock Valley Community Schools, where she served for many years. Generations of students fondly remember Shirley as the playground supervisor, keeping everyone in line while wearing her familiar long blue coat.

Throughout her life, Shirley overcame many challenges and hardships. She endured the loss of her husband to cancer when she was only 46 years old, mourned the loss of a beloved granddaughter, faced the possibility of losing her eyesight, and survived a brain aneurysm against overwhelming odds. Through every adversity, Shirley displayed remarkable strength, grace, determination, and humor. It became a family joke that Shirley had more than nine lives.

Above all else, Shirley found her greatest joy in caring for her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. She was always ready to babysit, paint, clean, cook, or lend a helping hand to those she loved. Her door was always open to family and friends, and she cherished visits over a cup of coffee or a cold beer. She also valued the special bond she shared with her siblings through their long-standing Friday afternoon coffee gatherings, which eventually continued at Whispering Heights.

Shirley was a talented seamstress and could often be found at her sewing machine creating quilts for family and friends. She especially enjoyed making quilts to help raise funds for Justice For All, a ministry to which she and her siblings devoted countless hours of service.

A member of Pioneer United Methodist Church in Rock Valley, Shirley's strong faith was an important part of her life. When she was unable to attend in person, she could often be found watching local church services from home. Shirley passed away peacefully on Sunday, September 27, 2026, at Hegg Memorial Hospital in Rock Valley at the age of 89.

Left to cherish her memory are her children, Kevin (Julie) Berkenpas, Cindy (David) Osborne, Rick (Tami) Berkenpas, and Kerri (Jeremy) Hoogendoorn; grandchildren, RJ Berkenpas, Hunter (Stephanie) Berkenpas, JD Osborne, Berke Osborne, Cheyenne (Jacob) Meendering, Sheridan Berkenpas, Shelby Berkenpas, Dakota Vlotho, Makenzi Vlotho, and Karson Hoogendoorn; great-grandchildren, Blake Meendering, CJ Meendering, and August Berkenpas; sisters, Lois (Gerrit) Vande Stouwe, Joan Caswell, and Karen Clark (Judy); brothers-in-law, Alden Berkenpas, Carl Berkenpas, and Merlin (Peg) Berkenpas; and sister-in-law, Leone Eidsmoe.

Shirley was preceded in death by her beloved husband, Richard "Berky" Berkenpas; parents, Jake and Cora Cannegieter; parents-in-law, Richard and Jenny Berkenpas; granddaughter, Shayleigh Berkenpas; brothers, Don Cannegieter, John Cannegieter, and Arland Cannegieter; brother-in-law, Wally Caswell and Bob Eidsmoe; sisters-in-law, Jeanine Berkenpas, Barb Berkenpas, Joyce Berkenpas and Rena Cannegieter; and nephew, Chad Berkenpas.

Shirley will be remembered for her unwavering strength, generous heart, enduring faith, and deep love for family. Her kindness, resilience, and sense of humor touched countless lives and leave a legacy that will live on in all who knew and loved her.

*Remembering the Life of*

# *Shirley Ann Berkenpas*

*August 29, 1937 ~ September 27, 2026*

**MEMORIAL SERVICE**
11:00 AM, Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Pioneer United Methodist Church
Rock Valley, Iowa

**OFFICIANT**
Rev. Ron Johnson

**ACCOMPANIST**
Vicky Kooistra

**MUSICAL SELECTIONS**
*"His Eye Is on the Sparrow"*
*"I'll Fly Away"*

**CONGREGATIONAL HYMNS**
*"What A Friend We Have In Jesus"*
*"To God Be The Glory"*

**PALLBEARERS**
RJ Berkenpas ~ Hunter Berkenpas
Dakota Vlotho ~ Karson Hoogendoorn
JD Osborne ~ Berke Osborne ~ Jacob Meendering

**HONORARY PALLBEARERS**
Cheyenne Meendering ~ Sheridan Berkenpas
Shelby Berkenpas ~ Makenzi Vlotho ~ Stephanie Berkenpas

**MEMORIALS**
Justice For All or
St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

**INTERMENT**
Valley View Cemetery
Rock Valley, Iowa

*Shirley's family invites everyone for a time of food and fellowship at Koldy's Sports Bar and Grill (1301 Main St) following the memorial service.*

# Safely Home

*I am home in Heaven, dear ones;*
*Oh, so happy and so bright!*
*There is perfect joy and beauty*
*In this everlasting light.*

*All the pain and grief is over,*
*Every restless tossing passed;*
*I am now at peace forever,*
*Safely home in Heaven at last.*

*Did you wonder I so calmly*
*Trod the valley of the shade?*
*Oh! but Jesus' love illumined*
*Every dark and fearful glade.*

*And He came Himself to meet me*
*In that way so hard to tread;*
*And with Jesus' arm to lean on,*
*Could I have one doubt or dread?*

*Then you must not grieve so sorely,*
*For I love you dearly still*
*Try to look beyond earth's shadows,*
*Pray to trust our Father's Will.*

*There is work still waiting for you,*
*So you must not idly stand;*
*Do it now, while life remaineth -*
*You shall rest in Jesus' land.*

*When that work is all completed,*
*He will gently call you Home;*
*Oh, the rapture of that meeting,*
*Oh, the joy to see you come!*

PORTER FUNERAL HOME

# In Loving Memory



# Shirley Ann Berkenpas

August 29, 1937 ~ September 27