

In Loving Memory



Ruth Harriet Strand

September 9, 1926 - February 15, 2026

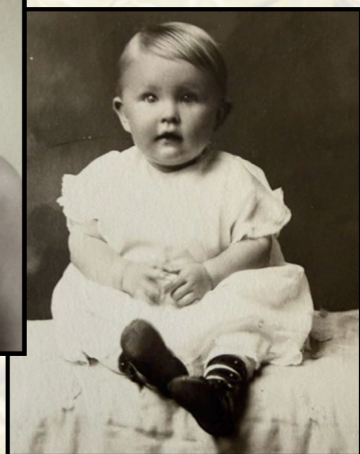


**HANSON
RUNSVOLD**
Cremation • Burial

*If I Can Stop One
Heart from Breaking*

*If I can stop one heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain;
If I can ease one life the aching,
Or cool one pain,
Or help one fainting robin
Unto his nest again,
I shall not live in vain*

By Emily Dickinson



Remembering

Ruth Strand

September 9, 1926 - February 15, 2026

Memorial Service

Tuesday, August 4, 2026 - 11:00 AM

Emmanuel Lutheran Church

Abercrombie, North Dakota

Officiant

Pastor Janelle Hansen

Congregational Hymns

Mary Jo Lothspeich, *Accompanist*

“How Great Thou Art” #856 “Amazing Grace” #779

“For the Beauty of the Earth” #879

Nurse Honors

MN DAK Nurse Honor Guard

Honorary Pallbearers

David Schuldheisz - John Schuldheisz - Paul Schuldheisz

Peter Schuldheisz - Nancy Reigle - Mark McGuigan

Kathleen Ganglehoff - Daniel McGuigan - Kristin Ruud-Diaz

Interment

Emmanuel Lutheran Cemetery

Abercrombie, North Dakota

All are invited to a luncheon following the burial.

Ruth Harriet Strand, 99, of Fargo, ND, formerly of Los Angeles, CA, passed away with her niece by her side on Sunday, February 15, 2026, at St. Catherine North in Fargo.

Ruth Harriet Strand was born on September 9, 1926, in Abercrombie, North Dakota, to Clarence and Viola (Johnson) Strand. The oldest of four daughters, Ruth developed a lifelong sense of responsibility and love for her younger sisters, whom she cherished throughout her life. She was baptized and confirmed at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, and was raised on the family farm, where she attended country school before continuing her education at Abercrombie High School. She graduated in 1944.

Ruth began her nursing education at St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing in Fargo as a U.S. Cadet Nurse in the World War II Cadet Nurse Corps, a government-sponsored program created to rapidly train young women to help meet the nation's wartime nursing shortage. From September 1944 through September 1947, she completed her nursing studies at St. Luke's, along with general education coursework at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota. Her training included three months of clinical experience in the Psychiatric and Neurology Units at Cook County Hospital in Chicago, Illinois. Upon earning her R.N. degree, Ruth often reflected that "most of the civilian nurses had been called to serve our country during WWII, so we took on much responsibility at a young age." She remained deeply proud of her service, which reflected the compassion, dedication, and patriotism that characterized her generation and guided her throughout her life.

From 1947 to 1950, Ruth served as Student Health Director and taught Nursing Arts at St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing. After relocating to California, where many of her Johnson aunts and uncles had also settled, Ruth continued her nursing career at Veterans Administration hospitals in the Los Angeles area, working in medical and surgical units. She also spent a brief period working at a nursing home on Long Island, New York, before returning to the VA Hospital in Los Angeles, California, where she worked for the final years of her career in an outpatient drug treatment program. Her patients were always at the heart of her work, and she was known for her compassion, dedication, and genuine care for those she served. Throughout her career, Ruth also developed many cherished friendships with fellow nurses and colleagues. Those relationships endured well beyond her working years, a testament to the warmth, kindness, and genuine interest she showed to everyone she met. Ruth retired in 1994 at the age of 67 after nearly five decades of devoted nursing service.

Ruth had a lifelong passion for learning and embraced many creative pursuits, including drawing, painting, music, and theater. She took numerous classes throughout her life and, in addition to her nursing degree, later earned an Associate of Arts degree in Humanities from a local junior college. Combining her commitment to nursing with her love of travel, history, and discovery, Ruth participated in several transcultural nursing immersion programs that took her around the world. She visited hospitals, met with physicians and nurses, and learned about healthcare practices and cultures in other countries. These journeys fulfilled her dream of experiencing the places she had long studied and admired, including China, Australia, Kenya, Chile, Argentina, Scandinavia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Tahiti, Egypt, Russia and many more.

Throughout her nursing career, Ruth's demanding schedule made it difficult to participate consistently in church life, although her faith remained an important part of who she was. In retirement, she found a welcoming community at Westwood Presbyterian Church, where she became actively involved in charitable and social events. She also attended the church's weekly Adult Bible Forums led by theological professors at UCLA, fulfilling her deep interest in religious study and continuing her lifelong pursuit of a deeper understanding of her faith.

Ruth's love for animals began during her childhood growing up on a farm, where she helped care for the animals and developed a deep appreciation for their well-being. Throughout her life, she remained devoted to protecting animals, especially those threatened by extinction or mistreated through human use and abuse.

She supported wildlife conservation efforts through her donations to the World Wildlife Fund and cared deeply about vulnerable creatures around the world. Her compassion extended to animals close to home as well. After returning from a trip to Australia, she noticed a stray cat lingering near her car and apartment. She eventually welcomed the cat into her life, and the two became inseparable. She lovingly named her companion Melbourne, a reminder of her travels and the special bond they shared.

Family was extremely special to Ruth. She cherished her sisters and their families, and she took great joy in being a loving aunt to her nieces and nephews. She made it a priority to return home to North Dakota and Minnesota for Christmases, baptisms, graduations, weddings, and annual summer visits. She also loved welcoming family to California, where she prepared delicious meals and planned memorable outings to the beach, amusement parks, museums, and her beloved Los Angeles Dodgers games, a team she faithfully cheered for throughout her life.

Even from afar, Ruth remained a constant presence through numerous thoughtful letters, cards for every birthday and holiday, and carefully chosen gifts that reflected how deeply she knew and loved each person. Her bond with the Johnson and Strand cousins and their families was equally special, rooted in the close relationships they formed growing up together and strengthened through shared memories, time spent together with those living in California, and a connection that endured throughout their lives.

In August 2016, Ruth returned to Fargo due to health needs and spent her remaining years lovingly cared for by the staff and healthcare team at Rosewood/Saint Catherine North. Throughout those years, her sister Shirley was a constant presence, faithfully tending to her affairs, advocating for her care, and surrounding her with steadfast love and support until her passing in December 2025. Being closer to family brought Ruth great comfort and joy, as loved ones visited often, shared memories, and remained connected through heartfelt cards, letters, and expressions of love throughout her final nine years.

Although Ruth left the prairies and farmland of North Dakota, where her great-grandparents had settled after immigrating from Norway, she carried with her throughout her life a deep appreciation for the sacrifices, perseverance, and resilience of those who came before her. She understood the hardships faced by her ancestors in establishing a new life, as well as the struggles experienced by her parents and local families during the Great Depression. Rooted in this legacy, Ruth carried forward the values, faith, work ethic, and strong family and religious foundation that shaped her upbringing. These guiding principles influenced her nursing career, her dedication to serving others, and the compassionate way she lived her life.

Ruth will be laid to rest in the Emmanuel Lutheran Church Cemetery beside her parents and among many beloved aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends. Returning to the place where her story began, she will be surrounded by the family, faith, and community that shaped the remarkable life she lived.

Ruth is survived by her nephews, David (Jane) Schuldheisz, MN; John (Paula) Schuldheisz, TX; Paul Schuldheisz, MN; Peter (Kari) Schuldheisz, MN; Mark (Teresa) McGuigan, ND; Daniel McGuigan, ND; nieces Nancy (David) Reigle, CO; Kathleen (Vince) Ganglehoff, ND; Kristin Ruud-Diaz (Julio), NJ; and many great and great-great-nieces and nephews, as well as several cousins and their children for whom she cared deeply.

Ruth was preceded in death by her parents; sisters and brothers-in-law Fayma and Melvin Daniel McGuigan, Ardelle and Russell Schuldheisz, and Shirley and Richard Ruud.

Ruth's family is deeply grateful for the compassionate care, kindness, and support she received from the entire staff at Rosewood/Saint Catherine North for nearly ten years, as well as from HIA Hospice during the final day of her life.

Memorials may be given to Emmanuel Lutheran Church (Abercrombie, ND), the World Wildlife Fund, or to a local animal shelter of your choice.