

Bertha Jane Stangeland "Bert" passed away peacefully surrounded by family at the age of 95 on October 10, 2026 while under the care of hospice at SMP St Catherine's North.

Bertha Jane Olerud was born on April 23, 1931, to Bertha and Andrew Olerud in Mayville, ND. As a tomboy growing up on the farm near Argusville, Bert loved horses and dogs. During her school years she was active on the girls' basketball team. She graduated Valedictorian of her class from Argusville High School in 1949.

Bert attended Moorhead State College, graduating in June of 1951 with her degree in teaching. She was active in the Beta Chi Sorority. Following graduation, she taught at New York Mills, Felton, and Hawley.

Her high school friend Harriet Stangeland introduced her to the love of her life, Gordy and they were married (Gordon E. Stangeland) on June 20, 1952, at Zion Lutheran in Harwood, ND. They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary shortly before Gordy's death in 2002. She loved country western music and dancing. She and Gordy spent many Saturday nights in Fargo or Moorhead having steak dinners and dancing the night away.

In 1958 Gordy and Bert moved to Hawley where they built a new home and raised their 4 children. Bert continued to sub and teach part time. She was an avid gardener, especially growing gladiolas and a variety of roses along with their vegetable garden. She belonged to the garden club and could be counted on to have several entries in the Hawley Garden Show each summer. Bert was a great cook, making and freezing apple pies from their apple trees, using up rhubarb, freezing corn, canning tomatoes, and making pickles. She also spent time with her friends in Hawley on a bowling league.

Family was important to Bert and most Sundays meant family dinners. They loaded the kids in the station wagon and headed to their parents or a brother's/sister's for the afternoon. If it was her turn to entertain, she served delicious meals in the formal dining room using her china and sterling silver.

Together they loved taking the kids on road trips out west to visit family. They started camping with family and friends at the area lakes, and eventually bought a lot and built a lake home on Big Pelican. The lake home became a gathering place to entertain kids, grandkids, and extended family during summer visits. They enjoyed many new friendships at Haugen's Point as others moved in and built cabins.

Gordy's career in the grain business took them to Springfield, MN in 1975 and then to Enderlin, ND for a dozen years before moving back to Fargo-Moorhead. While in Enderlin, they never missed attending sporting activities and cheering on their kids. Bert's love of teaching continued, and she worked as a para in the West Fargo School District, befriending several special children.

Bert was extremely proud of her Norwegian heritage and was an active member of the Sons of Norway in Fargo where she often served on Pie Day. She also belonged to the Women of the ELCA at Pontoppidan Lutheran in Fargo, faithfully serving at funerals, going to quilting, and recycling cards. She loved Sunday morning coffee with all of her Pont friends. She maintained friendships with her sorority sisters into her 80's and enjoyed attending their monthly luncheons. As the years went by Bert was thrilled each time she got to meet a new great-grandchild.

Bert is survived her four children; Jane Longnecker (Doug) of Longville, MN, Julie Rosant (Peter) of Richland, WA, Thomas Stangeland (Leslie) of Post Falls, ID, Peter Stangeland (Cheri) of Fargo, ND; six grandchildren, Marcus (Kristen) Bratsch, Allison Bratsch (Kyle Salvatora), Andrew (Paige) Stangeland, Madeline (Jeff) Alboucq, Erin (Brennan) Bonn, Alexandra Stangeland; and seven great-grandchildren, Ezra Bratsch, Nehemiah Bratsch, Isaiah Bratsch, Audrey Salvatora, Charlotte Salvatora, Ellis Bonn, Andi Bonn, Blair Alboucq, and Owen Stangeland; and one brother, Andrew "Nick" (Carol) Olerud.

Bert was preceded in death by her husband, Gordy; her parents; and siblings, Ira (Betty) Olerud, Anne (Bill) Nelson. Arthur (Mary) Olerud, and June Olerud.

Memorials are preferred to Pontoppidan Lutheran Church Radio Fund or Youth Fund, Oakwood Cemetery in Harwood and HIA Hospice of the Red River Valley.

The family would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the wonderful staff at St Catherine's North for their many years of kindness and care, and also to her care team with HIA Hospice of the Red River Valley.

In Loving Memory



Bertha Jane Stangeland

April 23, 1931 – October 10, 2026

*When you lived your life for others
And you loved without condition,
When you made so many laugh
And your smile won't be forgotten,*

*When you left behind an empty place
That no one else can fill,
When the friendships that you shared
Long to be renewed,*

*When you built your life on hope
And fulfilled it every day,
The footprints that you left behind
Will bring us face to face.*

*So, goodbye is not forever,
You're only steps away.*



Prayer Service

Tuesday, October 13, 2026 – 7:00 PM

Hanson–Runsvold Funeral Home

Fargo, North Dakota

Funeral Service

Wednesday, October 14, 2026 – 11:00 AM

Pontoppidan Lutheran Church

Fargo, North Dakota

Rev. Alex Waters, *Officiant*

Marlys Herring, *Organist*

Pastor Marcus Bratsch, *Reader*

Erin Bonn, *Reader and Eulogist*

Congregational Hymns

“How Great Thou Art”

“Blessed Assurance” “On Eagle's Wings”

“Amazing Grace” “The Lord's Prayer”

Honorary Pallbearers

Marcus Bratsch – Allison Bratsch

Andrew Stangeland – Madeline Alboucq

Erin Bonn – Lexi Stangeland

Burial

Oakwood Cemetery

Harwood, North Dakota

All are invited to a luncheon following the service.