

Bennie Axel Benson was born on May 19, 1945, to Florence (Peterson) and Fred Benson. He grew up on the family farm and was an active participant in farm work while he lived at home. Bennie loved to mow the several acres of lawn, drove the tractor and trailer out in the fields to pick rocks, plowed fields in the fall, pulled weeds out of the soybeans, worked in the garden and raised turkeys every year to sell to the neighbors for Thanksgiving. In addition, Bennie was often hired by neighboring farmers to assist with manual labor at their farms. Bennie also loved to fish in the Yellow Medicine River which ran through the family farm, but he did not like running into turtles!

In 1975, Bennie started attending what was then the Chippewa-Yellow Medicine Developmental Achievement Center (DAC) in Montevideo. He rode on the Clarkfield School bus with his sister who was starting her senior year of high school. In Clarkfield, Bennie changed buses and rode to Granite Falls to pick up more DAC participants before going to the DAC location in Montevideo. This was his route home as well; 76 miles round trip every weekday.

In 1978, Bennie moved to REM-Montevideo. In 1988, Bennie moved to an apartment in Montevideo where he was supported by services through Onward Services. For the next 37 years, Onward provided the highest quality of services that Bennie and his family could ask for. For several years Bennie had a lawn mowing business. Thanks to his good friend, Tom Albrecht, who built a special cart for Bennie, Bennie was able to move his mower and supplies around the neighborhood to mow for others. When Heartland Industries opened in 1996, Bennie became a supported employee there, including working at the Second Time Around thrift store. Bennie was known for his work ethic and did not retire until 2019.

For years Bennie continued to enjoy fishing through the Let's Go Fishing program as well as enjoying participation in a variety of Special Olympics events. Over the years he was also able to enjoy several camps and trips for people with developmental disabilities. Bennie loved it when he could go on guided fishing trips in northern Minnesota. His friend, Tom, also brought Bennie spearfishing in the winter, which Bennie thoroughly enjoyed.

Though Bennie started out life with challenges and faced more throughout the years, he was an example to others throughout his life through his work ethic and enjoyment of simple pleasures such as a good meal, growing tomatoes, making sure the birds at his feeders were well fed, spotting birds and animals in nature, and fishing. Bennie's eyes always seemed better than 20/20 when it came to noticing nature. Bennie loved volunteering by collecting pop can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House and by sharpening pencils for the elementary schools. Our family will never be able to express the gratitude we feel for the staff of Onward Services in helping Bennie to live his best life, their dedication over the years is unmatched.

Bennie passed away at the age of 80 at Luther Haven on March 6, 2026. He was preceded in death by his parents, his brother, Robert and his nephew, Peter Benson. He is survived by his sister and brother-in-law, Betty and Tim Christensen, their children, Andrea and Ryan Janowicz and family, Mitchell and Taylor Christensen and family and Elissa and Phillip Ward; nephew, Christopher Benson and several cousins. Bennie is also survived by very special friends, Deb and Mark Grussing, Sheila Emery, and Tom Albrecht, Onward housemates and friends, Heartland friends and faith visitors from Salem Lutheran Church, Mary and Robin. Also, a special thanks to Bennie's social worker of 23 years, Jennifer Husby. We are grateful for the compassionate care Bennie received at CCM Health and at Luther Haven the past few months.

In lieu of flowers, memorials are preferred to the Montevideo Let's Go Fishing program, the Adults with Disabilities Montevideo program or St. Lucas Cemetery Fund.



In Loving
MEMORY

Bennie A. Benson

MAY 19, 1945 ✝ MARCH 6, 2026

Fisherman's Prayer

God grant that I may

Live to fish,

Until my dying day,

And when it comes

To my last cast,

I then most humbly pray,

When in the Lord's

Safe landing net,

I'm peacefully asleep,

That in his mercy I be judged,

As big enough to keep.

In Memory of

Bennie Axel Benson

May 19, 1945



March 6, 2026

Celebration of Life
Salem Lutheran Church
Montevideo, Minnesota
Saturday, March 14th, 2026
1 PM



Officiant

Pastor Sam Kautz

Organist

Diane Schulte

Casketbearers

Tim Christensen

Mitch Christensen

Trey Templer

Chase Cummings

Andrea Janowicz

Elissa Ward

Honorary Casketbearers

Bennie's Onward Housemates Past & Present

Interment

St. Lucas Lutheran Cemetery

Rural Cottonwood, Normania Township, MN

Arrangements—*J.H. Lynner Funeral Home Since 1891*