



His Journey's Just Begun

Don't think of him as gone away-
his journey's just begun,
life holds so many facets-
this earth is only one.

Just think of him as resting
from the sorrows and the tears
in a place of warmth and comfort
where there are no days and years.

Think how he must be wishing
that we could know today
how nothing but our sadness
can really pass away.

And think of him as living
in the hearts of those he touched. . .
for nothing loved is ever lost-

and he was loved so much.

Gary Carlson

Family will Receive Friends

Friday, September 5, 2025 | 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Bethel Lutheran Church | Wahpeton, North Dakota

Funeral Service

Saturday, September 6, 2025 | 11:00 AM
Bethel Lutheran Church | Wahpeton, North Dakota

Officiating

Pastor Amy Eisenmann

Music

Organist & Soloist | Andrew Yaggie
How Great Thou Art | I Can Only Imagine | Untitled Hymn

Congregational Hymns

Here I Am Lord | Borning Cry

Pallbearers - Gary's Grandchildren

Katherine Osvold | Cassandra Carlson | Cody Carlson
Braeden Wahl | Brynne Wahl | Bauer Wahl

Burial

Milnor Lutheran Cemetery | Milnor, North Dakota

Thank you

We would like to extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to all who called Gary friend. He treasured time spent with his family and friends. Your expressions of care have been humbling. It is such a comfort for us to find that you knew and loved Gary as we did - a loving husband, an exceptional father and grandpa, a respected colleague, and a true friend.

~~~~~

When you look back and I am but a memory, I pray  
that you always remember that you were, are,  
and always will be deeply loved by me.

# *In Loving*

---

# M E M O R Y



## Gary Raymond Carlson

September 24, 1944 | September 1, 2025



Gary was born September 24, 1944, in Breckenridge, MN, to Raymond Carlson and Alta Holt Carlson. He was raised from infancy by his parents, Elmer and Agnes Carlson, on a farm near Milnor, ND. Gary was baptized and confirmed at Milnor Lutheran Church. He graduated from Milnor High School in 1962.

Gary attended North Dakota State College of Science in Wahpeton, ND, and received an Associate's Degree in Journalism.

He married Jean Hendrickson on November 24, 1965, at the Milnor Lutheran Church. Their marriage was blessed with two children.

Gary pursued a career change by attending the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis and graduated in 1967 with a degree in Mortuary Science. After graduation, Gary and Jean moved to Crookston, MN, where he completed his funeral director internship, later moving to Fulda, MN, where he managed Hustad Funeral Home. In 1974, Gary and Jean purchased the Lindsey Funeral Home, re-naming it the Lindsey-Carlson Funeral Home in Page, ND. In 1990, they moved to Wahpeton, ND, where he was employed as an Operations Manager for the Vertin Family Funeral Homes. He oversaw funeral homes throughout seven states. Gary retired on January 1, 2012.

Gary served as President of the North Dakota Funeral Directors Association in 1993, and served in all offices, including Chairman of the National Funeral Directors

Association Insurance Board. He represented North Dakota as a member of the Policy Board of the National Funeral Directors Association, and from 1997-1999, he also served on the Executive Board. Gary served on the Advisory Board of the National Red Cross Tissue Donor Program and was a member of the Academy of Certified Funeral Service Practitioners. In 2007, then Governor John Hoeven appointed Gary to the North Dakota State Board of Funeral Service, where he served a 4-year term. In 2018, Gary proudly received his 50-year service pin from both the North Dakota and Minnesota Funeral Directors Associations. Being well known in the funeral industry, Gary enjoyed attending annual conventions, networking, and visiting with peers, friends, and vendors.

He enjoyed the outdoors and loved hunting pheasants and big game, including a once in a lifetime moose hunt in North Dakota. He also enjoyed a good game of golf and a lazy afternoon relaxing on the pontoon. After retirement, Gary and Jean spent their winters in Lake Havasu City, AZ, and enjoyed time in the summer at their lake home on Ottertail Lake in Minnesota.

Gary was a sanctioned American Softball Association umpire for 35 years and enjoyed umpiring many local league games and tournaments, as well as state championship games, traveling to wherever they were held.

Gary is survived by his wife, Jean, and they would have celebrated 60 years of marriage this November. He is also survived by his children, Chris (Brenda) Carlson, Fergus Falls, MN and Cheri (Scott) Wahl, Litchfield, MN; six grandchildren, Katherine (Jason) Osvold, Cassandra (Dominic Walker) Carlson, Cody Carlson, Braeden Wahl, Brynne Wahl and Bauer Wahl; great-grandson, Ezra Walker, and two bonus grandchildren, Bailey and Preston Walker; four half-sisters, LaRae (Randy) Odegard, Denise (Randy) Seeling, Vanessa (Steve) Odegard, and Erin (Richard) Olson; sisters and brothers-in-law, Judy (David) Brenna, Lone (James) Foley, and Marsha Hendrickson; along with several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents and siblings, Fritz Carlson, Arthur Carlson, Delores Johnson, and Connie Pithey.

*He will be missed beyond measure.*

