

Eleanor (Elly) Gay Maas was born March 18, 1942, to Albert and Evelyn (Veldhuis) Mannes in Zeeland, Michigan. She was the oldest of five children and enjoyed growing up with each one of them. She went to grade school in Zeeland and high school in Holland, Michigan. Elly then went on to college in Grand Rapids, Michigan at Calvin College for 2 years and then Reformed Bible Institute (known as Kuyper College today) where she graduated in 1964. There she met the love of her life, Bernard (Bernie) Maas, while working in the RBI bookstore. Bernie and Elly started their life together and were married on June 13, 1967. They had three children, and Elly was able to become what she wanted to be most in the world – a mother.

Elly was a lover of art and painting. She could be found following a tutorial on how to create landscape/scenery via acrylic paint and a canvas. Many of her siblings, children, and grandchildren have her artwork hanging on their walls. Another passion of Elly's included wanting to know her lineage and family history. She would spend hours at her computer researching the genealogy of her ancestors, all the way back to the 1700s - and of course, slipping in a few games of solitaire. Elly was a truly humble and compassionate woman whose greatest joy was caring for the people around her. She was known for her creation of mats made from plastic grocery bags that were given to those in need all over the world. She worked countless hours on cutting and assembling the bags in different ways and found the most efficient way to complete them. Elly also spent many weekdays in the nursing home with residents, teaching them and sharing her compassion in this endeavor.

She had a motherly spirit that made everyone feel loved, welcomed, and safe, whether they were family or simply someone in need of a listening ear. A devoted Christian and deeply spiritual woman, Elly's faith was the foundation of her life. She relied wholeheartedly on the Lord- trusting in His guidance, finding strength in His presence, and seeking to live her life according to His will. Honest and sincere, Elly always spoke from the heart and lived with quiet integrity. She had a remarkable way of using her smile to develop many friendships with those outside of her own, including friendships with those of many different ethnic backgrounds. Elly's hospitality was never for recognition or praise—it was simply who she was. Elly's unwavering faith, selflessness, warmth, and compassion touched countless lives, and the love she so freely gave will continue to live on in the hearts of all who knew her. Elly passed away Monday, August 31, 2026, at her home under the loving care of her family and Sioux Center Home Health & Hospice at the age of 84.

Eleanor is survived by her husband, Bernard; brothers, Don (Mary) Mannes and Jerry (Shar) Mannes; sisters, Judith (Peter) Boogart and Lynette Williams; sons, Tim (Rita) Maas and Phil (Janell) Maas; daughter, Greta (Mike) Van Zee; grandchildren, Felicia, Cody, Tanner, TJ, and Sable Maas, Whitney (Braden) Copple, Bailey (Riggen) Zelinsky, and Cade Van Zee; and great-grandchild, Brooks Copple.

Remembering the Life of Eleanor Gay Maas

March 18, 1942 ~ August 31, 2026

MEMORIAL SERVICE

11:00 AM, Friday, September 4, 2026
Trinity Christian Reformed Church
Rock Valley, Iowa

OFFICIANT

Pastor Luke Johnston

ACCOMPANIST

Natalie Ysselstein

PROCESSIONAL

"O Jesus, I Have Promised"

CONGREGATIONAL HYMN

"My Jesus, I Love Thee"

RECESSIONAL

"I Can Only Imagine"

PALLBEARERS

TJ Maas ~ Braden Copple
Cade Van Zee ~ Tanner Maas
Cody Maas ~ Riggen Zelinsky

MEMORIALS

Justice For All
Rock Valley Christian School

INTERMENT

Valley View Cemetery
Rock Valley, Iowa

Elly's family invites everyone for a time of food and fellowship in the church fellowship hall immediately following the memorial service.

In Loving Memory



One of Elly's Paintings



Eleanor Maas

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