

Gilbert "Gil" William Nelson, 94, of Fargo, passed away August 25, 2026, just two days after celebrating his 94th birthday.

Born August 23, 1932, in Bisbee, North Dakota, Gil was the youngest of four children of John Nelson (Johan Nilsson) and Hedwig Tuebner. Gil's father was a Swedish immigrant who came to America at 17, worked as a section master for the Soo Line Railroad, and died of lung cancer at 54, leaving Gil at home with his mother and one sister. Times were hard, and Gil learned early to only get what you can afford. His sisters were Fay (Earl) Johnson and Mae (Lloyd Schmid and Ray) Blackburn, whom he loved deeply, and his brother was John "Fred" (Marge) Nelson, whom he idolized. His stepfather was Julius Kiedaisch.

Gil was valedictorian of his high school class, a multisport athlete, and active in theater and the school newspaper. He attended North Dakota Agricultural College (now NDSU), where he earned a degree in mathematics education, participated in Sigma Chi and Phi Kappa Phi, and served in Air Force ROTC.

Immediately after graduation, Gil taught for one year in Sheldon, ND, where he also coached middle school basketball. His talent for teaching was already clear, but his career took a turn when he was commissioned as a 2nd LT into the Air Force.

Gil was one of twenty scientists selected to work for the National Advisory Council for Aeronautics-the predecessor to NASA-testing jet engines in wind tunnels in Cleveland, OH. He was promoted to 1st LT after one year. After release from active duty in 1957, he continued serving in the Reserve and was promoted to Captain in July 1961.

He returned to Fargo in 1957 to pursue his master's degree while teaching mathematics at NDSU. That same year, he met Carolyn Callenbach in an Advanced Algebra class. Gil was the star of the class; Carolyn was the only woman. They got to know each other because they were assigned to share an office and quickly decided they liked spending all of their time together. Even though Carolyn's dad thought Gil was too old for his daughter (a five-year age difference), they were married in April 1959.

Their early years included 11 moves in 10 years, graduate studies at the University of Oklahoma and Montana State University, and the arrival of three children. They eventually settled on College Street in Fargo, where they lived for 38 years.

Gil devoted 40 years to teaching mathematics at NDSU, from 1957 to 1997, and was beloved by generations of students. He was active in the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi and did much student counseling. He loved teaching. His family continues to hear from former students who say he was the best teacher they ever had. He had a gift for making mathematics understandable and believed students should be tested on what they had been taught-"no surprises." He was wicked smart, confident in his abilities, and carried a natural presence in the classroom.

Gil was a member of AMVETS, Kiwanis, and First United Methodist Church. He loved reading, crossword puzzles, card games, and his Bison. He attended countless NDSU sporting events and passed his love of the Bison on to his children and grandchildren. He also had a wonderful singing voice that often turned heads when he joined in on a hymn.

In 1980, Gil and Carolyn became guardians to Karl, Kaarin, and Bjorn Knudson, who unexpectedly extended the parenting years and added much joy and love to the family.

In 2004, Gil survived an abdominal aortic aneurysm-a miracle that began what the family called his "bonus years." Those years gave him more than two decades to watch his children and grandchildren grow, build families, and achieve successes. His mind remained sharp until the end, and birthdays and anniversaries gave him the chance to proudly talk about his loved ones. He cherished family visits and would tell the staff at his care facility stories about each family member-never missing an opportunity to share their accomplishments.

Gil was a dedicated supporter of Carolyn in all of her activities and pursuits. They traveled extensively-especially for legislative and music gatherings-where Gil always managed to become a crowd favorite.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the caregivers and staff at Fargo Elim Health Care Center and HIA Hospice for their understanding, compassion, and expertise in caring for Gil. He could be a handful-but always thankful-and the family is grateful that the care teams understood and appreciated his special charm.

Gil is survived by his wife of 67 years, Carolyn, Fargo; children, Paul (Beth Laffey) Nelson, Rochester, NY; John (Cindy) Nelson, West Fargo; and Karla (Duane) Erlandson, Ham Lake, MN; grandchildren, Maeve (Alex), Fiona, Isaac, Adam (Kayci), Elle (Grant), Luke (Yi), Ryan (Matea), Aaron (Lindsey), and Jocelyn (Kaden); great-grandchildren, Shaina, Brooks, Elliott, and Wesley; brother in law, John (Largo) Callenbach, Mission, KS; and many beloved nieces and nephews.

Memorials are preferred to the NDSU Foundation - Gil and Carolyn Nelson Scholarship or HIA Hospice.

In Loving Memory



GILBERT "GIL"
NELSON

August 23, 1932
August 25, 2026

PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths
of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art
with me; Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the
presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my
head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all
the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house
of the Lord for ever.



**HANSON
RUNSVOLD**
Cremation • Burial

Remembering

GIL NELSON

August 23, 1932 - August 25, 2026

Celebration of Life

Thursday, September 17, 2026 - 2:00 PM

Hanson-Runsvold Funeral Home

Fargo, North Dakota

Officiant

Pastor Ryan Mutzenberger

Music

Sally Harmon, *Pianist*

Alex Rydell, *Violinist*

"Ashokan Farewell"

"Amazing Grace"

"The Yellow and The Green"

Honorary Pallbearers

Adam Nelson - Maeve Nelson - Fiona Nelson

Isaac Nelson - Elle Erlandson - Luke Erlandson

Ryan Erlandson - Aaron Erlandson - Jocelyn Erlandson

Military Honors

US Air Force Military Honors Team

Fargo AMVETS Post 7

Interment

Sunset Memorial Gardens

Fargo, North Dakota

All are invited to a reception following the service.

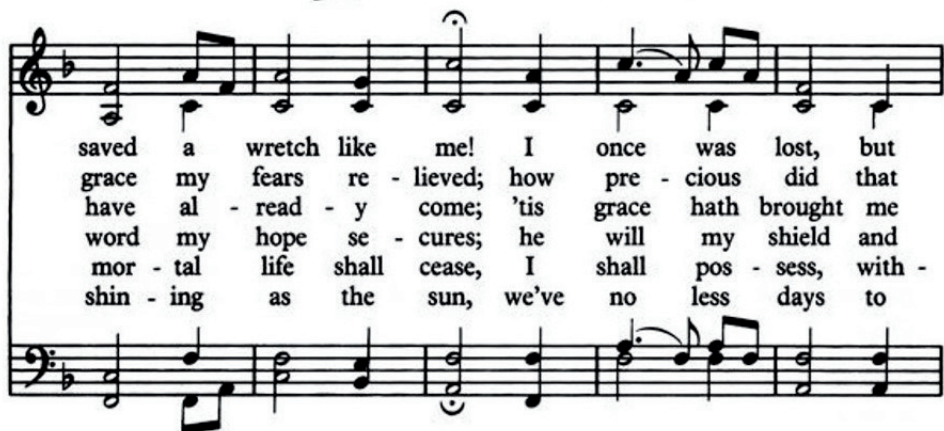
Amazing Grace

ASSURANCE

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1. A - maz - ing grace! How sweet the sound that
 2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and
 3. Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares, I
 4. The Lord has prom - ised good to me, his
 5. Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail, and
 6. When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright



saved a wretch like me! I once was lost, but
 grace my fears re - lieved; how pre - cious did that
 have al - read - y come; 'tis grace hath brought me
 word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
 mor - tal life shall cease, I shall pos - sess, with -
 shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to



now am found; was blind, but now I see.
 grace ap - pear the hour I first be - lieved.
 safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
 por - tion be, as long as life en - dures.
 in the veil, a life of joy and peace.
 sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

"The Yellow and the Green"

Words by A. E. Minard

Ho! a cheer for green and yellow,
 Up with yellow and the green.

They're the shades that deck our prairies,
 Far and wide with glorious sheen.

Fields of waving green in the springtime,
 Golden yellow in the fall.

How the great high-arching heaven,
 Looks and laughs upon it all.

*There will be a strawberry ice cream
 social with a concert by the
 Silver Winds Flute Quartet on
 Wednesday, September 23
 beginning at 4:00 PM at Touchmark.
 All are welcome to attend.*