



*My Mother*

*My Mother kept a garden,  
a garden of the heart.  
She planted all the good things  
that gave my life its start.*

*She turned me to the sunshine  
and encouraged me to dream,  
fostering and nurturing  
the seeds of self-esteem.*

*And when the wind and rain came,  
she protected me enough,  
but not too much because she knew  
I'd need to stand up strong and tough.*

*Her constant good example  
always taught me right from wrong,  
markers for my pathway  
that will last a lifetime long.*

*I am my Mother's garden.  
I am her legacy.  
And I hope she feels the love  
reflected back from me.*

*In Loving Memory*



*Ruth J. Ratchenski*  
*February 25, 1936 ~ March 24, 2026*



Ruth Joan Ratchenski was born on February 25, 1936, in Grafton, ND to Rudolph and Hjordis (Torstad) Thompson. She attended Grafton schools, was active in basketball and music, and graduated in 1954. She played clarinet with the Grafton band while marching in the Rose Festival, Rose Bowl, Orange Bowl, and Mardi Gras parades.

Ruth married Walter Ratchenski on November 14, 1954, and moved to the Hamilton area to farm and be a full-time homemaker. After a few years, they moved into the family farm's house, where they would live and raise a family for 23 years before moving to a new home on the same farmstead in 1981. They lived there until moving into town in 2007.

Ruth was a devoted member of United Lutheran Church and served in many roles to support church life: Sunday school teacher (26 years) and superintendent, WELCA, Faith and Care teams, altar guild, and Bible study.

Ruth was a longtime member of the Cavalier Curling Club, skipping teams during the regular season and in weekend bonspiels, as well as baking sour cream raisin pies to sell at the club.

Baking was one way Ruth enjoyed sharing with others. Cookies, bars, pies, and cakes were plentiful, and the Tupperware in the freezer usually had a variety to pick from when visitors stopped by.

One of Ruth's favorite activities was sitting in bleachers watching her children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren perform – sports, music, plays, and other competitions. She showed up to support her family whenever she could.

She also loved tending to her flowers and garden every summer, providing fresh vegetables at dinner and canning several batches of pickles to last all winter.

After years of hard work, Ruth and Walter decided to become "snowbirds" and bought a place in Mesa, AZ in the early '90s. This began the annual rite of getting to AZ in time for the New Year's Eve dance and returning to ND at the end of March or Easter, whichever came sooner. Ruth played shuffleboard, went to dances, walked in the warm weather, played cards, and enjoyed picnics with family and friends – old and new.

Ruth is survived by her children: Wayne (Loma) Ratchenski, Cavalier, ND; Dale (Sheryl) Ratchenski, Hamilton, ND; Mark (Becky) Ratchenski, Cavalier, ND; Barbara Moon, Lakeville, MN; and Jon (Barb) Ratchenski, Hamilton, ND. Grandchildren: Tara (Chad) Kendall, Bryan (JoEllyn) Ratchenski, Luke (Raichl) Ratchenski, Tess (Alec) Johnson, Lily (Alex) Flage, Matt (Kait) Ratchenski, Andy (Katelyn) Moon, Katie Moon, Ellie Moon, Adam Ratchenski, and Isaac Ratchenski. Great grandchildren: Rhun, Cyrus, Piper, James, and Cade Kendall; Colton (Sydney) Ratchenski and Alyx Ratchenski; Emma, Eli, and Evie Ratchenski; Cora and Cirilla Johnson; Lauren, Olivia, and Emerson Flage; Ramsey and Summer Ratchenski; and Owen Moon. Great great grandchild: James Ratchenski. Siblings: Charles (Ann) Thompson and Arnie (Connie) Thompson; sister-in-law Bev Thompson.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Walter Ratchenski; parents, Rudolph and Hjordis Thompson; siblings, Clara (Jim) Scott and Robert Thompson.

Ruth J. Ratchenski, 90, of Cavalier, ND, passed away Tuesday, March 24, 2026, at Unity Medical Center, Grafton, ND.

## ***FUNERAL SERVICE***

*Saturday, March 28, 2026 - 11:00 a.m.*  
*United Lutheran Church*  
*Cavalier, North Dakota*

### ***CLERGY***

*Rev. Beth Peterson*

### ***CONGREGATIONAL HYMNS***

*"Beautiful Savior"*

*"Children of the Heavenly Father"*

*"Here I Am, Lord"*

*Suzanne Ashpole, Pianist*

### ***CASKET BEARERS***

*Tara Kendall Tess Johnson*

*Lily Flage Katie Moon*

*Ellie Moon*

### ***INTERMENT***

*Cavalier Cemetery*  
*Cavalier, North Dakota*