

"My two personal attendants"



Memorial Service

Saturday, September 26, 2026 - 1:30 PM

First Presbyterian Church
Pipestone, Minnesota

Officiating

Rev. Velda Maine

Scripture Readings

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 John 3:16

Recorded Music Selections

"Here I Am, Lord"

as recorded by Sunday 7PM Choir

"On Eagle's Wings" as recorded by Michael Crawford

"Amazing Grace, My Chains Are Gone"

as recorded by Chris Tomlin

"Wind Beneath My Wings" as recorded by Bette Midler

Urn Bearers - Michael Thode, Justin Staeffler

Inurnment

New Woodlawn Cemetery
Pipestone, Minnesota



Jana Willey

July 25, 1964 - September 7, 2026

IN Remembrance Jana Jolene Willey

Jana Jolene Willey, age 62, of Pipestone, Minnesota, passed away peacefully on September 7, 2026, with her family and friends by her side. She was under the care of Pipestone County Hospice.

Jana was born on July 25, 1964, in Pipestone. She was the youngest daughter of Kenneth Paul and Jylan Ruth (Hamer) Willey and the last sibling to arrive, completing the family affectionately known as the "Willey Wigwam." She was baptized on October 11, 1964, and confirmed on June 15, 1979, at First Presbyterian Church in Pipestone.

Jana graduated from Pipestone High School in 1983 and continued her education at Southwest State University in Marshall, Minnesota. She completed her college education in 1990, earning a bachelor's degree in social work. Jana worked for many years at the Good Samaritan Home in Pipestone and was most recently employed at Fey Industries in Edgerton, Minnesota.

In January 2009, Jana was diagnosed with breast cancer. She fought a difficult battle and, in 2017, was recognized as an honorary cancer survivor at Pipestone County's Relay for Life. On April 17, 2026, Jana was diagnosed with leukemia. She once again faced the diagnosis with determination and courage.

Jana traveled frequently to Sioux Falls for treatment, sometimes going daily for chemotherapy and at other times several times a week for additional treatments and blood transfusions. As she became weaker, family members took turns driving her to appointments and staying by her side through it all.

At one point, a bone marrow biopsy showed that the chemotherapy was not working. Jana decided to try another round of treatment using different medication. A subsequent biopsy brought encouraging news: the treatment was working and her numbers were improving. For a time, the possibility of a bone marrow transplant seemed within reach.

On August 5, Jana called all of her siblings to share the good news. Her siblings were thrilled, but Jana was even more excited. She continued traveling to Sioux Falls for blood and platelet transfusions, which helped give her some strength, although she remained very tired and weak.

On August 31, after talking with her doctors and with her family by her side, Jana made the difficult decision to stop treatment. A few days later, she entered hospice care, where she received the around-the-clock care she needed. True to Jana's personality, she requested a jacuzzi and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to relax and soak in a bubble bath. She knew she was not getting better, and she was ready to go home to her eternal home.

Jana was a lifelong member of First Presbyterian Church in Pipestone, where she served as both a deacon and an elder. She enjoyed traveling, including a trip to Hawaii in 1993 and a trip to Florida in the summer of 2025. She loved going to movies, concerts, plays, and musicals with her friends and family, and she especially enjoyed evenings gathered around a backyard bonfire. She was particularly proud of her ability to "tent" the firewood just right in the fire pit.

Jana found joy in the little things. She loved seeing the first cardinal of spring, watching the classic movie channel, reminiscing about the Hawaiian ocean breeze, and watching dolphins soar through the waves. She had a special fondness for Dr. Seuss's "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", and Snoopy and the Peanuts Gang. At heart, Jana had a childlike spirit, and that was part of what made her so much fun to be around.

Those who knew Jana will remember her contagious laugh, her quick wit, and her wonderfully playful spirit. She could find humor in almost anything, and even during her treatments, she always seemed to have a one-line comment or funny remark ready to make those around her smile. And Jana certainly had a soft spot for her male nurses; that familiar little twinkle in her eye was hard to miss whenever one of them was nearby.

Jana is lovingly survived by her siblings, Gayl Thode, Mary Willey, Ruth (Rod) Staeffler, and John Willey; special family friends G.L. and Deb Tucker and their families; and many nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews, whom she loved and treated as her own children. She is also survived by her special friends Cynthia Portz and Lindsey Hunstad, and her two cherished friends, Linda Dickman and Brenda Fluit.

Jana loved you all very much.

She was preceded in death by her parents; grandparents; brother, Alan; brother-in-law, Jim Thode; sister-in-law, Kris Willey; and her two special dogs, Nicky and Ty.

Blessed be the memory of Jana.

You are deeply missed and loved by all of us. Your memory will remain in our hearts forever.