

Shirley Ione (Olson) Gerlitz, 101, of Fargo, ND, passed away surrounded by family on Sunday, Dec 21, 2025.

Shirley was born on June 2nd 1924, in Miles City, MT to Myrel and Elva (Kyseth) Olson and she was the first of 5 children to bless the Olson family. After the Great Depression began, her family moved into the Lyster House near the Osterwind Farm in Marshall, ND. Once the nation began to recover, her family moved to Fargo, ND where she attended Horace Mann Elementary (7th-8th grade), Roosevelt Elementary (9th grade) and graduated from Fargo Central High School (10th -12th grade) in 1944.

During her time at Horace Mann Elementary, her teacher Miss Lind, introduced Shirley to sewing and fancy work (needle point/cross stitch) and she found a new passion! She began making her own clothes and decorative items for herself and family for many years to come!

Shirley worked at Lundquist Eat shop as a waitress right after graduating, then to Gambles Hardware and Furniture, and then lastly worked in the Toy Department and in Ladies Hosiery at Sears.

At the age of 16, while bobbing for apples at a party at Calvary Baptist Church in Fargo, she met the love of her life Waldo Gerlitz. They dated for 4 years and were married January 16th 1945 on Langley Field, Virginia, since Waldo was stationed there before being deployed overseas for WWII. Waldo and Shirley eventually moved back to Fargo and happily raised 5 children and remained there.

Shirley greatly loved her family, flowers, the color pink, music, singing and most of all, the Lord. Shirley was very active at Calvary Baptist church as a deaconess, attended one of many Ladies circles, and helped out where ever needed until the church was sold and demolished in the early 2000's.

Shirley is survived by her 3 sons, Wayne (Shelley) Gerlitz, Bruce (Anita) Gerlitz and Jim (Julie) Gerlitz; 9 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents; her loving husband, Waldo; her daughter, Sandy; her son, Don; her brothers Gordy, Lauren and Duane; her sister, Muriel and her grandson, Eric.

Celebrating the Life of



Shirley Ione Gerlitz

June 2, 1924 - December 21, 2025

I'm Spending Christmas with Jesus Christ this Year

I see the countless Christmas trees,
Around the world below.
With tiny lights, like heaven's stars,
Reflecting in the snow.

The sight is so spectacular,
Please wipe away that tear.
For I'm spending Christmas,
With Jesus Christ this year.

I hear the many Christmas songs,
That people hold so dear.
But earthly music can't compare,
With the Christmas choir up here.

I have no words to tell you,
The joy their voices bring.
For it's beyond description,
To hear the angels sing.

I know how much you miss me,
Trust God and have no fear
For I'm spending Christmas,
With Jesus Christ this year.

I can't tell you of the splendor
Or the peace here in this place.
Can you imagine Christmas
With our Savior, face to face?

May God uplift your spirit
As I tell Him of your love.
Then pray one for another,
As you lift your eyes above.

So let your hearts be joyful,
And let your spirits sing.

For I'm spending Christmas in Heaven,
And I'm walking with the King.

~Author Unknown~



2 Corinthians 5: 17

“THEREFORE IF ANY
MAN BE IN CHRIST,
HE IS A NEW CREATURE:
OLD THINGS ARE
PASSED AWAY;
BEHOLD, ALL THINGS
ARE BECOME NEW.”

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Remembering

Shirley Gerlitz

June 2, 1924 - December 21, 2025

Funeral Service

Friday, January 9, 2026 - 2:00 PM

Hanson-Runsvold Funeral Home - Fargo, North Dakota

Pastor Glenn Knudson, Officiant

Glenna Wiedmann, Soloist

Breanna Breidenbach, Accompanist

Recorded Music “How Great Thou Art” by Home Free

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Special Music “In the Beloved”

Reading of the Obituary

Congregational Hymn “His Eye Is on the Sparrow” #624

Congregational Hymn “Jesus Loves Me” #185

Sharing of Memories

Congregational Hymn “Just as I Am” #488

Message

Closing Song “The Doxology” (Acapella)

Closing Prayer

Pallbearers

Wayne Gerlitz - Bruce Gerlitz - Jim Gerlitz

John Gerlitz - Ron Wiedmann - Sterling Volla

Ethan Elsner - Brent Gerlitz

Burial

Sunset Memorial Gardens - Fargo, North Dakota

All are invited to a reception following the service.



**HANSON
RUNSVOLD**
Cremation • Burial