

Kathi Tharaldson was born on May 28, 1942, in Park Rapids, Minnesota, to Roy and DeMaris (Clark) Melin. Kathi Ellen was the youngest of three daughters. Kathi arrived in this world with two teeth, an uncanny talent of perfect pitch, and a gift for seeing and tending to those in need, often the four-legged sort. Her family lived in Minnesota, Oklahoma, Arizona, and Southern California before settling in Menahga, Minnesota where she completed junior high and graduated from Menahga High School.



Kathi began playing organ and piano in church as early as elementary school and continued to serve congregations through music for the rest of her life. Kathi attended Whittier College in California and earned a Bachelor of Science in Education from Bemidji State University. She taught music, physical education, psychology, and science in schools across the United States before joining Healy High School in Pierz, Minnesota as choir director and physical education teacher. After marrying Ernie Tharaldson in August 1968, she devoted nearly two



decades to raising their four children. In 1988, she completed a Master's Degree in Education Administration at St. Cloud State University. Kathi then served as high school principal for the Clinton-Graceville-Beardsley School District in Graceville, Minnesota. A lifelong advocate for music and education, Kathi inspired generations of students. She organized community performances, directed choirs, Sunday School programs, coached and accompanied soloists, directed musicals, and mentored kids of all ages. Kathi shared her gifts without hesitation, nurturing others - sometimes long before they recognized it themselves. She always saw the best in everyone no matter the situation.

Kathi is survived by her children: Peter Tharaldson and Amy Schult of Spooner, WI; Rana Tharaldson of Center City, MN; Ingrid and Bryan Schmitt of St. Paul, MN; and Brevik and Billie Tharaldson of Watertown, MN. Grandchildren: Lars, Inga, and Ilsa Heinecke; August and Casper Tharaldson; Adrik and Erna Tharaldson Schult. A host of nieces; nephews; brothers- and sisters-in-law; and friends through whom her legacy lives on. Kathi is preceded in death by her husband, Ernie; parents: Roy and DeMaris Melin; sisters: Roberta and Patty; many beloved in-laws; nieces; nephews; dear friends; former students and treasured furry friends.

In Loving Memory of

Kathi Tharaldson



WHO WAS BORN

May 28, 1942
Menahga, Minnesota

AND CALLED TO HER ETERNAL HOME

August 7, 2025
St. Paul, Minnesota

FUNERAL SERVICE

Saturday, August 16, 2025 - 11:00 a.m.
Trinity Lutheran Church
Clinton, Minnesota

CLERGY

Pastor Jim Rach

EULOGY

Rana Tharaldson

MUSICIAN

Pam Chase, Organist

SPECIAL SONGS

“In The Garden” | “Abide With Me” | Amazing Grace”
“How Great Thou Art” | “God Be With You Til’ We Meet Again”
“Jesus Loves Me” | “Let There be Peace on Earth”

ACTIVE CASKET BEARERS

Rollie Lobsinger | John Lobsinger | Peter Tharaldson | Lars Heinecke

HONORARY CASKET BEARERS

Beloved Caretakers
Becky | Loretta | Misty | Amanda | Suri | Jessica | Laura

INTERMENT

East Zion Lutheran Cemetery
Rural Starbuck, Minnesota

APPRECIATION

Kathi’s family is grateful for your attendance at this service. Your expressions of kindness and love are deeply appreciated. Following the service, please join the family for a luncheon and a time of fellowship in the church dining area.

Mundwiler & Larson Funeral Home - Ortonville, Minnesota

"Over the Rainbow"

*Somewhere over the rainbow
Way up high
There's a land that I heard of
Once in a lullaby*

*Somewhere over the rainbow
Skies are blue
And the dreams that you dare to dream
Really do come true*

*Someday I'll wish upon a star
And wake up where the clouds are far behind me
Where troubles melt like lemon drops
Away above the chimney tops
That's where you'll find me*

*Somewhere over the rainbow
Bluebirds fly
Birds fly over the rainbow
Why, then, oh, why can't I?*

*If happy little bluebirds fly
Beyond the rainbow
Why, oh, why can't I?*

Yarburg, E.Y. (1939)



Please use this QR code to access Kathi's
online guestbook & tribute video.



Remembering

T H E L I F E O F



Kathi Tharaldson

May 28, 1942 - August 7, 2025