

Mom

Your mom is always with you.

She's the smell of certain foods you remember.

She's the cool hand on your brow

when you're not feeling well.

She's the breath in the air on a cold winter's day.

She is Christmas morning.

Your mother lives inside your laughter.

She's the place you come from, your first home.

She's your first love, your first friend,

even your first enemy.

But nothing on earth can separate you.

Not time...not space...not even death.

(Author Unknown)

RUSH FUNERAL HOME
www.rushfuneralhome.com

In Loving Memory of



Irene Willoughby

April 11, 1930 - March 19, 2024

In Loving Memory of
Irene Ruth Willoughby

Midland, South Dakota
Born - April 11, 1930
Died - March 19, 2024
Age - 93 Years, 11 Months, 8 Days

MEMORIAL SERVICE
Saturday, May 4, 2024 - 11:00 a.m.
Trinity Lutheran Church
Midland, South Dakota

CLERGY
Pastor Cindy Bisser

USHERS
Gary Snook - Russell Cvach

MUSIC
Marilyn Millage - Pianist
Haakon County Crooners - Vocalists
"O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee"
"On Eagles Wings"
Marlis Doud - Pianist
Joni Willoughby - Vocalist
"Children of the Heavenly Father"

HONORARY PALLBEARERS
All Relatives and Friends in Attendance

INTERMENT
Midland Cemetery
Midland, South Dakota

Irene Ruth Eckert Willoughby was born at home in rural Midland, the youngest of eight children on April 11, 1930, to John P. and Maria (Koerner) Eckert. She passed from this earth on March 19, 2024, in Edgewood Memory Care Center in Pierre where she resided since 2019 at the age of 93, 22 days short of her 94th birthday. Irene grew up on a farm southeast of Midland where she was baptized and confirmed at St. Peter's Lutheran Church.

She attended Liberty rural grade school and Midland High School where she graduated in 1947. After graduation, she attended one year at the National School of Business in Rapid City. Upon graduating from business college, Irene worked for two years at the First National Bank in Philip, South Dakota.

In 1950, Irene married her high school sweetheart Wallace "Red" Willoughby and moved to the farm north of Midland where they resided together for 67 years. Five children were born to this union. They were Tim, Monte, Patty, Jeff, and Tony. Irene was very proud of the accomplishments of each one and she rarely missed attending any activity in which they were involved, be it baseball, football and basketball games and music and theater events to name a few. This carried on into their activities as adults and with her grandchildren.

Irene was a woman of service in her community and church. She served as a 4-H leader, in addition to being a member of the Midland All-School Reunion committee, both for many years. Irene was also a member of Victory club, PTA, Elizabeth Circle, and was a VBS and Sunday school teacher and church council member at Trinity Lutheran Church which she and Wallace joined in 1955. In 1996 they joined Grace Lutheran Church of Hayes, where she served on the church council and the minister's selection committees. In each organization of which she was a member, Irene served in leadership roles.

When the rural school where her children attended closed, she took up residence in Midland with her children who then attended "town school" and then went home to the farm every weekend. During that time, she worked one year as a speech therapist aide and another year as a classroom aid for third and fourth graders. These were perfect jobs for her as she loved children, and she loved helping others.

Irene will be remembered as a devoted daughter, a special sibling, a wonderful wife, a magnificent mom, a great grandma, an awesome aunt, a caring cousin, a fantastic friend, and a nice neighbor. She was an amazing cook and baker and known at church, clubs and family gatherings for her pretzel salad, hash brown casserole and brownies of which she always commented, "I guess they liked them. I never came home with any".

We were blessed to have her as a mom. She was loving, caring, supportive, fun, had a great sense of humor, was smart as a whip and was a little sassy and you always knew what she thought about any given topic. You didn't even have to ask her. Mom was a strong Christian woman and the way she lived her life was a testament and a guide for others.

Survivors include four children Tim (Cathy) of Las Vegas, Patty (Ron Piper) of Florida, Jeff (Julie) and Tony (Gaynold), both of Midland; four grandchildren Amy Escobar of Las Vegas, John (Chelley) Willoughby of Pierre, Tess (Kyle) Symes of Vermont, and Joni Willoughby of Chamberlain; three great-grandsons Cale Allison, and Jacob and Wyatt Willoughby; numerous step-grandchildren and step-great-grandchildren; two sisters-in-law Gaile Eckert of Rapid City, and Alice Evans of Belle Fourche; brother-in-law, Maynard Downen; and a host of other relatives and friends.

In addition to her husband Red, Irene was preceded in death by her son Monte; four brothers Melvin, Harold (Ann), Milo (Shirley), and John Eckert; and three sisters Edna Joy (Stub), Esther Downen, and Vera Portanova (Port); and brother-in-law George Evans.