

Betty was born February 8, 1931 in Corona, South Dakota to Edna Osterloh and Rhoderick Buttk. She was baptized and confirmed in the Christian faith in the Wilmot Lutheran Church. Betty attended school in Wilmot, SD.

She met the handsome love of her life, Lewis Ward, at a dance in Peever, SD. They were married September 15, 1948. Betty and Lewis lived on a farm between Wilmot and Browns Valley until they retired and moved to Wilmot, SD. They enjoyed dancing and card parties with their wonderful group of friends.

On April 26, Betty took her last breath here and her next breath in heaven in the arms of her Lord and Savior. A few months ago, Betty was asked what she hoped people would remember about her, and she responded, "I want people to remember that I love God and He loves me. God has always been here for me. He is a loving God and He is faithful to us."

If you knew Mom, you knew she loved visiting and keeping in touch. She enjoyed sending cards and letters and calling others to visit. She also enjoyed baking, gardening, sewing clothes for her kids, roller skating, bowling, and attending foster parent conferences. Betty was also known for her love to shop, especially at rummage sales. But what she found the most joy in was her children.

Betty and Lewis were blessed with two daughters, Ember and Melody. A few years later they welcomed their first foster baby, Chuck Eagle, who they later adopted. Mercy was also adopted years later, joining Vernita, Jason, Alpha, and Amy as forever family. During 50 years of being foster parents, Betty and Lewis cared for more than 200 children in their home, many with disabilities. Betty was a fierce advocate for her children, making sure they received the health care and education they needed. Betty loved every child she welcomed into their home.

Betty is survived by her children: Ember Dady (Pat), Melody Gruby, Mercy Tomschin (Adam), Alpha Begay, Jason DuMarce, Amy Thennis and son-in-law Chad Ihnen; grandchildren: Brett Hanson (Kelly), Heather Bainbridge (Shawn), Troy Hanson (Maggie), Sam Hanson, Kirk Gruby, Jered Gruby (Wendy), Kara Kjenstad (Steve), Kyla Zach (David), Mason Tomschin, Chad Ward, Charla Ward, Cody Ward, Cole Ward, Christian Ihnen, Nevaeh Thennis, Destiny Akot, Akot Atiem, Deng Thennis, Elvis HighBear, and Diamond HighBear; 22 great grandchildren; her beloved little sister JoAnn Schmig of Texas; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her husband Lewis; son Chuck Ward; daughter Vernita Ihnen; grandson Erik Gruby; and brother Howard Buttk.

Romans 8 promises us that neither life nor death can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Our mother believed that.



Celebrating The Life Of



Betty Lou Ward

February 8, 1931 ~ April 26, 2025



Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all
creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God
that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:39

**In Loving Memory Of
Betty L. Ward**

Celebration of Life

10:30 AM, May 24, 2025

Wilmot Lutheran Church - Wilmot, South Dakota

Officiating

Rev. Kay Reeb

Children's Sermon

Darcy Ready (and Nathan)

Urn Bearer

Mason Tomschin

Honorary Urn Bearers

Betty's grandchildren and the residents and staff
at the Browns Valley Health Center

Burial

Wilmot Cemetery - Wilmot, South Dakota
(at a later date)

**Please join family at the Peever Community Center
immediately following the church service today for lunch.**