

Clara Lenz was born on April 3, 1921 at Taylor to Adolph and Ida (Brandt) Lenz and was the third of eight children. The day after the death of her mother on February 9, 1931 from childbirth, her maternal grandparents Henry and Rosalia Brandt took the seven small children plus a newborn baby into their home and raised them along with their own five children, never complaining about the extra work or burden of caring for them all. They had enough love to go around, and even though times were hard and money was short, nobody ever went to bed hungry. Clara graduated from Taylor High School in 1939. Following graduation she attended Dickinson State Teachers College and earned her Teaching Certificate in 1941. She then taught grades 1-8 at several one room schoolhouses for the next four years. On July 1, 1941 her future husband, Earl Elkins, asked her to go with him to the Mandan rodeo. She accepted his offer and they had their first date on the Fourth of July. On their way to Mandan, Earl lit a 3-inch firecracker and tossed it out the window, but the wind blew it back into the car. After some mad scrambling Earl threw it out a 2nd time before it went off. Clara always told him that he must have wanted to get rid of her in a hurry. On June 11, 1943 they were married in Taylor. To this union, three children were born, Earleen in 1946, Gerald in 1950, and Arthur in 1958. Besides being a farmer's wife, homemaker, and raising her children, Clara was also a 4H leader for the Granvale Girls 4H Club, taught Sunday School at the Taylor Lutheran Church and drove school bus which at that time was nothing more than a panel truck with bench seats on each side to haul at least 20 of the neighborhood children to school in Taylor. In 1966, they moved to Dickinson where Earl was employed by the Soil Conservation Service and purchased their home. They joined St. John's Lutheran Church where Clara taught Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and served on the Service Committee for many years, fixing hair for the residents at St. Luke's Nursing Home and working at Church receptions and luncheons. Clara had a strong faith in God and instilled it in her children at a very young age. Her faith carried her through good and bad times all throughout her life. Her family will sorely miss their prayer warrior. She was also a very independent and strong willed person which allowed her to live in her home by herself after Earl went to the Nursing Home. She was able to take care of herself and her home for the next 12 years and was able to celebrate her 100th birthday in her home with her family. Clara is survived by her three children, Earleen (Gary) Friez of Hettinger, Gerald Elkins of Bismarck, Arthur (Teryl) Elkins of Dickinson; six grandchildren, Cary (Karla) Friez, Nancy (Brian) Haider, Susan (Darrin) Erickson, all of Bismarck, Marshawn (James) Gubbels of Winside, Nebraska, Keyona Elkins of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Dalton Elkins of Dickinson; 9 great grandchildren; and 9 great-great grandchildren. Clara was preceded in death by her parents; maternal grandparents; all seven of her siblings, Herbert, Dorothy, Ida, Harry, Robert, Richard, and Emily; husband, Earl; daughter-in-law, Donna; and one grandson.

Clara Elkins

April 3, 1921 - December 6, 2023



Clara Elkins

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me
in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

FUNERAL SERVICE:

Friday, December 22, 2023 10:00 am
St. John Lutheran Church
Dickinson, North Dakota

VISITATION:

Thursday, December 21, 2023 5:00 - 7:00 pm
Stevenson Funeral Home
Dickinson, North Dakota

OFFICIATING:

Pastor Lisa Lewton

MUSIC:

Margaret Marcusen
Lowell Larson Alecia Pretzer

PALLBEARERS:

Cary Friez Nancy Haider
Susan Erickson Marshawn Gubbels
Keyona Elkins Dalton Elkins

INTERMENT:

Pioneer Cemetery
Taylor, North Dakota

ARRANGEMENTS:

Stevenson Funeral Home
Dickinson, North Dakota