



Isaiah 40:31

But they that wait upon
the Lord
Shall renew their strength.
They shall mount up with
wings as eagles,
They shall run, and not be weary;
And they shall walk,
and not faint.



Janice Marlene Sanford

Born to Leslie and Beatrice Sivertson

March 7, 1945 ~ Minot, North Dakota

Returned to Her Heavenly Father

January 25, 2026 ~ Watford City, North Dakota

Celebration of Life

Saturday, February 7, 2026 at 2:00 PM

Watford City Assembly Of God

Watford City, North Dakota

Officiating

Pastor John Brady

Eulogist

Beth Sanford

Scripture Readers

Dawson Lindahl Sydney VanBerkom

Pallbearers

Ben VanBerkom Brent Sanford Barry Sanford
Steve Sanford Nicolas Sanford Brian Haugen
Dawson Lindahl Tyler Sanford

Music

"When All is Said and Done"
"Goodness of God" ~ "In Christ Alone"
"If You Could See Me Now"

Soloist

Colleen Ninneman

Ushers

Sydney VanBerkom Bergen Lindahl
Erin Sanford Leyna Sanford

Final Resting Place

Silent City Cemetery ~ Keene, North Dakota

Arrangements By

Fulkerson Stevenson Funeral Home
Watford City, North Dakota

Celebrating THE LIFE OF



Janice Sanford

March 7, 1945 - January 25, 2026



Janice Marlene Sivertson was born March 7, 1945, to Les and Bea Sivertson in the small town of Keene, North Dakota, on the prairies of McKenzie County (aka the Island Empire). She was the granddaughter of the first resilient Norwegian pioneers to Blue Buttes Township, seeking a better life. She was a sandy-haired girl with freckles, green eyes, and a gap between her two front teeth. As a little girl, she spent her days running up and down the dusty streets with her cousins and brother, Arnold (Butch), in and out of the Black Gold Cafe, run by her mom, Beatrice, and laying on the dirt floor under cars with her dad Les, a blacksmith and mechanic, who owned and operated the iconic Keene Garage handing him a wrench. Her nickname was Sunshine.



Janice started her school career riding in nine-year-old Butch's old Model A car from Keene to the one-room school in Berg, snuggled under a blanket next to cousin Diana in the rumble seat with a hot potato warming their feet, doubling as their school lunch. When Janice was 12 years old, her family welcomed her little sister, Debbie.

After graduating from the eighth grade, Janice entered high school in Watford City, sharing a rented basement room with Butch and her cousin, Daryl. She was a shy, country girl in a new world. Jean was her first friend. She became part of the famous "Evil 11" goodie two-shoes group. She hung out at slumber parties and school dances, made homecoming floats and was in school plays, worked at the A&W as a car hop, sang Elvis songs, and wore a poodle skirt. She always had a big smile, was kind, and was a good friend. Janice left WCHS as homecoming queen in 1963, on to Minot State to become a teacher, encouraged by her soon-to-be mother-in-law, Cora Sanford. One of the first people in her extended family to go to college.



After marrying Wayne Sanford in 1964, Janice graduated from Minot State University with her teaching diploma. She taught first grade in Arnegard and finished her bachelor's degree during the summers in Missoula, MT, where she enjoyed golfing, hiking, and picking cherries for 15 cents a pound. They spent their free time golfing, bowling, and playing cards with

other young couples, including the Tveters and Saxes. She enjoyed making crafts, knitting, crocheting, and quilting.

In 1971, Janice had her first child, Brent, followed by Beth in 1974 and Barry in 1976. It was well known that the Sanford kids had almost as many books as the city library at their house. Their family was always on the move, often with extended family: golfing, camping, boating, and fishing on Lake Sakakawea, visiting extended family on homestead farms, berry picking, gardening, hiking in the Badlands, and visiting Medora and the Black Hills. Janice loved taking the kids to the nursing home to visit her grandma, Nellie, and to help her mom in the beauty shop and with the chapel. Janice loved family reunions, the bigger, the better! Sivertson and Gunderson reunions were highlights for her. She enjoyed preparing healthy food for her family and was guilty of restricting sugar and red food dye from her kids' diet, along with her friend, Maria Berglund. If the kids got a sniffle, out came the steamy tent to clear up the bug they caught at school. She taught her kids how to drive and her grandkids how to ride bikes.

In 1980, Janice had a pivotal experience that introduced her to her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and left her with a passion to share His love and grace with others. Janice often said that, without fail, whenever she went into her room to pray, the kids would start to fight. She always prayed with her kids at night and rubbed their feet. She spent many years of her life with her best friend, Jesus, praying for everyone and anyone. She particularly enjoyed teaching people to love Jesus, teaching them bible, scripture songs, and prayer for family, friends, and the world. Over the years, she taught many classes in Sunday school, youth group, Bible quiz, and Bible study for struggling people who wanted to grow in their faith. She accompanied her dad in jail ministry and then worked with the local team for more than 30 years. If she ever sent you a card, it was bathed in prayer for you and your family.

Janice went back to teaching when the kids were in high school, first teaching Romanian refugees with Joyce Tveter to speak English. Then, she substituted in Watford City and Mandaree, and finally worked full-time at the Johnson Corners Christian Academy (JCCA), where she taught various combinations of kindergarten, first, and second grade for 25 years, often donating part of her salary to support tuition for needy children. She had a way with young children that brought out the best in them. Her steady patience led to her specialty of teaching reading and writing.

She made it to work, rain or shine, in her silver Ford Mustang, even with ice and snow. Until one day, when she spun into the ditch on the way to school, and finally relented to the boys and bought her first blue SUV. Janice was working at JCCA the day the semi-truck crashed through the

walls of the school, and everyone miraculously survived. She taught school until she was 72 years old.

Janice became a grandma at age 55, enjoying every moment she could with her seven grandchildren, and they with her. She was a great pinch-hit babysitter. She read a million books, taught them cursive, and enjoyed sharing adventures with them, whether it was going to the pool or the park, ice cream, the Badlands, Medora, the museum, shopping, traveling, the lake, or even Hardees. She particularly enjoyed 1:1 time with the grandkids. In her retirement, she enjoyed working at the tourist information center and spending time with her church family and her grandkids.

An extension of Janice's love for learning was her love for adventure, including whitewater rafting as a young woman, climbing to the top of Battleship Butte, horseback riding, tubing, and kneeboarding in her early 70s. She was always up for catching a sunset, a Blue Buttes or Badlands drive, hunting for bison or wildflowers, or a road trip across multiple states. Janice traveled all over with family and friends—Mexico, Europe three times, Israel and Jordan, many US states, Washington, DC, Hawaii, an Alaskan cruise, and many Christian conferences and events. The Holy Land trip was very meaningful for her, particularly around the Sea of Galilee and at the Temple Mount.

She will be remembered for her big smile, warm hugs, servant heart, random check-in calls and texts, and her love for Jesus. Janice was preceded in death by her parents, Les and Bea Sivertson, her brother Arnold Sivertson, and her sister Deborah Joy Sivertson Kastner. She leaves behind her son Brent (Sandi) with Sydney (Ben), Nicolas and Erin; daughter Beth with Dawson and Bergen; and son Barry (Paige) with Leyna and Tyler.



*We Love You to the Badlands and back, Mom!
See you at the East Gate!*