

Hiawatha , KS



Grace I. "Ivalou" Backhus, 91, of Hiawatha, died Saturday, September 23, 2017, at Maple Heights Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Hiawatha.

Grace was born December 21, 1925, at Upland, Kansas, one of nine children of the late Raymond and Minnie Sherman Bender.

Grace married Alvin Backhus at St. John's Lutheran Church at Tampa, KS August 11, 1946. After discharge from the service of World War II, they lived/ farmed near Tampa a few years (Alvin's family at Tampa calls Grace "Shorty") before moving to the Kansas City area in 1954 to live until 1988, where Grace worked at Ben Franklin, TG & Y, and the fountain at Woolworth Department Store. She would start work as a clerk, later becoming manager. They both retired and moved to the Phoenix, AZ area to make their home. About nine years ago, the couple moved to Brown County, KS near Robinson/Hiawatha to be near family. They recently celebrated their 71st anniversary at Maple Heights Nursing Home where Alvin resides.

Upon making their home in the Hiawatha area, they became members Zion Lutheran Church.

Other survivors include a daughter Edna Lehew (Robert) of rural Hiawatha; a son Edward Backhus (Tina) of Sarasota, FL; a living sister Twila Lee Poulson of Charlotte, NC; 5 grandchildren: Dan Backhus, Doug Backhus, Dawn Perdomo, Billy Baker, and Cheryl Tarwater; with 18 great-grandchildren.

She was also preceded in death by 3 brothers and 4 sisters.

A Celebration of Grace's life is planned for 1 p.m. Wednesday, September 27, at St. John's Lutheran Church, Tampa, KS, with the Reverend Michael Dunaway officiating. Interment will follow at the Church Cemetery, with a visitation/reception immediately following back in the Church basement.

Friends may call at the funeral home after 3-7 p.m. Tuesday.

Memorial contributions are suggested to NEK Hospice, sent in care of Chapel Oaks Funeral Home, 124 S 7th St., Hiawatha, KS 66434. www.chapeloaksfuneralhome.com