

## CLARA ELIZABETH SAMUELSON



Clara Elizabeth Samuelson, age 101, passed away on Sunday, August 20, 2023, at her home in Storm Lake, Iowa. Memorial services will take place Saturday, August 26, 2023, at 11 AM at St. Mark Lutheran Church in Storm Lake. Visitation will be in St. Mark, beginning at 9:30AM prior to the service. Lunch will follow the service in St. Mark Fellowship Hall. Burial will be in Fairfield Cemetery in Albert City following lunch. The Fratzke & Jensen Funeral Home in Storm Lake is in charge of the arrangements.

Clara was born February 27, 1922, in Saratoga Township, Howard County, Iowa, to Maren Marie (née Nielsen) and Adolph Marinus Gregersen, recent immigrants from Denmark. Clara's education began at age four in a one-room schoolhouse, Saratoga #5. On March 1, 1929, soon after her seventh birthday, her parents moved to Buena Vista County where Clara graduated from Fairview School (Elk Twp.) and earned a Two-Year Normal Diploma from Buena Vista College in 1940.

At the age of eighteen, Clara began her teaching career in Albert City, teaching fourth grade and junior high classes, from 1940-1946. In Albert City, she also met her husband, Melvin Samuelson; they married on October 27, 1944. While Clara still taught in Albert City from 1944 -1945, she joined Melvin, who was stationed in Ft. Pierce with the US Navy from April to August, 1945. In late August Clara was returning by train to Albert City to work and Melvin on a two week leave when V-Day was announced.

Clara and Melvin shared life for seventy years until his death in May, 2015. Before moving to their Storm Lake home in 1967, they made three moves as Melvin took on new positions in public school education and they raised four daughters. Clara went on to earn a B.A. from Buena Vista College in 1959 and school librarian certification in 1961. Between 1961 and 1967, Clara filled various part and full-time positions in the Alta School as librarian and junior high English teacher. From 1967-1969, she taught fourth grade in Truesdale; from 1969-1974, she was the elementary librarian for Storm Lake Schools, teaching some junior high English classes; from 1974-1985, she was the corrective reading teacher at St. Mary's (Storm Lake); and, from 1985-1986, she taught her final year as Chapter I Reading teacher in the Storm Lake Schools.

Throughout a life spent in Buena Vista County, Clara enjoyed being involved in various organizations, many times taking on leadership roles: Girl Scouts, Girls 4-H, A.A.U.W., P.E.O., American Scandinavian Foundation, Stephen's Ministry, Sunday School, community volunteer work, and bridge clubs. She took pleasure in reading, gardening flowers and vegetables, canning, sewing clothing, recycling fabric into quilts. Clara enjoyed taking road trips. *Clara enjoyed travel and made family road trips a learning experience, bringing reference books to share in the car, and making sure stops had a learning component. From the tabernacle in Salt Lake City, wildflowers on the way up Pike's Peak to the Smithsonian in Washington DC - she was the family tour guide.* She especially enjoyed the two trips she and Melvin made to Scandinavia (1975 and 1993). Seeing her parents

'homeplaces and sharing time with her relatives in Denmark was very meaningful, as it was for Melvin to see his family homeplaces and spend time with his relatives in Sweden.

Preceding Clara in death are her husband Melvin, her parents Adolph and Maren Marie Gregersen, sisters Lillian Swanson Holstein and Vivian Toomer, nieces Anita Toomer Coon and Janet Swanson Porter. She is survived by her brother Kenneth Gregersen of Ankeny, four daughters Colleen (Mike) Last of Mason City, Linda (Jim) Klingensmith of Pittsburgh, Brenda Samuelson, and Christine Samuelson of Los Angeles; her grandchildren Gretchen (Last) Stanley, Andrew Last, Megan (Last) Koch, Joseph Last, Katherine Klingensmith, Meade Klingensmith, Erik Olson, and Kai Olson; her greatgrandchildren Noah Stanley, Christian Stanley, Marinus Nordstrom, Myles Koch, Albert Koch, and Adelaide Waxlax.