

Celebration of Life Service
Sharon Louise Christiansen
March 18, 1946—July 31, 2025



Lord of Love Lutheran Church
10405 Fort St., Omaha, NE 68134

Wednesday, August 6, 2025 at 10:30am

** Indicates places to stand, as you are comfortable doing so.*

-Bold type indicates *congregational responses.*

-Please remember to silence your cell phones or shut them off before the service.

Prelude

****Welcome and Gathering at the Font***

Welcome in the name of Jesus the Savior, who died and was raised to new life by the grace of God. We are gathered here to worship, to proclaim Christ crucified and risen, to remember before God our sister Sharon, to give thanks for her life, to commend her to our merciful redeemer, and to comfort one another in our grief.

A reading from Romans 6: When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

***Processional Hymn: "Beautiful Savior"**

ELW 838

1 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, King of cre - a - tion,
 2 Fair are the mead - ows, fair are the wood - lands,
 3 Fair is the sun - shine, fair is the moon - light,
 4 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, Lord of the na - tions,

Son of God and Son of Man!
 robed in the flow'rs of bloom - ing spring;
 bright in the spar - kling stars on high;
 Son of God and Son of Man!

Tru - ly I'd love thee, tru - ly I'd serve thee,
 Je - sus is fair - er, Je - sus is pur - er,
 Je - sus shines bright - er, Je - sus shines pur - er
 Glo - ry and hon - or, praise, ad - o - ra - tion,

light of my soul, my joy, my crown.
 he makes our sor - rowing spir - it sing.
 than all the an - gels in the sky.
 now and for - ev - er - more be thine!

Text: *Gesangbuch*, Münster, 1677; tr. Joseph A. Seiss, 1823–1904
 Music: SCHÖNSTER HERR JESU, Silesian folk tune, 19th cent.

Please be seated.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today our sister in Christ, Sharon. We thank you for giving her to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Illumine our lives, so we may see in death the gate to eternal life, that we may continue our course on earth in confidence until, by your call, we are reunited with those who have gone before us; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Reading of the Obituary

Scripture Readings

Micah 6:8

He has told you, O mortal, what is good,
and what does the Lord require of you
but to do justice and to love kindness
and to walk humbly with your God?

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?

**My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.**

He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.

**He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.**

The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

**The sun shall not strike you by day
nor the moon by night.**

The Lord will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.

**The Lord will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.**

Romans 3:23-24

Since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

John 3:16-17

(Jesus said,) "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

"Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world but in order that the world might be saved through him."

Homily:

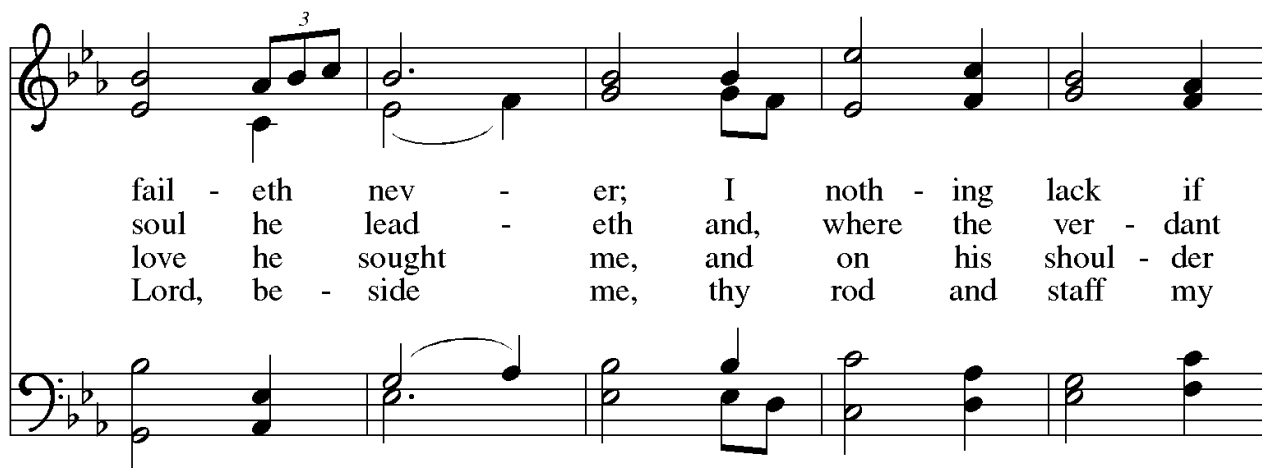
Pastor Becky Sells

Hymn: "The King of Love My Shepherd Is"

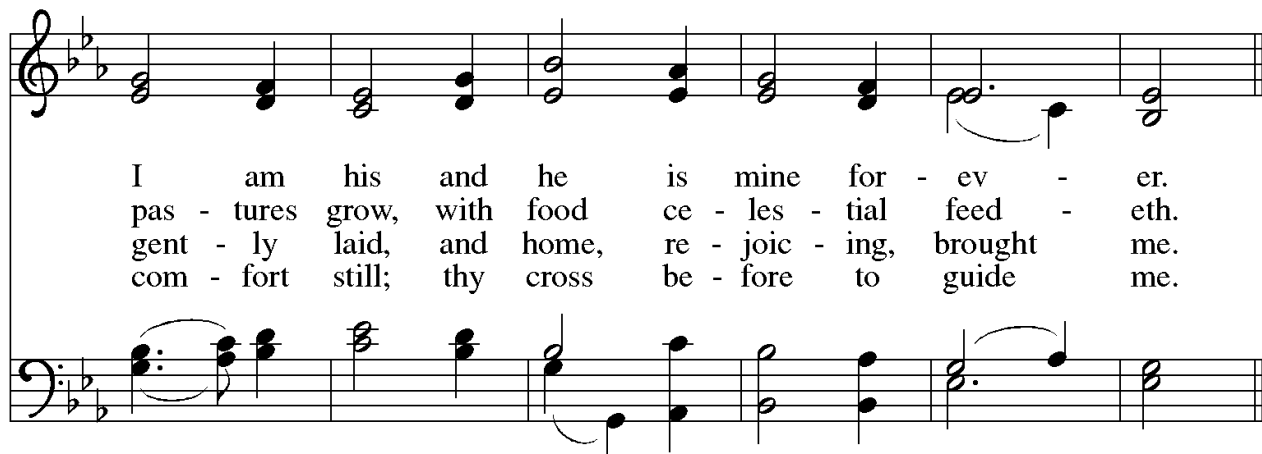
ELW 502



1 The King of love my shep - herd is, whose good - ness
 2 Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my ran - somed
 3 Per - verse and fool - ish oft I strayed, but yet in
 4 In death's dark vale I fear no ill, with thee, dear



fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if
 soul he lead - eth and, where the ver - dant
 love he sought me, and on his shoul - der
 Lord, be - side me, thy rod and staff my



I am his and he is mine for - ev - er.
 pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.
 gent - ly laid, and home, re - joic - ing, brought me.
 com - fort still; thy cross be - fore to guide me.

5 Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
 thine unction grace bestoweth;
 and, oh, what transport of delight
 from thy pure chalice floweth!

6 And so, through all the length of days,
 thy goodness faileth never.
 Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
 within thy house forever.

Apostles' Creed

Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**I believe in God the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

Let us pray.

Almighty God, in holy baptism you have knit your chosen people together into one communion of saints in the body of Christ. Give to your whole church in heaven and on earth your light and your peace.

God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to share the new life in Christ.

God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Give courage and faith to all who mourn, and a sure and certain hope in your loving care, that casting all their sorrow on you, they may have strength for the days ahead.

God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that, where this world groans in grief and pain, your Holy Spirit may lead us to bear witness to your light and life.

God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Help us, in the midst of things we cannot understand, to believe and trust in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection to life everlasting. God of mercy,

Hear our prayer.

God of all grace, we give you thanks because by his death our Savior Jesus Christ destroyed the power of death and by his resurrection opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Make us certain that because he lives, we shall live also, and that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come shall be able to separate us from your love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Service of Holy Communion

Please rise as you are comfortable.

****The Great Thanksgiving***

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

****Words of Institution***

On the night he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for remembrance of me.

****Lord's Prayer***

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Please be seated.

Invitation to Communion

Come. All are welcome at the table of the Lord.

Distribution Music

Blessing from the table

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.

Amen.

Announcement

Commendation

Let us commend Sharon to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer.

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant, Sharon. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive her into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

Amen.

"Children of the Heavenly Father"

ELW # 781

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in the key of D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The melody is primarily in the Soprano and Alto parts, with the Tenor and Bass parts providing harmonic support. The lyrics are in English and Swedish. The English lyrics are: Tryg - ga - re kan ing - en va - ra än Guds lil - la bar - na - ska - ra, 1 Chil - dren of the heav'n-ly Fa - ther safe - ly in his bo - som gath - er; 2 God his own doth tend and nour-ish, in his ho - ly courts they flour-ish. 3 Nei - ther life nor death shall ev - er from the Lord his chil - dren sev - er; 4 Though he giv - eth or he tak-eth, God his chil-dren ne'er for - sak - eth; The Swedish lyrics are: stjär - nan ej på him - la - fäs - tet, få - geln ej i kän - da näs - tet. nest - ling bird nor star in heav - en such a ref - uge e'er was giv - en. From all e - vil things he spares them, in his might - y arms he bears them. un - to them his grace he show - eth, and their sor - rows all he know - eth. his the lov - ing pur - pose sole - ly to pre - serve them pure and ho - ly.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903; tr. Ernst W. Olson, 1870–1958
Music: TRYGGARE KAN INGEN VARA, Swedish folk tune
Text © 1925 Board of Publication, Lutheran Church in America, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

Sending

Let us go forth in peace.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Tolling of the Bell (*It will ring one time for every year of her life.*)

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Obituary for Sharon Louise Christiansen

Sharon Louise Christiansen was born on March 18, 1946 in Sidney, Montana to Ann K (Badt) and Alvin L. Christiansen. She grew up surrounded by a loving family, including maternal grandparents across the street and down two houses, and her favorite, Grandpa Tom. He lived with the family the first few years of her life, and it was said that Sharon held Grandpa Tom in her spell for the rest of his life. The family became complete with the addition of James L. (1947) and Kathryn A (1954).

Sharon was baptized and confirmed at Pella Lutheran Church in Sidney, attending Luther League and going to Bible camp at Brush Lake. Sharon attended school in Sidney, graduating with the class of 1964. She was a member of the high school band and discovered her love of literature in high school. Sometimes she even combined the two by reading a book as a pep band member during a basketball game or a rodeo while the action was going on around her.

After high school, Sharon left Montana to attend Dana College in Blair, Nebraska. Coming from a small town in "the middle of nowhere," to Dana in Blair seemed very exotic and she loved meeting new people from all over the country and the freedom that college provided. At Dana she made several lifelong friends and with one highlight was being flown home to Sidney in a friend's private plane at the end of summer.

Sharon's college education was interrupted for some time while she worked as a dishwasher at the Lalonde hotel in Sidney and as a nurse's aide at the Crowell Home in Blair. She often recounted walking home from Crowell Home after her evening shift on July 20, 1969 and seeing televisions glowing in all the homes as everyone watched the moon landing. Sharon continued her college studies over the years, but those last 6 credits of French remained elusive.

Sharon moved to Omaha, her final hometown, and after brief stints at factory and insurance jobs, she had found her niche as a Library specialist for the Omaha Public Library! Over the next forty years she worked for a time at every library branch but her favorite remained the Benson Branch, the one where she had started.

When Kathy moved back to Omaha in 1976, they became roommates for "just a while," which lasted almost 50 years. Their home was the one where friends gathered for gourmet meals or pizza, or sometimes just a movie viewed on that "new VCR thing." After discovering a love for European travel she made several trips, sometimes with a friend, but very often; by herself. She had become an independent strong woman.

Her life was enhanced by her beloved dogs which included the indomitable Ged (pantyhorse story), the "free" sweet Bear (lots of vet bills), Polly the Cairn terrier (squeaky Funny Face), Katie the Westie (Christmas Eve spider bite), Fiona Rose, another Westie (lost all her fur and almost her life) and finally the sisters, Jade (McLady) and Chloe (Ann Marie). She cherished each and every one of them.

In the early 2000's Sharon became more interested in justice causes. Some of the non-profits she supported included Doctors Without Borders, the ACLU, the Southern Poverty Law Center, Planned Parenthood, ELCA Good Gifts, Heifer International and Loads of Love at Lord of Love.

Although reading remained a constant as her favorite hobby, she had many, **many** hobbies over the years. These included gourmet cooking, gardening, bobbin lace making, hardanger embroidery, cross stitch embroidery, tole painting, glass beading, altered books, scrapbooking, paper crafts, and most recently card making. One of the joys of retirement for her was more time for her crafts.

During the last several years of Sharon's life she struggled with many health issues which exacerbated her depression. She tried her hardest this last year to turn things around, but a fall in the early morning of July 21, 2025 was something from which she couldn't recover. Although the last week and a half of her life was excruciatingly hard, the last 30 minutes of her life on July 31, 2025 were calm and peaceful, surrounded by her family and friends, hopefully knowing that she was loved by so many and had always, *always* been a beloved child of God.