

Emma M. Helmke ⁶⁴⁻²
3-1-2018

Emma M. Helmke, 95, of Grinnell died Sunday, February 25, 2018, at the Mayflower Community Health Care Center.

Funeral services are scheduled for 11:00 a.m. Saturday, March 3rd, at St. John's Lutheran Church in Grinnell with the Rev. Kathryn Roys of St. John's and the Rev. Matthew Froah, First Baptist Church in Bloomfield, officiating. Organist will be Juli Bey. Pallbearers will be her grandchildren.

Visitation will be held from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Smith Funeral Home with the family present from 6:00 to 8:00 Friday evening.

Burial will be in Hazelwood Cemetery in Grinnell.

Memorial contributions may be directed to St. John's Lutheran Church, Lutheran Services of Iowa, or Grinnell Regional Medical Center.

Emma was born on November 30, 1922, in Chilton, Wisconsin. She was the seventh of ten children; her parents were Peter Schmahl, Sr. and Anna Frank. She was raised in Chilton and was a 1940 graduate of Chilton High School.

After her education, Emma was employed at Aid Association for Lutherans, now part of Thrivent Financial, in Appleton, Wisconsin, from 1941 until 1946.

On December 28, 1946, she was united in marriage with Earl O. Helmke, at St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Chilton. The couple lived in Wausau, Wisconsin, and in 1957 they moved to Grinnell due to Earl's transfer by General Telephone.

While in Grinnell, she had been active in her church and the community. In the church she had served on many committees and as church secretary, taught Sunday school, and was involved in the Lutheran Women's groups. She was a Den Mother for the Boy Scout Troop supported by the church and volunteered as a leader for Campfire Girls. Later in life, she volunteered at the gift shop at Grinnell Regional Medical Center. Emma enjoyed sewing and needle work. She was a consistent letter writer and always sent cards to her family and friends for special occasions. Her strong faith in her Lord Jesus was evident all her life.

Emma is survived by her children, Mark (Beth) Helmke of St. Charles, Illinois, Eloise (Gary) Froah of Newton, Sara (Victor) Gaultney of Thame, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom, and Thomas (Michael) Helmke of Des Moines; a daughter-in-law, Lynn (Ken) Helmke of Dubuque; a sister, Louise Kleinschmidt of Saginaw, Michigan; 13 grandchildren, Jonathan (Amy) Helmke, Elisa Helmke, Laura (David) Ten Clay, Alexander Helmke, Rebecca (Greg) Hewitt, Caroline (Reid) Hutchison, Gordon Helmke, Michele Burnett, Rev. Matthew (Shari) Froah, Joy (Rob) Bettles, Peter (Heidi) Gaultney, Timothy (Lizzie) Gaultney and Christopher Gaultney; 11 great-grandchildren Samuel and Laura Helmke, Joshua, Hannah and Joseph Ten Clay, Ryan Burnett, Jaryn, Japheth, Jocelynn and Jeseca Froah and Gideon Bettles; and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her husband, Earl, in 1989; a son, Kenneth Helmke in 2016; her parents; five brothers, Peter, Henry, George, William and Richard Schmahl; and three sisters, Amelia Klinner, Anna Marie Kemerling and Katherine Kemerling.

