

Reatha E. Evans, 76, of Grinnell, died on Friday, Feb. 10, 2012, at the Mayflower Health Care Center in Grinnell.

A funeral service was held at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 14, at First Baptist Church in Grinnell with the Rev. Christine Tinker, chaplain of the Mayflower Community, officiating. Organist was Denise Baustian. Casket Bearers were Jeffrey "Scott" Lloyd, Michael Lloyd, Timothy Campbell, Tyler Curtis, Alan "Bryant" Kaiser and Benjamin Evans. Interment was at Hazelwood Cemetery in Grinnell.

Memorials may be directed to the Scholarship Fund for Willowbrook in Newton, Grinnell Regional Hospice, the Alzheimer's Association and the Mayflower South Village Activity Fund and sent in care of the Smith Funeral Home, P.O. Box 368, Grinnell, Iowa 50112.

Reatha was born on Saturday, June 15, 1935, near Brooklyn to Everett and Doris Jones Johnston. She grew up on a farm southeast of Malcom and graduated from Montezuma High School with the Class of 1952. While in high school she enjoyed performing in plays, served as drum majorette, and played on the first girls' basketball team at Montezuma High School.

On July 4, 1953, Reatha met Carl Evans on a blind date. During their courtship they enjoyed going to auto races in Oskaloosa "to watch the red cars win."

On Aug. 22, 1954, Reatha and Carl were married at the First United Methodist Church in Montezuma "on the hottest day of the summer." At their wedding, Reatha's brother, Don, met Carl's sister, Mary. It wasn't long before there was another wedding. Carl and Reatha farmed the Evans' family farm south of Grinnell near Westfield, where they also enjoyed neighborhood card parties.

In 1958, Carl was called into the United States Army and Reatha took classes at AIB in Des Moines. She also enjoyed making ceramics during his service in the military.

After Carl's discharge, Reatha worked as a bookkeeper at the McFarland Clinic in Ames, while Carl completed his degree at Iowa State University. They lived in one of the quonset huts at Pammel Court in Ames.

The couple were blessed with two children, Beverly Ann and Michael Eugene.

In addition to being a homemaker, Reatha worked as a secretary in the guidance counselors' office at Atlantic High School, as activity director for the Agency on the Aging for the Iowa Western Community College of Council Bluffs and was also employed by RRACAP of Jasper County. She also enjoyed her volunteer work.

The couple enjoyed family camping trips, square dancing and participating in Marriage Encounter, Cursillo, and other marriage enrichment activities.

Reatha had a well-developed sense of humor, was an avid bridge player, enjoyed being active in church and choir and being a foster mother. She was an active member of St. Luke United Methodist Church in Newton from the time the couple moved to Newton in 1978 until she became ill more than 20 years later. She was also very active in politics. In the early 1980's, she completed her A.A. degree from Des Moines Area Community College. She had a strong desire to make a difference in the world. Reatha was a wonderful wife, mother and friend. She was her husband's best friend and supporter. They were often stopped and complimented in later years because they enjoyed holding hands while walking. She also greatly loved her children and grandchildren.

Those who will miss her are her husband, Carl Evans, of Kellogg; two children, Beverly (Jeffrey) Lloyd of Newton and Michael (Karla) Evans of Earlham; 12 grandchildren, Jeffrey "Scott" (Kara) Lloyd, Jennifer (Bryant) Kaiser, Kimberly (Timothy) Campbell, Wendy Lloyd, Michael Lloyd, Christine (Tyler) Curtis, Nathan Lloyd, Luke Evans, Benjamin Evans, Elisabeth Evans, Gabriella Evans and Jared Evans; eight great-grandchildren, Alissa, Zachary, Micah, Tiffany, Joanna, Colin, Madelynn and Natalie; and many other relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her parents; and two brothers, Donald and Max Johnston.

PCCR 2-15-2012

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Friends may call at the First Baptist Church in Grinnell beginning 9:00 a.m. on Tuesday and the family will be present one hour prior to the service.

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CHR 2-13-2012

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