



## Joan Marcia Johnson

May 20, 1933 - April 14, 2026

Joan was born in the village of Manchester near Hartford CT in 1933. Because her parents were divorced, she was raised, along with her brother Frank, by their paternal grandparents.

She graduated from South Manchester High and did some part-time work at the city library. As she grew she spent more and more time volunteering at the Congregational Church and later the Lutheran Church in town. This eventually led to her going into fulltime church work.

One of the joys of her young life was spending parts of Summers at the Congregational youth camp on Star Island which is one of the islands in the Isles of Shoals group off the coast of New Hampshire/Maine. She was a participant and later a counselor.

After graduating high school and after the death of her grandmother, Joan set out on a career in church work. She became the secretary at First Lutheran Church in Jamestown, NY. There she began to use creative dramatic movement to form a "Motion Choir" which became part of church services there.

From there Joan moved on to a job at National Lutheran Headquarters in Minneapolis. She continued her work with youngsters at House of Prayer

Lutheran church in Richfield, MN. She now called her choir a "Worship Choir". She self-published a book about creative dramatic movement called "With Hearts and Hands Uplifted" and conducted seminars on the subject around the Twin Cities and state. While Joan worked at Community of the Cross Lutheran Church in Bloomington, MN, she became a Commissioned Lay Minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Joan met her husband to be, Joel Johnson, at a Lutheran church in south Minneapolis. Together, they raised three daughters who gave them nine grandkids and three great-grandchildren.

After a fall that broke a bone in her back and with the onset of dementia, Joan has lived in the memory care unit of a nursing home in Edina, MN.

She is survived by her husband of 65 years. Joel Lester Johnson of Bloomington, MN; daughter Ellen Johnson Franz; daughter Laura Johnson Gray and husband Andrew Gray; daughter Ali Johnson Lacher and husband Bob Lacher; Grandchildren Paul Nishikawa (Taiki); Sarah Franz (Matt); Mary Franz (Ryan Haff); Aviva Rose (Clover) ; Ben Lacher; Melissa Ray (Aidan); Simon Gray (Maia); Lizzie Zanto (Owen); Alexa Lacher; Great Grandchildren Colette, Isla, and Sebastian

# Tribute Wall



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**Laura Johnson Gray** - April 16 at 03:26 PM