



William Joseph Wendt

February 3, 1934 - November 23, 2025

William J. Wendt, age 91, of Brooklyn Center, MN, entered into eternal rest on Sunday, November 23, 2025.

William (Bill) was born in February 1934, and was a life-long Minneapolis-area resident. After graduating from North High School, he was employed by Northwestern Bell Telephone Company (i.e., US West). He held many positions over a 40+ year career, from "climbing the telephone poles" to working in a dispatch office.

Bill met and married the love of his life, Ila Mae, in June 1956. He earned his Bachelor's degree from Metropolitan State University while working full-time and raising his family of five children. Not only were Bill and Ila Mae parenting their own children, but they opened their home and hearts to foster children for more than four decades. Working with Lutheran Children's Friend Society and Hennepin County, they provided a loving, healing space for more than 100 children; ranging from newborns to teens and children from all backgrounds and life experiences. Following Bill's retirement from "Ma Bell," he became a school bus driver transporting special needs children to/from school.

In his younger years, Bill enjoyed playing softball, bowling on church teams, fishing, and pheasant hunting. Bill spent countless seasons attending athletic events of his children (e.g. football, basketball, softball, track). He was an avid sports fan. Even at the age of 91, he enjoyed watching his favorite Minnesota teams, especially Gopher football, with his sons and grandchildren as long-

time season ticket holders. He was an avid reader with a fondness for mystery novels and gave freely of his time and talents. His faith was a foundation in his life giving freely of his time and talents for church activities and leadership positions, and was committed to ensuring a faith-based/Christian education for his family.

At the top of the list, Bill's favorite activity was camping in Minnesota state parks. He loved the woods and lakes; calling it "heaven on earth." The family started out camping in a big tent, and by the time Bill and Ila Mae were empty-nesters, they were proud owners of a brand new 25' camper that Ila Mae called her "little dream house." In the winter, they escaped to Clearwater Beach, FL for a few weeks where they enjoyed the warmth and walks on the white sand beaches, but Bill always looked forward to returning home to the white snow of Minnesota.

William is survived by his children: Steven (Sandra), Constance (Mark) Forrester, Bruce (Bonnie), Tim (Tami), Mary Kay Sampson; and grandchildren Justin, Erin Stoffel, Stephanie Hoyhtya, Joshua, Jacob (fiancée Ashley), Nathaniel, Scott, Randall, Colleen, Logan, and McKenna; and great-grandchildren Sonora, Colten, Novalee, Hollis, Ophelia, William, Eli, Abigail, Ellie, Paisley, Jade, Isabella; and many nieces and nephews.

William was preceded in death by his devoted wife of 66 years, Ila Mae, his parents, George and Clarice Wendt, and brothers, Vernon and Gerald.

Funeral service will be held Wednesday, December 17, at 11:00 AM (with visitation at 10:00 AM) at Peace Lutheran Church, 20 Northdale Blvd. NW, Coon Rapids, MN.

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 17. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Peace Lutheran Church (Coon Rapids)
20 Northdale Blvd.
Coon Rapids, MN

Memorial Service

DEC 17. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Peace Lutheran Church (Coon Rapids)
20 Northdale Blvd.
Coon Rapids, MN

Reception

DEC 17. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (CT)

Peace Lutheran Church (Coon Rapids)
20 Northdale Blvd.
Coon Rapids, MN

Graveside Service

DEC 17. 2:30 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Glen Haven Memorial Gardens
5125 West Broadway
Crystal, MN 55429

Tribute Wall

JH

“ *Janeen & Janelle Gates- HUGS purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of William Joseph Wendt.*



Janeen & Janelle Gates- HUGS - December 15, 2025 at 10:40 PM