



## Charlene Swanson

March 16, 1936 - October 19, 2021

Charlene Ruth Johnson Swanson, 85, passed away peacefully on October 19, 2021, at Brewster Health Center.

She was born March 16, 1936, to J. Elmer and Berenice Johnson. Charlene grew up on a farm south of Longmont, Colorado and attended grade school at Beasley Elementary, a two-room schoolhouse. She graduated from Longmont High School in 1954 and attended Bethany College in Lindsborg, Kansas, graduating in 1958 with a degree in elementary education. While at Bethany, Charlene was editor of the Bethany yearbook, the Daisy. At Bethany, Charlene met Duane Swanson and they were married on June 11, 1958, at First Lutheran Church in Longmont, Colorado. They began their married life in Topeka where Charlene taught second grade at McCarter Elementary. Charlene retired from teaching after one year and many headaches, realizing teaching was not for her. Charlene and Duane moved to Lawrence, Kansas while he pursued his master's degree. They lived in Wichita, Kansas for one year and then returned to Topeka in 1962 when Duane took a position with the Menninger Foundation.

Charlene was a stay-at-home mom until she began working at the Kansas House of Representatives in 1975. After 40 years of service, she retired in 2015 as Chief Journal Clerk. She loved her time at the House and made many lasting friendships. She was known for the ability to pull all-nighters during the session and recover better than the younger gals. Charlene also worked at the Carousel Gift Shop as bookkeeper. A talented musician, she served her beloved Our Savior's Lutheran Church as organist for 50 years. In addition, she was a member of the Worship Committee, played in the bell choir, accompanied the choir, and was editor of the church newsletter, the Dialog. She enjoyed planning special events including fellowship events, progressive dinners and the Scandinavian Smorgasbord. A highlight of the holiday season was the Open House that Charlene and Duane hosted in their home. Charlene's peanut clusters were a favorite.

Charlene and Duane enjoyed traveling and ventured to Sweden on three occasions as well as Denmark, Germany, and Austria. While in Sweden they visited relatives building

lasting ties. They also traveled the United States with their family as well as on trips for the Menninger Foundation. The best trips, however, were to their condo in Colorado to spend time with family in Charlene's beloved mountains and visit extended family during the holidays.

In 2016 Charlene moved to Brewster Place. She participated in many activities including playing cards, attending programs, serving as Resident Council Secretary, volunteering for the Bazaar and participating in intergenerational programs with Washburn University and Meadows Elementary School.

Charlene is survived by her daughters, Lynda Weaver (Phil) and Janis Swanson. She is also survived by grandson Kyle Weaver (Genina) and granddaughter Kalyn Sieker (Kyle) as well as great-granddaughters Scarlett and Heidi Weaver and Maren Sieker. Other survivors include her niece Karen Wondra (Alan) and nephew John Evans (Michelle) and their families. In addition, she is survived by her sister-in-law Barbara Swanson, nephew Pete Swanson and niece Amy Sanders (Shannon). Charlene was proud of her Swedish and Colorado roots and is survived by many relatives and friends in both Colorado and Sweden. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband Duane, sister Nadine Evans Lesser, nephew Chuck Evans, and great-niece and great-nephew, Megan and Brett Wondra.

Like so many, Charlene never fully understood the impact she had on the lives of others. No matter where she was, Charlene easily made friends of all ages. Whether she was Charlene, Mom, Meme, Great Meme, aunt, neighbor or friend, she was beloved and revered for her intellect, eye for detail, musical talent, sense of humor, great strength, faith, service to her church and family, and love of all-things sport. During the last months of her life, she thoroughly enjoyed watching the Summer Olympics and US Open Tennis tournament. She was a longtime season ticket holder to Washburn University basketball games where she made many friends. Her favorite team was the Kansas Jayhawks.

In addition to family and friends, Charlene's family thanks the Brewster Place community for the many friendships made, excellent care given and support provided to her during the last five years. Much gratitude is also given to Ascend Hospice for their care, love and support during the last three months of her life.

Visitation will be on Monday, October 25, from 5 pm to 7 pm at Our Savior's Lutheran Church. A celebration of Charlene's life will be held on Tuesday, October 26 at 10 am at the church.

The family requests that all attendees please wear masks. The service will be live streamed on the Church's YouTube channel, <http://www.youtube.com/oursaviorslutheranchurchtopeka>.

Memorial contributions may be made to Our Savior's Lutheran Church Worship and Music program. 2021 SW 29th St, Topeka, KS 66611.

Condolences may be sent online to <http://www.kevinbrennanfamily.com>.

# Events

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**OCT**   **Visitation**   05:00PM - 07:00PM

**25**

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Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
2021 SW 29th Street, Topeka, KS, US, 66611

**OCT**   **A Celebration of Life**   10:00AM

**26**

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Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
2021 SW 29th Street, Topeka, KS, US, 66611

# Comments

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“ An external video has been added.



**Kevin Brennan Family Funeral Home** - October 22, 2021 at 05:54 PM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Charlene Swanson.



October 26, 2021 at 10:11 AM

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“ Janis, I know how much you loved your mother by the loving way you always talked about her. I only met her a couple of times but knew right away that she was a special lady. It's so very hard to lose a mother. I pray God will fill this new void in your heart with His graces. As Willie Nelson sings, " it's not something you get over, but it's something you get through." With sympathy, Pat Shehi

**Pat Shehi** - October 25, 2021 at 03:43 PM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Charlene Swanson.



October 25, 2021 at 10:47 AM

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“ I worked with Duane and got to know Darlene well. She was a lovely lady and I send you my Sympathy.

**Marilyn Young** - October 25, 2021 at 09:27 AM

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“ I always loved talking with her. She was sharp as a tack, great sense of humor. She loved her family and was so proud of each one. She loved to talk about her daughters and grandkids but would always ask about my family too. She was a sharp, kind and fun person. Loved that twinkle in her eye. We will miss her at Brewster Place.

**Dan Brooks** - October 24, 2021 at 04:51 PM

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“ Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Charlene Swanson.



October 24, 2021 at 09:20 AM

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“ Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Charlene Swanson.



October 22, 2021 at 10:14 PM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Charlene Swanson.



October 22, 2021 at 02:42 PM

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“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Charlene Swanson.



October 22, 2021 at 09:36 AM

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“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Charlene Swanson.



October 21, 2021 at 11:17 PM

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“ Janis, Linda and family, if heaven has mountains, your mom (and dad) are reunited enjoying the view and the jokes. How fortunate to have them in our lives. Jane and I hope your sadness is replaced with wonderful memories of live's well lived. Your mom's wry smile and twinkle in her eyes was special. I will always remember riding dirt bikes, building forts and playing drums at your house. My parents loved your parents and I love you. We are all very fortunate. Peace to you. Troy

**Troy Fowler** - October 21, 2021 at 06:27 PM

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“ Just 5 days after her service Suzy and I will help dedicate Christ Lutheran’s new worship service as we both sing our hymns with our organ we will know that Charlene will be playing a heavenly organ. Peace be with the family. Suzy and Ray

**suzy Makalous** - October 21, 2021 at 05:38 PM

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“ Charlene.. A wonderful lady that will be missed by many. Lynda, Janis and family -- I'll be thinking of you during this time. Wish I could be there to give you all hugs but am glad I'll be able to be there virtually next week. All my love, April

**April Anderson** - October 21, 2021 at 05:07 PM

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“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Charlene Swanson.



October 21, 2021 at 04:47 PM

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“ We will truly miss her- Brewster Place purchased the Ocean Breeze Spray for the family of Charlene Swanson.



**We will truly miss her- Brewster Place** - October 21, 2021 at 04:11 PM

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“ Such a wonderful lady! So caring and quick witted. Truly a joy to know. Hugs to Lynda, Janis & the rest of the family.  
Linda & Bruce Krueger

**Linda Krueger** - October 21, 2021 at 04:07 PM



“ From Taylor’s and Cordia’s purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Charlene Swanson.



From Taylor’s and Cordia’s - October 21, 2021 at 03:53 PM