

Shirley Ann Bassett

1936-2025

Shirley Ann (Nansel) Bassett went home to be with her Lord on November 29, 2025, surrounded by her loving family.

Shirley was born April 6, 1936, to Loyd Kenneth Nansel and Lois Mae (Avers) Nansel on a farm southwest of Arnold, Nebraska. After losing both parents at a young age, Shirley and her five siblings continued working the family farm, supporting one another as they pursued their education. Following her graduation from Arnold High School in 1953, she left the farm to attend nurses' training for one year.

In November of 1955, she married Gary Joe Bassett of Arnold, NE and they settled on his family farm east of town. Here she accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior in 1959. They farmed for twelve years and welcomed Tracy, Randall, Ann and Holly into their family.

In 1968, Gary and Shirley's love of God and compassion for those who did not know Him compelled them to sell their livestock and farm equipment and complete three years of missionary training with New Tribes Mission (now Ethnos360). In January of 1971, they packed the family, which now included Eric who was only four-months old, into their crew cab pickup and drove to Panama, Central America. There they began their seven years of missionary service as dorm parents for elementary school children, and their family was completed when Russell was born.

In 1978 Gary and Shirley transferred to the New Tribes Language Institute in Camdenton, MO. She served as women's work detail leader, then as organizer of the "mission barrel," and finally as printer in the print shop. She also served as a planner and cook for the mission's Refresher Course/conference each summer. Shirley embraced each responsibility wholeheartedly and with quiet devotion.

After 22 years of selfless, faithful service at the Language Institute, Gary and Shirley retired to the town of their youth, Arnold, NE in 2001. The first two years were spent renewing ties with the community and remodeling their home.

But in December of 2003, everything changed when Gary was tragically killed in a car accident, and Shirley was left to figure out life on her own. She found purpose in gardening, walking, Good News Club, organizing blood drives, planning funeral dinners, and many other church and community activities. She treasured the memories she made with her children and grandchildren on trips, visits, and during two family reunions in Colorado.

As her health declined, she faced each day with the same steady resolve and grit that had defined her life. The last 18 months of her life were spent in Lenexa, Kansas, with her daughter, Holly,



providing excellent care.

Shirley was a devoted lover of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She was dearly loved by her family and those around her. She lived her life shaped by the love her Heavenly Father had for her, and that love flowed naturally into how she served others. She genuinely enjoyed listening to people's stories—the ordinary details, the quiet struggles, the moments most would overlook. She carried those things with her, often scribbling names, needs, and passing comments into the pages of her prayer journals so she could lift them up privately. No request was too great or too small for her to bring before the Lord.

Shirley was preceded in death by her parents, Loyd and Lois Nansel; siblings, Delmar, Wayne, and Kenneth Nansel, and Ardith Clark; her husband of 48 years, Gary Bassett; sons-in-law, Steve Robertson and Joel Emerson; grandson, Ian Mark Bassett and mother-in-law, Verel Chrisp.

She is survived by two siblings, Theda Colman of Broken Bow, NE and Ralph Nansel of Arnold, NE; her children, Tracy (Mike) Jarvis of Canby, OR; Randall (Diana) Bassett of Killeen, TX; Ann Bassett of Nashville, TN; Holly Robertson of Lenexa, KS; Eric (Holly) Bassett of Columbia, MO; and Russell Bassett of Denver, CO; 12 grandchildren; and 16 great-grandchildren with another one on the way.

A Celebration of Life service will be held Saturday, December 13 at the Arnold Baptist Church at 10:00 AM. Shirley loved bright colors, and the family invites you to wear them to the service. Burial will be at the Arnold Cemetery immediately following the service. There will be a noon meal provided at the church. The family will be at the church an hour prior to the service with pictures and memorabilia of Shirley on display. If you are unable to attend, we invite you to join virtually. Go to www.govierbrothers.com The livestream will appear when the ceremony begins.

In lieu of flowers, the family encourages donations in Shirley's memory to Ethnos360's Renovate to Reach project which will be used to renovate housing at the Ethnos360 Language Institute, where Shirley served for 22 years.

Donations can be made here: <https://ethnos360.org/projects/renovate-to-reach> or mail to: Ethnos360 312 W. First St., Sanford, FL 32771. Or to the charity of your choice that helps people.