Obituary

Mildred (Bailey) Smith
1921-2026



Mildred Elaine (Bailey) Smith of Arnold, NE, peacefully passed away and entered the embrace of her Lord and Savior on November 3, 2026, in North Platte, NE.

Born on August 9, 1921, in Bertrand, NE, she was the cherished daughter of Lee and Zelma Bailey. While still an infant, her family relocated to Arnold, where her father worked on a dairy farm and later at a local service station.

Mildred completed her education from kindergarten to twelfth grade in Arnold, graduating in May 1939. During high school, she pursued two years of standard training classes, earning a certificate to teach in rural schools for three years. She furthered her education at Kearney State Teacher's College, renewing her teaching certificate. As a result, she dedicated six and a half years to teaching at various country schools in Arnold and one school in Michigan.

On March 8, 1942, she married Don W. Smith at Western, NE in the parsonage of Reverend W. B. Zimmerman, a close friend of the Smith family. In October 1942, Don was inducted into the United States Army (WWII), so Mildred moved to Michigan to stay with her parents. She was hired to teach in a rural school in Coldwater, Michigan, until Don's return from Europe in October 1945.

They purchased the Smith home place on Garfield Table, where they farmed and raised their three children, Craig, Trudy, and Todd. In 1976, Don and Mildred decided to build their retirement home and move to Arnold, where Mildred lived for 49 years.

Mildred had a passion for music and enjoyed singing solos, playing clarinet in the band, and taking piano lessons from a young age. She later had many piano pupils, including her daughter, Trudy. She became the pianist for the Garfield Methodist Church and served in this capacity for many years.

Mildred was brought up in a loving Christian home and was baptized at the age of seven. She rededicated her life to the Savior under the ministry of Reverend Stan Schrag at Garfield Methodist Church. She continued to serve Him through many areas of ministry, such as teaching Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, and being involved in a weekly prayer group of local ladies. She also greatly loved missionary families and felt very strongly about supporting them in any way she could.

Mildred was a founding member of the Arnold Scarlett O'Hatters, enjoyed their monthly adventures out of town, and cherished her close friendships. She was also a lifelong member of the American Legion Auxiliary #130 and assisted with many community outreaches. Everyone in town spoke fondly of her which was a testimony of her sweet and gentle spirit.

Mildred was preceded in death by her husband, Don; son, Todd; her parents, Lee and Zelma Bailey; a brother, Glen Lee Bailey; her father and mother-in-law, Mynor and Cecil Smith; her brother-in-law, Bobbie Smith, and her sisters-in-law, Gloria Smith and Bonnie Rose. She is survived by her son, Craig (Pam) Smith, who live on the family farm; daughter, Trudy (Ross) Van Camp of Bennington, NE; four grandchildren, Leslie (Andrew) Rogers of Bondurant, IA; David (Tami) Smith of Arnold, NE; Luke (Katie) Van Camp of Elkhorn, NE; Casey Vlach of Columbus, NE; and twelve great-grandchildren, Evie and Trent Rogers; Madison, Gabriel, and Aden Smith; Halle, Connor, Sadie, and Benjamin Van Camp; Caden Ocken, and Ella Vlach. Other surviving family members include her brother-in-law, Max (Joan) Smith, and many nieces, nephews and their families.

Funeral services were held on Saturday, November 7, 2026, at 10:30 AM at the United Methodist Church in Arnold, NE. Burial followed in the Arnold Cemetery. Memorial gifts may be given to the Todd Becker Foundation or Arnold Cemetery. A visitation and time to greet was held on Friday, November 6th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM at the Arnold United Methodist Church. Govier Brothers Mortuary/Arnold Funeral Home are in charge of arrangements. Online words of remembrance or condolences may be left at www.govierbrothers.com