

Belva Joy (Lonn) Coffey, age 92, passed away peacefully with her two daughters at her side on January 12, 2026, at Sanford Hospice House, Fargo, ND.

Born on April 20, 1933, in Octavia, NE to Earl and Harriet Elizabeth (Allen) Lonn. Belva acquired the name Joy when her younger sister started calling her "Joy Bell" because she couldn't say Belva. Later she was simply known as Joy. At the age of 5, Joy started 1st grade in Garrison, NE, and later attended school in David City, NE, from where she graduated at the age of 16. She then attended the Nebraska Methodist School of Nursing in Omaha, NE. It was there that she met the one true love of her life, Dr. James H. Coffey. They were united in marriage on September 26, 1952. Joy was among the first women to be allowed to receive her nursing cap and pin while married and even pregnant. It was during their time in Omaha that they were blessed with their first child. Upon Jim finishing his internship in Omaha, they moved for a short time to Missouri where their second child was born. When Jim needed to fulfill his military obligation he joined the Air Force, which brought a move to Texas for his training. After that they moved to Alaska where he was stationed for two years, during which time child number 3 was born just after a blizzard had them snowed in for several days. They then returned to Nebraska and settled in Blair where children number four and five, and later number six completed their family. In 1962 Joy became a tried and true North Dakotan with their move to Fargo.

Joy was always one to appreciate the beauty of ordinary things. This was evident in her love of flowers, birds, butterflies, and kitties. She loved the quietness of being at the lake where she spent hours watching the birds, especially her favorite pileated woodpeckers. She was a woman of very strong faith and loved her "family" at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in north Fargo.

Jim and Joy loved to travel, both in the United States and abroad with trips to Sweden, Denmark, England, Ireland and Scotland. Joy especially loved Hawaii where she and Jim attended photography retreats on the island of Molokai. Joy also enjoyed sewing, and crafting, among other things.

Joy was kept very busy throughout her adult life by raising her six children who were all involved in many activities. She was cook, chauffeur, cheerleader and more to not only her own children, but to all those in the neighborhood as well. She was once recognized as "Mother of the Year" by the Fargo YWCA.

Joy is survived by her six children, Robert (Kris) Coffey, Patrick (Shellie) Coffey, Laura Nylander, Roger (Joyce) Coffey, Jerry (Lisa) Coffey, and Sandy Miller; along with 17 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren; her sister, Nancy Hendricks; and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her husband, Jim; and her son-in-law, Russell Nylander.

Memorial contributions can be made to the St. Stephen's Endowment Fund, 120 21st Ave. N., Fargo, ND 58102.

Celebrating THE LIFE OF



Joy Coffey

April 20, 1933 - January 12, 2026

Remember Me

Remember me when flowers bloom

Early in the spring.

Remember me in sunny days

In the fun that summer brings.

Remember me in the fall

As you walk through leaves of gold.

And in the wintertime- remember me

In the stories that are told.

But most of all remember

Each day - right from the start.

I will be forever near

For I live within your heart.



**HANSON
RUNSVOLD**
Cremation • Burial

Remembering

Joy Coffey

April 20, 1933 - January 12, 2026

Celebration of Life

Tuesday, January 20, 2026 - 11:00 AM

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

Fargo, North Dakota

Fr. Jamie Parsley, *Officiant*

Michelle Gelinske, *Vocalist*

James Mackay, *Accompanist*

Congregational Hymns

"Morning Has Broken"

"In the Garden"

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"

Special Music

"Hallelujah" - Leonard Cohen

"Over the Rainbow" - Israel Kamakawiwo'ole

Honorary Pallbearers

All of Joy's Grandchildren and Great-Grandchildren

Interment

St. Stephen's Memorial Garden

Fargo, North Dakota

All are invited to a luncheon following the service.