



### **Mildred Marie Willson**

Mildred Marie Willson was born January 19, 1919, to Clarence and Arta (Anderson) Leeling in Lusk, WY. The family eventually moved to a small homestead in Centennial Valley in South Dakota where Mildred and her six siblings grew up and attended school in a small stone schoolhouse on the Crook City Road which is still standing today. Mildred's assigned job at home was to tend the garden which she did willingly and continued to do all of her life.

On March 2, 1940, she married Frank Willson in Deadwood, SD, in the home of a Baptist minister whose wife stopped making bread long enough to be a witness. They started married life with \$14.00 in their pocket and trust in the Good Lord. Over time, He blessed them with three children; Jim, Vern, and Irene.

In 1946, they purchased land south of Whitewood and in 1953, began raising registered Black Angus cattle. Their operation became known as Crook Mountain Angus Ranch where they continued ranching into their old age. They were known for their generosity and hospitality to friends and strangers alike and visitors always left feeling well fed and encouraged.

Mildred loved birds, flowers, and playing in the sandbox with grandkids, but she was no wimpy woman and took on rattlesnakes with a hoe and Black Angus bulls with her trusty white stick.

She was a member of the Whitewood Presbyterian Church for over 60 years and taught Sunday school for 30 years. She loved working in the kitchen, especially during the annual church bazaar and continued to serve until her health declined and she moved to Serenity Corner Assisted Living. Providentially, the facility was located in the country where cows still roamed, a creek trickled nearby, and she could sit on the deck and watch the birds.

A life well lived and a legacy never forgotten.

Survivors include two sons and their wives, Jim and Donna of Whitewood and Vern and Shirley of Black Hawk, SD; one daughter, Irene Wehner of Whitewood; 13 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

Mildred was preceded in death by her husband, siblings, and a son-in-law.



## *In Loving Memory Of*



*Mildred Marie Willson*

1919 ~ 2017

*In Loving Memory Of*

*Mildred Marie Willson*

***Born***

January 19, 1919  
Lusk, Wyoming

***Died***

February 8, 2017  
Sturgis, South Dakota

***Funeral Service***

Saturday, February 18, 2017, at 10:00 a.m.  
Whitewood Presbyterian Church  
Whitewood, South Dakota

***Officiant***

Pastor Jil Jennewein

***Accompanist***

Barb Shrader

***Singers***

Chris Kaitfors ~ Kelsey Kaitfors

"In The Garden"

"His Eye Is On The Sparrow"

***Congregational Hymns***

"How Great Thou Art" p. 51

"Because He Lives" p. 447

***Pallbearers***

Greg Willson ~ Jared Willson ~ Bryan O'Neal  
Randy Kolb ~ Matt Maidl ~ Adam Wehner

***Interment***

St. Onge Cemetery  
St. Onge, South Dakota

*The warmth of the sunshine,  
the fragrance of flowers  
The softness of dew  
in the wee morning hours  
The music of laughter,  
the smell of bread baking  
The song of the robin  
as daylight is breaking  
The beauty of unselfish love  
for another  
God took all of these things  
and created my mother*

*The family invites you to join them for fellowship and lunch in the church hall following the committal service. We thank you for your presence and condolences.*