

James Dale Eichinger, age 85, met Jesus Christ October 26, 2024 at his home in Sturgis, SD. He passed away peacefully with his wife, Connie and daughter, Brenda praising God as He welcomed Jim home. Jim died as a result of complications from Parkinson's Disease.

Jim was born June 7, 1939 to George Ralph Eichinger and Erma (Knee) Eichinger at their home in Lake Wilson, MN, their second child and first son. Jim's father deserted the family when Jim was around 10 years old, leaving his mother to support 6 children. He was "farmed out", a common practice of the times, to a farm family, where he helped on the farm and was provided room and board. He stayed with the first family for one year, then spent his remaining childhood with Cliff and Andy Petersen near Avoca, MN.

Jim's biggest dream as he graduated from high school was to join the Air Force. When he graduated, he sold his vehicle, kissed his girlfriend goodbye, and took a bus to Sioux Falls, SD to enlist. Unfortunately, a torn ACL that he had suffered in high school disqualified him from military service. He returned to Petersen's farm, and married his girlfriend, Barb Bestge.

Jim and Barb were married 19 years and had three children that he worshipped: Brenda, Daniel, and Curtis. They lived in Valley Springs, SD, where Jim was on the volunteer fire department and treasurer, then mayor of the small town. He was very involved in his children's lives. He worked for Coleman Manufacturing for many years, left that job to work as a salesman for Morton Building, and in the 70s moved to Rapid City.

His friends Loren and MarJean Kuper introduced him to Connie Nichelson Walters in 1989, and they married in 1994, enjoying 30 years of friendship and love. Jim extended that same love to Connie's children; Matt and Eric Walters, their wives and children.

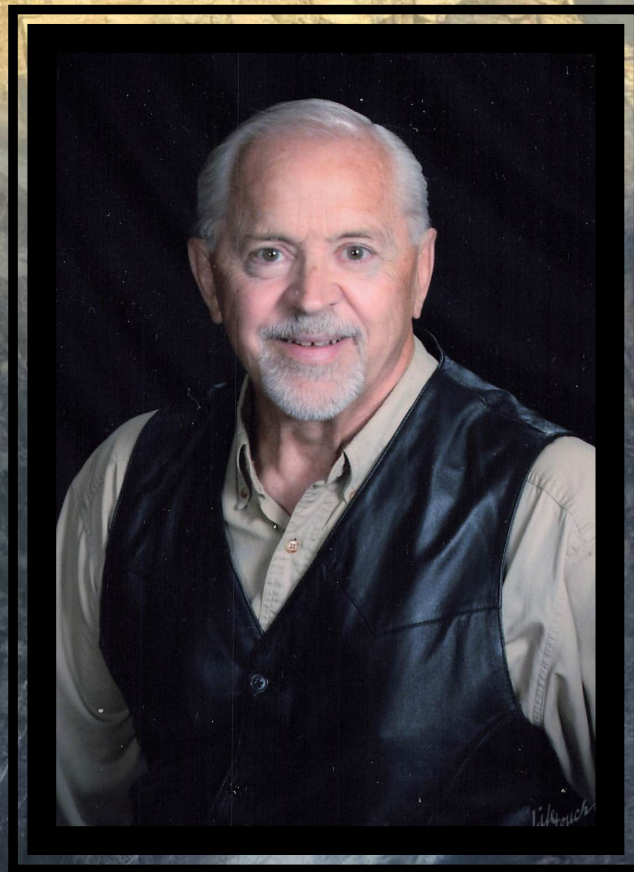
Jim was a people person and always found a connection to people, regardless of their station in life. Because he had suffered abject poverty in his childhood, Jim was always rooting for the underdog. He maintained everything he bought in pristine condition, repairing whatever was broken, and "McGyvering" something out of supplies that were on hand. He kept almost everything he used, determined to use it again "someday". He always had a smile and a joke ready. He and Connie spent many weekends camping and solving world problems around a campfire.

Jim loved children and always had kids surrounding him. He could make anything fun, from filling a bathtub overflowing with bubbles, to making rockets out of toilet paper tubes. He was adored by all his grandchildren. He spoiled children and dogs alike. He was the go-to guy for treats and fun. His sense of humor was appreciated by all who knew him.

Jim and Connie rediscovered their faith at Grace United Methodist Church in Piedmont, SD, where he was on their board of trustees during the building of the new church. Once built, he was there almost every day, ready to do whatever was needed to be done. When he was diagnosed with Stage 4 Lymphoma in 2006, and with Parkinson's in 2017, he was not afraid. He knew where he would land and is today surrounded by the love of his family in Heaven.

Jim is survived by his wife, Connie, Sturgis, SD; children, Brenda (Don) Wood, Manderson, WY, Daniel (Susan) Eichinger, Black Hawk, SD, Curtis (Phoebe) Eichinger, Colorado Springs, CO, Matt (Trisha) Walters, Black Hawk, SD, and Eric (Mindy) Walters, Sioux Falls, SD; 12 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren, and a sister, DeEtte Fenske, Portland, OR. He was preceded in death by both parents; brothers, William, Gerald, and David, and sisters, Carole and Rita.

Condolences may be sent to the family at www.kinkadefunerals.com.



In Loving Memory Of

James Dale Eichinger

June 7, 1939 ~ October 26, 2024

In Loving Memory Of
James Dale Eichinger

Born

June 7, 1939
Lake Wilson, Minnesota

Died

October 26, 2024
Sturgis, South Dakota

Funeral Service

Monday, November 4, 2024, 10:30 a.m.
Grace United Methodist Church
Piedmont, South Dakota

Officiant

Pastor John Britt

Musical Selections

“Heaven is a Beautiful Place” “Because You Love Me”
“Softly and Tenderly” “God Be with You Till We Meet Again”

Pallbearers

Landon Wood Toby Wood
Brynnt Wood Nick Dumas
Logan Walters Paxton Walters

Final Resting Place

Piedmont Cemetery
Piedmont, South Dakota

*To Those I love and those who love me...
When I am gone...Release me – Let me go...
I have so many things to see and do...
You mustn't tie yourself to me with tears.
Be thankful for our many beautiful years.
I gave to you my love.
You can only guess how much you
gave to me in happiness.
I thank you for the love you each have shown,
but now it's time I traveled on alone...
So grieve a while for me...if grieve you must.
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It's only for a time that we must part...
So bless the memories within your heart...
I won't be far away. For life goes on.
So if you need me – Call and I will come.
Though you can't see or touch me
I'll be near, and if you listen with
your heart you'll hear
All my love around you soft and clear.
And then when you must come
this way alone,
I'll greet you with a smile and say...
"Welcome Home!"*

*The family invites you to join them for lunch and fellowship
at the church, following the burial.
Thank you for your presence and condolences.*