

## Esther Ruthlee Kornmeyer

Esther Ruthlee Bender was born on April 12, 1923, in Bunker Hill, Kansas, to Henry Phillip and Anna Elizabeth (Schneider) Bender. Both her parents were immigrants from the Volga German colony, Kratzke, in Russia. Esther was the youngest of nine children. Her sisters named her, but her mother preferred to call her Fritz or little troublemaker.

On December 3, 1941, Esther married Roy O. Kornmeyer Jr. in Waldo, Kansas. On their honeymoon, while they were traveling to California, they heard the news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Roy entered the Army Air Corps, and Fritz and Roy moved around the country as required during those war years. By 1948, they were living in Yuba City, California. In 1956, the family moved to El Dorado County outside of Placerville, California, where Esther later worked at the local Ben Franklin 5 & 10 Store. The Kornmeyers moved to Kingman, Arizona, in 1967. Their last move was to South Dakota in 2010.

Fritz's love for Jesus was a constant in her life. She devoted more than 80 of her last 101 years to raising, nurturing, and caring for her family and friends, from Kansas to California and Arizona to South Dakota. Fritz also enjoyed music. She and her husband Roy were involved with music for much of their lives. Many friends in Sturgis will remember her playing her cajon and singing with the "Pickers" and the "Old Timers," sometimes joining her husband in a duet while Roy played the guitar. She will be lovingly missed by her family and many friends for years to come.

Fritz's husband, Roy, preceded her in death on September 7, 2019. She is survived by her children and their families' Roy III and Ada Kornmeyer of Port Ludlow, Washington, David and Charlene Kornmeyer of Black Hawk, South Dakota, Elizabeth Kinsey of Anthem, Arizona; grandchildren, Kymberly Rutledge, Hillary Coulson, Tony Bekoff, Scott Kinsey, and Laurel Kinsey; seven great-grandchildren, one great great-grandchild, and many nieces and nephews.

## *In Loving Memory*

### Esther Ruthlee Kornmeyer



April 12, 1923 ~ December 20, 2024