

Margaret E. Stuenkel (Stoelting)

Margaret, the daughter of Arthur and Mathilda Stoelting, was born on October 8, 1943, and was baptized into the Christian faith and joined to Christ on October 24 at Holy Ghost Lutheran Church, Bergholtz, New York. She grew up in Bergholtz on Stoelting Street with a brother, Duane (Lois), and two sisters, Helen (Ernest) Haseley and Mary Lou (William) Milroy. Within this family deeply rooted in church and community, Margaret was shaped for the rest of her life. She spoke often of her gratitude for her parents, her siblings, and the congregation that had nurtured her in her faith.

Following high school, Margaret graduated from Concordia College, Seward, Nebraska. At Concordia, Margaret majored in education along with music. She sang in a special choir, acted in plays, and learned to play the organ. Her first call following graduation was to a congregation near Chicago where she taught school, had the youth program, directed the choirs, and played the organ. In the summers she volunteered at an inner city church on Chicago's south side.

She then moved to Vallejo, California, where she taught in a public elementary school. In Vallejo she met Donald Jensen. Donald and Margaret joined Wycliffe Bible Translators and were assigned to the Mexico Branch in Mexico City. There Margaret taught the children of translators who were in various villages working on translations. In Mexico, Don and Margaret adopted two children, David and Johanna. Due to political unrest the Mexico Branch had to leave Mexico and continue its work headquartered in Catalina, Arizona.

With the start of Catalina Lutheran Church, Margaret started an Early Childhood Center in the church which provided preschool education to the children of the community and the Bible translators. With a strong commitment to early childhood education, Margaret earned a Specialist in Education degree from the University of Arizona and worked in a early childhood program for the Tucson Unified School District.

Margaret was joined in marriage to Roger Stuenkel on June 14, 1998, and moved to New Jersey where Roger was serving a new congregation. After a year, the couple to North Olmsted, Ohio, where Roger accepted a call to serve Ascension Lutheran Church. Margaret accepted the position as principal of an inner city Lutheran school, Luther Memorial School. Seeking a fresh start for the school, she deliberately took it down to the level of kindergarten and first grade while serving both as principal and teacher. She then added one grade at a time with a special focus upon music and the arts. That school is now a thriving school and will be on two separate campuses this fall.

Margaret enjoyed her family, David and Sarah Jensen, and Johanna and Adam Gale, and took special delight in her grandchildren, Tayler Jensen and Lily Gale, and Logan and Hunter Jensen.

The family requests that Memorial gifts be given to Wycliffe Bible Translators in behalf of Hanna Henson or to Luther Memorial School in Cleveland, Ohio, or to the Concert Series of Risen Savior Lutheran Church.