



## Mary Cathleen Gengerke

June 7, 1950 - January 8, 2026

Mary Cathleen Gengerke, age 75, of Spirit Lake, Iowa, passed away on Thursday, January 8, 2026, at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. Friday, January 23, 2026, at First Lutheran Church in Milford. Visitation will be held one hour prior to the service on Friday at the church. Inurnment will take place in the church's columbarium. Arrangements are under the direction of the Robinson Funeral Home in Spirit Lake. Online Condolences may be left at [www.spiritlakefuneralhome.com](http://www.spiritlakefuneralhome.com)

The service can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/D3q-WD-f6wA>

Mary was born on June 7, 1950, in Le Mars, Iowa, to Vincent and Martha (Paulsen) Hall. She graduated from Gehlen Catholic School and went on to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from South Dakota State University. On July 31, 1971, Mary was united in marriage to Thomas Gengerke in Le Mars.

Mary held various positions throughout her professional nursing career, including roles as a charge nurse, clinical instructor, and public health nurse. Tom and Mary's careers took them to South Dakota, Kansas, New York, and Iowa. With a passion for education, she later earned her master's degree in

education from Iowa State University. Mary went on to teach clinical nursing at Iowa Lakes Community College and the University of Iowa, where she made a lasting impact on countless students through her dedication, knowledge, and mentorship.

She was a faithful member of First Lutheran Church in Milford and an active member of P.E.O. In her free time, Mary enjoyed quilting, playing Mah-jongg and Bridge, fishing, and golfing. Above all else, she cherished time spent with her grandchildren, who were the joy of her life.

Mary is survived by her loving husband, Tom Gengerke, of Spirit Lake; sons Todd (Jeanne) Gengerke of Plymouth, Minnesota, and Jason (April) Jackson of Eureka, California; grandchildren Charlie, Nora, Lorelei, Miles, Walter Dee, Gus, and Oscar; brother Michael (Pat) Hall of Bradenton, Florida; and sister-in-law Lorraine Hall, of Camarillo, California.

She was preceded in death by her parents; her brothers Don (Laura) Hall and Joseph Hall; and her sister Margie (Jim) Moir.

Memorials may be made in Mary's name and directed to Iowa Lakes Community College Nursing Program or to Lakes Regional Hospice.

# Cemetery Details

## First Lutheran Church Columbarium

1525 Three Cross Rd.  
Milford, IA 51351

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 23. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First Lutheran Church  
1525 Three Cross Road  
Milford, IA 51351  
(712) 338-4514

## Memorial Service

JAN 23. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Lutheran Church  
1525 Three Cross Road  
Milford, IA 51351  
(712) 338-4514

# Tribute Wall



“ *Robinson Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke*



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**Robinson Funeral Home** - January 20 at 03:02 PM

KM

*What a beautiful video of a life well lived but taken too soon! She was beautiful inside and out! So thankful she was a part of my life!*  
*Kathi May*

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**Kathi May** - January 21 at 01:04 AM

SQ

“ *Dear Tom and Family, I was so sad and shocked to hear about Mary's passing. I've been thinking about all our fun times in high school and at Westmar College. I remember her and her mom helping me sew a dress, sleepovers at the Hall house and Mary picking me up for classes at Westmar and us hanging out with her brother Joe. We hadn't seen much of each other for a long time and I kept thinking, one of these days we need to get together. Sadly, now it is too late for that. My thoughts are with you all. Sandy Baker Quintero*

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**sandra baker quintero** - January 30 at 12:40 AM

SQ

“ *Sandra Baker Quintero lit a candle in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke*



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**sandra baker quintero** - January 30 at 12:40 AM



“ *Small Garden Dish was purchased for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*



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January 22 at 03:01 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*



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January 21 at 06:32 PM

TB

“ *The Bugbee's planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*

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**The Bugbee's** - January 21 at 06:32 PM



“ *Pink Potpourri Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*



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January 21 at 05:18 PM



“ *Jim & Mary Hall purchased the Simply Elegant S pathiphyllum for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*



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**Jim & Mary Hall** - January 21 at 01:54 PM



“ *Jim & Mary Hall planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*

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**Jim & Mary Hall** - January 21 at 01:54 PM



“ *Casey, Dee Dee, Solomon & isaac Shaffer purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*



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**Casey, Dee Dee, Solomon & isaac Shaffer** - January 21 at 09:29 AM

CS

“ Casey, Dee Dee, Solomon & isaac Shaffer planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.

Casey, Dee Dee, Solomon & isaac Shaffer - January 21 at 09:29 AM

RL

“ Roger L. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.

Roger L. - January 20 at 06:15 PM

MN

“ MGH ECC nurses purchased the Basket of Memories for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.



MGH ECC nurses - January 20 at 05:58 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.



January 20 at 12:12 PM

CF

“ Mary was one of my nursing instructors at ILCC. Some people were burn to be teachers, and Mary was one of them! Proverbs 16:21 says “sweetness of lips increases learning”, and Mary taught that way! She was a compassionate, kind, gentle soul!

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**Carole Feldhacker** - January 19 at 07:01 PM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.



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January 18 at 11:11 PM

CC

“ Charlie, Theresa, Doug, Tom, Kate Covert planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.

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**Charlie, Theresa, Doug, Tom, Kate Covert** - January 18 at 11:11 PM

AL

“ What a great day this was, so much love and so much laughter always.



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**Annie Lubben** - January 18 at 02:34 PM

AL

*what a great day this was, so much love and so much laughter always*

**Annie Lubben** - January 18 at 02:36 PM

GS

“ *Tom and Family: I offer prayers for comfort in this difficult time of sadness. Sincerely, Gerald Stangl*

**Gerald Stangl** - January 15 at 09:37 PM

AS

“ *Mary was one of my favorite nursing/clinical instructors. I will never forget the encouragement she provided.*

**Audrey Shedd** - January 15 at 06:40 PM

GT

“ *Gene T. purchased the Garden Accent Stone - "If love could have saved you" for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*



**Gene T.** - January 15 at 04:55 PM

MF

“ *Marty & Family. purchased the Medium Dish Garden for the family of Mary Cathleen Gengerke.*



**Marty & Family.** - January 15 at 01:44 PM

LH

“ Mary was one of my favorite Nursing instructors at ILCC, so very kind and helpful when you didn't understand, she took the time one on one to explain. RIP, Mary  
Laura Hamann

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**Laura Hamann** - January 15 at 07:25 AM

KM

“ Mary was a friend, mentor, and colleague when I was working in Public Health and as an instructor at Iowa Lakes Community College. I have fond memories of our time together. She was a special woman. My condolences to the family.

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**Karen Moritz** - January 14 at 10:09 PM

CH

“ Tom: I am so sorry to have learned of Mary's passing. I enjoyed discussing books that she was reading with her.

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**Cheryl Harms** - January 12 at 08:35 PM

KH

“ I was so blessed to have Mary as my clinical instructor! She was so patient and kind to her students, helping you feel at ease during stressful times. I appreciated her soft, sweet manner! May memories comfort you during the difficult days!

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**Kristin Heikens** - January 10 at 08:57 PM

MW

“ I will never forget this day Kathi and I spent with Mary looking at all the different peonies. We so enjoyed our time together. Mary always had time to listen to whatever we had to share. She was such a good friend and will be missed. Tom, Todd and family keep those precious Memories close to your heart. Maureen



Maureen Weaver - January 10 at 07:06 PM

BG

“ Tom, Jason, Todd and families, my heart goes out to you. She was still too young, like my dad, Joe her brother. She was such a light of sunshine. I will miss her so much ❤️ At least she is with him and other loved ones that have passed over. Darwin and I will be there, along with Stephanie and Kelly. We all miss her so much!

Beth Gettner - January 10 at 03:57 PM

BG

“ Tom, Jason, Todd and families my heart goes out to you at this time of lost. She was still too young, like my dad Joe - her brother. She was such a light of sunshine. I will miss her so much! ❤️ At least they are together with are other loved ones that have passed over. Darwin & I will be there along with Stephanie and Kelly. We all loved her a bunch 💕



Beth Gettner - January 10 at 03:42 PM

KJ

“ *Tom, Todd and Jason*  
*So sorry to hear of Mary's passing. We have great memories of growing up with the boys and card club. Mary was a great partner and it always helped my score.*  
*Kirk and Judy*

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**Kirk Jensen** - January 10 at 12:25 PM

JP

“ *Judy Peddycoart lit a candle in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke*



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**Judy Peddycoart** - January 10 at 11:21 AM

KG

“ *Mary was such a joyful part of our South Dakota State University 4th North Pierson Hall gang. Her smile lit up the room! I am grateful for all the memories we shared, both back in our college days and in the past couple of decades when we had 4th North reunions at various locations throughout the US. She will be greatly missed, but always remembered with great fondness and love. Katie Gray*

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**Katie Gray** - January 09 at 11:57 PM

DS

“ *Dear Tom and family, our sympathy and prayers to you all. We still are struggling with this news. So many memories together*



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**Dianne and Steve** - January 09 at 08:38 PM

KM

“ Tom and family, I am so very sorry to learn of Mary’s passing! She was the most genuine and insightful person and Maureen and I shared many good times and laughs during grad school with her and every get together after that! Our last get together will stay in my memory forever as we visited the beautiful peony farm and then went over to the lake to have lunch on the patio of a restaurant! We stayed there for several hours that day just enjoying the beautiful day, sunshine and friendship. I even remember talking her and Maureen into having a second cocktail and I can honestly say it seemed like time stood still that afternoon as we chatted about our lives and families. Mary loved her family so much and was so proud of them. Until we meet again dear Mary, we will miss you like crazy!  
Kathi May



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**Kathi May** - January 09 at 02:54 PM

CB

“ Cheryl Bruns lit a candle in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke



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**Cheryl Bruns** - January 09 at 01:14 PM

JZ

“ Tom and family, sorry to hear about Mary. My thoughts and prayers are with you all.

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**Jim Zweifel** - January 09 at 12:10 PM

TM

“ *Thomas Madigan lit a candle in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke*



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**Thomas Madigan** - January 09 at 12:03 PM

GG

“ *Tom, I'm so sorry to hear of Mary's passing. My thoughts are with you and your family. Greg Gamble*



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**Greg Gamble** - January 09 at 12:03 PM

TK

“ *Tom, so sorry for your loss. Our thoughts are with you, and may your memories help you through this sad time. Terry and Jane Kounkel.*

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**Terry Kounkel** - January 09 at 11:47 AM

PR

“ *Tom and family, I am so sorry to hear about Mary. What a wonderful soul she was to so many. She will truly be missed by her PEO sisters and all of her friends. Prayer to all.*



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**Peggy Rick** - January 09 at 11:24 AM

MT

“ Tom and family, we are so sorry to hear about Mary. She was a grand and beautiful woman. We know she will be missed by you all. Know that we are thinking of you. God Bless.  
Terry and Mary Heidebrink

Mary and Terry - January 09 at 10:28 AM

MS

“ Mary & I were good friends & taught many classes together at the hospital. She was very intelligent & a true mentor to me. Peace to her family.



Mary Spencer-Herbert - January 09 at 09:57 AM

LJ

“ Larry MaryAnn Jansen lit a candle in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke



Larry MaryAnn Jansen - January 09 at 09:47 AM

AB

“ Annie Bauer lit a candle in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke



Annie Bauer - January 09 at 09:39 AM

CL

“ *Connie Lange lit a candle in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke*



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**Connie Lange** - January 09 at 09:04 AM

DL

“ *I'm so sorry to hear of Mary's passing!! Rest in peace Mary!*



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**Dan Lempiainen** - January 09 at 08:33 AM

RT

“ *Ray And Diane Tucker lit a candle in memory of Mary Cathleen Gengerke*



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**Ray and Diane Tucker** - January 09 at 07:46 AM

TA

“ *So very sorry to hear about Mary. Prayers to the family.*

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**Tony and Pat Andersen** - January 08 at 08:51 PM

RS

*I will miss Mary in so many ways. She was such a dear and talented lady. So very sorry.*

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**Rhea Sybesma.** - January 09 at 03:15 PM



*Tom and family-our hearts go out to you over this devastating, sad news! Mary was such a delight!*  
*Ron & Carolyn Vincelli*

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**Carolyn Vincelli** - January 10 at 04:44 PM