Shari L. Bowden, 88, of Gettysburg, passed away Wednesday, November 4, 2026, at Avera Oahe Manor, Gettysburg.

Shari Louise Bowden was born in Gettysburg on May 14, 1938, to Worth and Violet (Bassett) Stocker. In 1940, the family welcomed another daughter, Kayleen Francis. Shari and Kay spent their childhood side by side, making memories playing on the courthouse lawn, spending time at their family's theater, and enjoying trips to the river and Lake Hurley.

During her high school years, Shari was very active in school, participating in Band, Glee Club, FHA, Student Council, Mixed Chorus, serving as a class officer and FHA officer, and working on the school paper. She graduated from Gettysburg High School in 1956.

On September 4, 1956, Shari married the love of her life, Donald A. Bowden. Together, they welcomed two sons, Michael and Jamie. Shari treasured being a wife and mother. Some of the family's fondest memories were made hunting and trapping together and taking road trips.

After the passing of her beloved husband in December of 1976, Shari decided to pursue a degree in teaching. She returned to school in 1978, attending Northern State University in Aberdeen. She graduated in 1982 with a degree in elementary education.

Shari began her teaching career in a country school before joining Gettysburg Elementary School in 1984. Teaching was more than a career to Shari; it was a true passion. She took great pride in her students and cherished the opportunity to make a difference in each of their lives. Shari was always willing to go the extra mile for her students, ensuring each child felt special and supported. Known affectionately as Mrs. Bowden, she became a favorite teacher to many students throughout the years. Her dedication and impact did not go unnoticed, as she was nominated for several teaching awards, winning the "Teachers who make a difference" award twice, as well as being named "Teacher of the Week." After 25 years of teaching, she retired in 2009.

Outside of teaching, Shari enjoyed playing cards and board games, writing letters and greeting cards, and spending time in her garden. Her greatest joy, however, was her family. She loved spending time with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, who brought so much happiness and fulfillment to her life.

On November 4, 2026, she was finally reunited with the love of her life, Donald. She welcomed her sister and best friend, Kayleen, to heaven just two days later.

Shari is survived by her two sons, Michael and Jamie; six grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and many extended family members and friends who will cherish her memory.

Shari's family would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to all the staff at Avera Oahe Manor for the kindness, compassion, and care they provided during the past year.

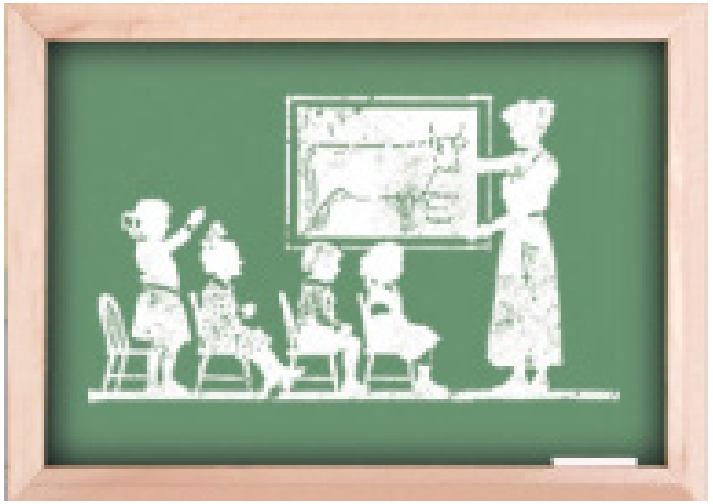


In Memory of

Shari L. Bowden

May 14, 1938 - November 4, 2026

A Teacher Takes a Hand
Opens a Mind & Touches a Heart



A Teacher Takes a Hand
Opens a Mind & Touches a Heart

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Gettysburg, South Dakota
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In Memory of

Shari L. Bowden

May 14, 1938
Gettysburg, South Dakota

November 4, 2026
Gettysburg, South Dakota

Prayer Service
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 10, 2026
United Methodist Church
Gettysburg, South Dakota

Officiating
Pastor Laura Cook

Casketbearers
Donnie Bowden, Jamie L. Bowden
Christian Bowden, John Clark, Cameron Bowden
Christopher Bowden, Devyn Lemler, Josh Cline

Honorary Casketbearers
All her great-grandchildren
Past students of the Gettysburg School System

Musicial Selections
"Amazing Grace"
"Where Her Heart Has Always Been"

Burial
Gettysburg Cemetery
Gettysburg, South Dakota