Thelma Janet Tessemaker



SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

Thelma Janet Tessemaker

September 30, 2023

Thelma Tessemaker (née Versfelt), beloved sister, wife, mother, and grandmother, passed into the arms of Jesus on the sunny autumn morning of September 30th, 2023. Her love and commitment to the Lord, as well as her courage and determination, were an inspiration to all who knew her. Thelma’s love for her family was immeasurable.

Thelma was born in Alberta in the summer of 1951 to John and Janke Versfelt. She was the third of seven siblings (John, Brenda, Irene, Wayne, Dale, and Patricia). It was a busy household, where Thelma played an active role in helping with weekly chores and caring for her younger siblings as well as completing her studies - maintaining high grades in school. Thelma was gifted in many areas. She could sew, crochet, knit, play guitar, sing, and she was very talented at drawing and painting. She was a natural when it came to fashion and beauty.

After high school, Thelma attended the University of British Columbia, working towards an education degree. During this time, she met the love of her life, Klaas Tessemaker, and they married in 1972. The newlyweds made their home in Alberta, where the birth of Jocelyn and Tanya Tessemaker followed within the next couple of years. Klaas and Thelma then moved to BC, where their third daughter,

Amanda Tessemaker (Hogewoning) was born.

Thelma’s faith in God was central to who she was. Both she and Klaas were always part of a church family and raised their daughters to know the Lord as well. When their children were small, Thelma volunteered as a Sunday school teacher, and is remembered fondly by her children for teaching them to memorize scripture, while encouraging them with small prizes!

Thelma loved her family deeply. This was seen in her delicious home-cooked meals, trips to the hospital with her husband or a child for various ailments, sewing of Halloween costumes, assisting her daughters with last minute school projects, as well as through her thoughtfully written cards and carefully wrapped gifts for each and every occasion! Her grandchildren always looked forward to a candy treat bag from Grandma when they would go and visit her. Thelma’s love was quietly shown as well through her listening ear, pondered thoughts and private prayers.

Even while raising a family, Thelma continued to take on academic challenges, studying to complete a certificate in wealth management. Using her newly learned skills, Thelma worked as an assistant to a financial planner within a life insurance and investment company for close to 20 years. During these years, Thelma demonstrated an extreme dedication to her job - but most importantly towards the clients that she served. Thelma got to know each client personally. She enjoyed interacting with anyone she met, listening to their life stories, and sharing encouraging words with them.

Thelma lived life to the full, despite facing multiple personal health challenges throughout the years. With each new diagnosis, Thelma, in faith, bravely faced both her treatment options as well as the lack thereof, when there seemed to be no answer for some of these health challenges. Thelma was friendly, kind and caring to fellow patients and medical staff in the hospitals where she was a patient. Her daughters fondly remember the times when Thelma would purchase little treats for

them from the candy striper's carts during her hospital stays.

Sadly, Thelma's most recent hospital stay spanned two months. Within that time, she experienced many acute health challenges which weakened her body further, to the point where her body could no longer recover. Her family was able to spend the last two precious weeks with Thelma at her bedside. Her family would like to express their deep gratitude to the medical staff at Abbotsford Regional Hospital, for their attentive care and empathy.

Thelma was predeceased by her father, John Versfelt, who passed away in February of 2019.

Thelma will be dearly missed by her husband, her daughters, her son-in-law (Ken), her grandchildren (Josiah, Isaac, Amarra, and Shenae), as well as by her mother and her siblings.

Thelma's memorial service will be held on Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 1:00pm at Living Hope Christian Reformed Church at 34631 Old Clayburn Rd, Abbotsford, BC V2S 4H5.

For those who are unable to attend the memorial service in person, the following link is available for streaming: https://www.youtube.com/live/bibUAwLEWeU?si=YIPPU64NFA641Xb-

In lieu of flowers, Thelma's family asks that donations be made to ReFrame Ministries (reframeministries.org), a Christian ministry that was close to Thelma's heart.

Messages of Condolence

Dear Mr Tessemaker and family,

I am so saddened to hear of the passing of your wife, mother, and grandmother.

It was my privilege to teach with Jocelyn for four years. It became clear what a beautiful mother Thelma was as her gentleness, creativity, kindness, devotion, and determination shone just as brightly in Jocelyn's classroom. May it bring you comfort to know that a generation of children in Victoria have been touched by the kindness and values Thelma so generously shared with the world.

Though the time we are given together is never enough, Thelma's life was clearly a rich and joyful journey. Her's was a life blessed and truly well-lived.

My deepest condolences,
Elaine Wooster, Victoria

— Elaine Wooster

My sister is finally at peace with no more pain. She fought so valiantly for so many years to maintain some normalcy despite many medical interventions.
Hugs and love to her family left without a wife, mother and grandmother who loved them.
Brenda

— Brenda Timmer

Our condolences to you and your family! Such a beautiful tribute to your Mom! She is Home, free from suffering!
We're sorry that we're not able to attend her memorial since we'll be in Nova Scotia.
Hugs for all of you Klaas, Jocelyn, Tanya, Ken and Amanda, Josiah, Issac, Amarra and Shenae!

— Wendy

So sorry for your loss! I have fond memories of lots of laughter with her when our families lived in Kamloops.

— Corrie

Although we met only once, we felt the family bond. While we're getting older more and more the older generation begins to start their "new" life. Leaving the next generation to become the older generation, the circle of life. But we remember them with a smile and lots of love.
Thinking of you all, on the other site of the ocean. Love from my mom Tini and Anzhelika, Chiara en Enrico.

— Tini Anzhelika Chiara & Enrico Versfelt

I'm so sadden to learn of you great loss. I came in contact with Thelma many times over the years in connection with her position at Assante Financial Management. I knew I was always in very capable hands when dealing with Thelma. She was always cheerful, kind and caring, and she treated everyone as a personal friend. Thelma Tessemaker was first class and an absolutely lovely person!

— Tony Mayo

I send my sincere condolences during this time of sorrow. The Bible promises that your loved one will live again on a beautiful paradise earth when death will be no more. (John 5:28, 29; Revelation 21:4)

— Lin Floyd

Thelma was my assistant for 20 years. We both loved serving our clientele/friends. We all loved her and will deeply miss her. Our condolences to Klaas and the family.

— Jerry Brown

I am so terribly sorry to hear of Thelma's passing. She was a wonderful person and always a joy to know and talk to. My sincere condolences to all the family. Mary Twemlow

— Mary Twemlow

Thelma was always so kind to me and made me feel that she cared about what I had to say even as a child. So sorry for your loss. Sending much love and hugs to your family.

— Jen & Mark Hasiuk

Klaas and family...m
My condolences to you all...my prayers and thoughts are with you all.

— Betty Vanderhoek

Dear Mr. Tessemaker and Family, it is with great sadness that today I am reading Mrs. Tessemaker's obituary. You all have been thought about quite often, and so many times we wanted to reach out to you, but were unsuccessful. I was just a young child, but I remember you both as just the most warmest people! Mrs. Tessemaker may be gone, but she will never be forgotten. Our condolences to you and your Family.

— Marie Hromas

I am so thankful that Thelma is no longer suffering in pain. She is now at peace with our Heavenly Father and our Saviour. May God continue to be with you Klaas and the whole family.

— Joann Simonsen

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https://www.myalternatives.ca/obituaries/tessemaker-thelma-janet

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