



## Marie Helene Reitz

December 21, 1926 - July 27, 2023

Marie Helene Reitz, 96, passed away on July 27, 2023 in Happy Valley, Oregon. She was born two months prematurely on December 21, 1926, in Fairfield, Washington, the sixth of eleven children, to Rev. Otto and Helene (nee Wittrock) Reitz.

Marie graduated from American Falls High School in Idaho, and from the Emanuel Hospital School of Nursing. She served in the Cadet Nurse Corps during WWII, and then worked as an RN in American Falls and in South Dakota. Throughout her life she had a spirit of adventure and service. In 1951, she began the first of three terms serving as a nurse with the Lutheran Church in Papua New Guinea. While in New Guinea, she worked and taught at the mission hospital near Lae, and later was assigned to the highlands where she tended the orphanage for children left behind by the mysterious Kuru disease. Seeing the critical need for trained nurses, she co-founded a School of Nursing with a certificate program enabling their students to establish clinics in their villages and work in hospitals. Both while on leave and after her service, Marie was in demand as a speaker, traveling throughout the US showing her slides and artifacts as she shared about the Lutheran Church's work in New Guinea.

Following her mission work, Marie returned to Portland where she completed both her BSRN and MSRN degrees at OHSU. She taught nursing first at Emanuel, then at Good Samaritan, and then at Linfield College, guiding many students over the years. In 1986, Marie moved to Denver and lived with her niece Arlis to complete her certificate as an Adult Nurse Practitioner. She then continued working in that capacity at Fairlawn Lutheran Home in Gresham. After retirement, Marie became active as a Parish Nurse, making contacts and supporting churches in establishing parish nursing programs throughout the region.

Even as her health began to fail and she was needing care herself, she maintained her core identity as a nurse, making efforts to help those who were trying to help her.

Marie's long time home was in Gladstone, Oregon, where she was active in her church

and community. She sang in the choir, taught Sunday School and Bible School, volunteered with the Preschool, played the organ, and played in the Handbell Choir. She enjoyed hiking, camping, golfing, and bike riding with friends and family. Marie never lost her spirit for adventure and traveled widely, making trips to Europe, returning to New Guinea, and visiting her relatives throughout the United State. Marie lived for two years at Homewoods on the Willamette, where she enjoyed the social activities and made many new friends. When her health declined in 2023, she moved to MorningStar Assisted Living in Happy Valley.

Marie was preceded in death by her sister Elisabeth Adolf, and brothers Gerhard, Robert, Armin, Theodore, Otto, and Marcus Reitz. She is survived by her sister Rosaline John, and brothers Joseph (Pat) Reitz and Karl (Mary) Reitz as well as numerous nieces and nephews, great nieces and nephews, and great-great nieces and nephews.

A Service for Marie Reitz will be held Thursday, August 3, 2023, at 10:30 am at St. Stephen Lutheran Church, 290 W. Gloucester, Gladstone, Oregon. A reception will follow the service, and then a committal will be held at 1:30 pm at Mt. View Cemetery, 500 Hilda Street, Oregon City.

Memorial gifts in honor of Marie Reitz may be given to St. Stephen Lutheran Church.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bsck-pGana2ECcob9YbyALeulahyrSkv/view?pli=1>

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85017666045?pwd=REJVSWg0RHp6L0NIRXpWUHVaN1ZtQT09>

Meeting ID: 850 1766 6045

Passcode: 320401

# Previous Events

## Memorial Service with Reception

AUG 3. 10:30 AM (PT)

Saint Stephen Lutheran Church  
290 West Gloucester  
Gladstone, OR

## Committal

AUG 3. 1:30 PM (PT)

Mountain View Cemetery  
500 Hilda Street  
Oregon City, Or

# Tribute Wall



“ *Hillside Chapel created a Webcast in memory of Marie Helene Reitz*



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**Hillside Chapel** - August 02, 2023 at 07:34 PM

MH

“ *Max and I have good memories of being with Marie at family gatherings. She was always so kind and loving. We thank God for her life of giving to others and serving God both on the mission field and in this country.*

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**Marilyn Hellberg** - August 04, 2023 at 06:39 PM