



Shirley Ann Reynolds

JUN 8, 1942 - JUN 18, 2025



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Shirley Ann Reynolds

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Shirley A. Reynolds, 83, died on June 18, 2025, at Ascension All Saints Hospital in Racine.

Shirley was born June 8, 1942, to Merlin (Kochert) and Chester H. Reynolds, Sr. in Lafayette, Indiana. She graduated from Jefferson High School in 1960 and worked for a year as a long-distance telephone operator. In 1966, she graduated from Purdue University with a B.S. degree in Audiology and Speech Sciences, and she was then hired by the Tippecanoe School Corporation in Lafayette as their first speech/language pathologist. After moving to Racine, she did post-graduate work at UW-Parkside and UW-Stevens Point. She worked as a speech/language pathologist for 44.5 years, mostly in Racine Unified schools. She retired from Gifford Elementary School on her 70th birthday in 2012.

In 1974, Shirley gave birth to her daughter, Devi Reynolds. She loved the times they spent together: trips when Devi was a child and the years they lived together after Devi's MS diagnosis. They both enjoyed discussing books, watching Bucks games, movies, Christmas, TV, rainy days, and their endless conversations about politics.

In the 1960s, Shirley became an advocate for social justice. She marched for several causes in Lafayette, Racine, Madison, Milwaukee, Springfield IL, and Washington D.C., including Take Back the Night, LGBTQIA+, and Black Lives Matter marches. She became a whistle-blower in 1968 when she observed her employer in her Indiana school district systematically refusing to hire Black teachers, and that action led to change. When she was president of the Racine National Organization for Women, the Racine Intellectual Freedom Committee, and the Racine Coalition for Peace and Justice, she organized programs for the community on a variety of women's rights issues; censorship in our schools; and U.S. foreign policy, specifically, opposition to the U.S. attack on Iraq in 2003. She spoke out against violence against women through her work as a task force chair for Wisconsin N.O.W. She was an active member of the Racine Education Association during her working years. She served on the board of the Racine chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness for six years.



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She was an active member of Olympia Brown Unitarian Universalist Church. She served as president of the Board of Trustees as well as serving on other church committees. Since 2017, she headed the church's Good Shepard Committee. She organized meals, rides, cards, and other help for church members in need. She never hesitated to lend a sympathetic ear and words of comfort.

Shirley was guided to live her life according to the UU Covenant and the Eight Principles of the faith. Her recent involvement with the 8th Principle Committee led to efforts that sought to eradicate white supremacy, improve the lives of Native Americans, transgender community, the incarcerated, and other often marginalized groups.

As someone with a profound hearing loss she was a passionate advocate for awareness of and accommodations for those coping with hearing loss. After her retirement, she joined the local chapter of Quota International, an organization that supported people with speech, language, and hearing problems. Through her involvement with Quota, she planned community programs in Racine and Kenosha about hearing loss and technology, and she became an advocate for "looping" buildings, including the Racine Public Library, to benefit people.

She enjoyed swimming in the Racine quarry and Lake Michigan, attending theater, visiting art museums, gardening, cooking for friends, and traveling within the U.S. and abroad. Her first trip abroad she traveled to Finland, Sweden, and Estonia when Devi was a student at the University of Helsinki. Later, she visited China, Canada, and several European countries. She was an avid reader and a long-time member of her book club. She was an amateur photographer and displayed her work at the Wustum Museum, Spectrum Gallery, Racine Arts Council, Anderson Art Center in Kenosha, and on Washington Island, WI. She also enjoyed her membership in Adventures in Life-Long Learning at UW-Parkside for several years.

Shirley is survived by her daughter Devi of Racine; sisters Kay (Howard) Berninger and Barbara (David) Warford of Lafayette IN; Rebecca Allinson of Forest IN and Cindy (Michael) Young of Frankfort IN; sisters-in-law Ruth Ann Reynolds of Sellersburg IN and Avelina Reynolds of Lafayette; Cousin Marjorie Reynolds (Mike Shoemaker) of Palm Desert CA. She is survived by several nieces and nephews and by countless wonderful friends including lifelong BFF, Sharon Jordan of Schenectady NY. She was preceded in death by her parents, brothers Chester Reynolds Jr. and Michael Reynolds, her stepparents, Marilyn Reynolds and Elmer Miller, and her "fifth sister" Mary Ann Maiers. She loved them all.



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A memorial service will be held at First Presbyterian Church, 716 College Ave. on October 25, 2025, at 11:00 AM and will be officiated by Rev. Tony Larsen, Rev. Darren Utley and Rev. Jana Blazek. A time of visitation will be held at the church on Saturday from 10:00 AM until the time of service. A reception will follow after services at the church. The church is handicapped accessible, and assisted listening devices are available. In lieu of flowers, memorials are suggested to The Reynolds Family Trust (C/O Mason Law, 245 Main Street #201, Racine, WI 53403), which will aid Devi in the transition.

Arrangements by Wilson Funeral Home were made for cremation.

Please check this tribute closer to Oct 25, 2025, for the links to watch the service via Zoom.



Events

Shirley Ann Reynolds

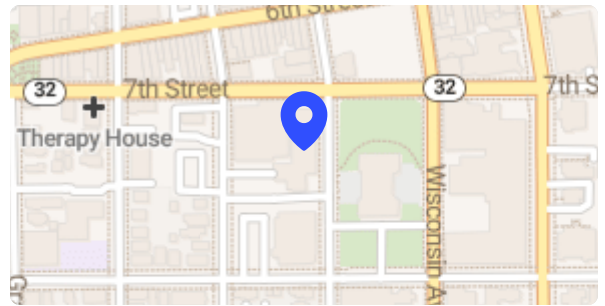
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Visitation

Saturday, October 25, 2025

10:00 AM - 11:00 AM CT

First Presbyterian Church
716 College Ave, Racine WI

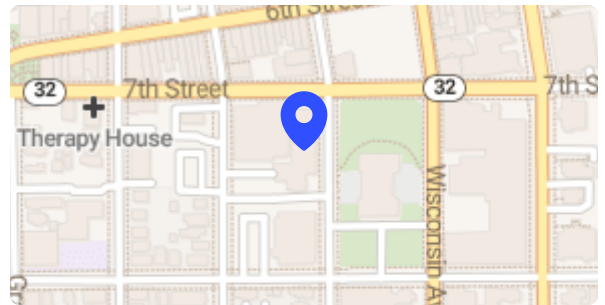


Memorial Service

Saturday, October 25, 2025

11:00 AM CT

First Presbyterian Church
716 College Ave, Racine WI

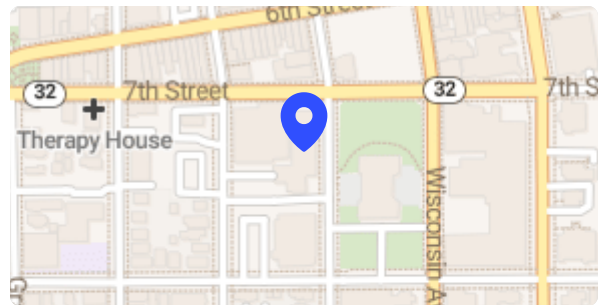


Reception

Saturday, October 25, 2025

First Presbyterian Church
716 College Ave, Racine WI

A reception will follow after services at the church.





Tribute Wall

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DD

Debbie Davis lit a candle in honor of Shirley.

So sorry, to hear of Shirley's passing. I thought the world of Shirley. I will cherish my last hug with her always. RIPT thank you, for letting me know. Debbie

October 2 at 5:06 PM



k

Kadee Paap posted:

I worked with Shirley at the original Knapp Elementary School. She was a delightful speech therapist to work with. I threw her first retirement party for her when she retired the first. She often mentioned her daughter and how much she loved her to your family.

July 14 at 11:30 PM

k

Kadee Paap posted:

Sorry to hear about Shirley... I threw her retirement party for her the first time she retired. She was a delightful speech therapist to work with. A good soul. So sorry to hear of your loss.

July 14 at 11:21 PM

KB

Kay Berninger posted:

Shirley was my older sister and I will always remember what a giving, loving person she was. She never forgot anyone's special days. I will so much miss her phone calls and emails, but most of all her kind heart. She will be missed by so many people, especially two little sisters. Rest in peace, Shirley. Love you dearly. Kay

June 27 at 2:47 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Shirley by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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