



Alice May Richards

March 2, 1934 - May 15, 2026

Pastor Alice M Richards, age 92, passed away on Friday, May 15, 2026, at the Pine Valley Community Village. She was born on March 2, 1934, to Phillip and Margaret Winslow and raised on the rural farm east of Twin Bluffs with her 4 Winslow sisters. Alice graduated from Ithaca High School in 1952 as the Valedictorian of her class. Her early excellence in forensics beautifully set the stage for her later calling. Following high school, she promptly married her high school sweetheart, Orlen Richards.

Alice and Orlen farmed for many years on the family farm north of Ithaca. They were both recognized as the Richland County Outstanding Young Farmers in the late 60's and hosted the Richland County Holstein Twilight Meeting in the early 70's. During the 60's and 70's Alice was very active as a community organizer working in roles to benefit area residents. She was a 4-H project leader for many years, teaching area girls cooking lessons. One particular story Alice shared was from the late 1950's, she along with several other area homemakers, spent an evening sleeping overnight in the basement A.D. German Warehouse, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright to test the suitability of the structure as a nuclear fallout shelter. She told her son, "I wouldn't ever do that again." She also regularly taught Sunday School at the Willow Valley United Methodist Church and filled leadership roles there. However, Alice was not satisfied with the role as a homemaker and farm wife. She, and God, had more written in her plan. In the 70's, Alice began a prolific career as a Certified Lay Speaker in the Wisconsin Conference of the United

Methodist Church. She filled the pulpit regularly in many churches throughout Southwest Wisconsin and was a valued speaker at Mother and Daughter Banquets, sharing her life lessons and how they related to the Bible. This eventually led to a second career for Alice and a return to school for two years. In the late 1980's, Alice achieved the position as a Local Lay Pastor in the United Methodist Church and was appointed to the two-point charge of the New Hope and Retreat United Methodist Churches. Alice served those congregations faithfully, growing each congregation and strengthening the parishioners' relationships with God. She made many close relationships with the folks of the DeSoto area and particularly enjoyed when husband Orlen, and daughter Joy, would come to DeSoto on weekends and Orlen would play the organ at their services.

Pastor Alice retired after 12 years at New Hope and Retreat and returned to the family farm outside Ithaca to continue as an anchor of the Richards family. Regular "Packer Parties" and holiday gatherings at her house included too many kids for the house to handle, a game of "Pit" which had to be played in a separate room with the door closed as it often got way too loud, and ridiculous amounts of potato chips with sour cream and onion dip. And if you heard Grandma Alice let out a scream the Packers either just scored, or turned the ball over. You were never sure which until you checked for yourself.

Alice was a woman of incredible strength, sharp wit, and competitive spirit. When a young man she baptized went on to win state and national collegiate wrestling titles, she lovingly joked, "You have to agree, I did a pretty good job of baptizing him." Above all, she was a woman of profound prayer, even leading service for her fellow residents at Pine Valley just a week before her passing.

Survivors include 1 daughter and 3 sons, Annette Louis, Ron (Debbie) Richards, Robert (Cheryl) Richards, and Marty (Teri) Richards. 10 Grandchildren, Chris Louis, Bret (Carrie) Louis, Aaron Richards, Courtney (Kyle) Hemphill, Owen (Emmy) Richards, Jenny (Brian) Waldner, Nathan

(MacKenzie) Richards, Holly (Joe) Stukel, Laurel Richards, Leah Richards and fiancé' Asher Layton, 5 German and Swiss Exchange Grandchildren, 25 Great Grandchildren, brother-in-law John Richards, and brother-in-law Jim Connors.

She was preceded in death by her husband Orlen, a daughter Joy Richards, Grandson's Gene Phillip Richards, Kyle Richards, Sisters, Charlotte (Tom) Williams, Carol Amelong, Mary (Jim) Connors, Ruth (Neal) Anderson, and sister-in-law Lynette Richards.

A Celebration of Alice's Life will be held on Friday, May 29, 2026, at 1:00 PM at the Clary Memorial Funeral Home in Richland Center. Friends may call on Friday, May 29, 2026, from 10:00 AM until the time of service at the funeral home. Burial will be held at Willow Valley Cemetery at a later date.

Memorials may be given to the Willow Valley United Methodist Church. www.clarymemorialfuneralhome.com

Cemetery Details

Willow Valley Cemetery

County Trunk BA
Richland Center,, WI 53581

Previous Events

Celebration of Life - Visitation

MAY 29. 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Clary Memorial Funeral & Cremation Service, LLC
26777 Jelland Drive
Richland Center, WI 53581
(608) 647-6390
josh@clarymemorial.com
<https://clarymemorialfuneralhome.com/>

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Tribute Wall

JB

“ Jim Connors & Amy Booth purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Alice May Richards.



Jim Connors & Amy Booth - May 29 at 11:05 AM



“ 86 files added to the album Life Tributes



Clary Memorial Funeral Home - May 29 at 10:55 AM

DR

“ Dominic & Lori Rott purchased the In Heaven's Arms Bouquet for the family of Alice May Richards.



Dominic & Lori Rott - May 28 at 01:52 PM

JW

“ *Condolences to Alice's family, Jeri Walsh*

Jeri Walsh - May 23 at 05:17 AM

BB

“ *I send my deepest appreciation for Alice. I came to know her through her leadership in the church district and to admire her work as a lay pastor, She was inspiration to clergy like myself as well as to lay church members. Hers was a life well-lived. From: Billy Bross, retired member of Wisconsin Conference, Libertyville, IL*

Billy Bross - May 21 at 08:18 PM

VW

“ *My sincere sympathy to the Richards family they were close neighbors to me when I lived in the Ithaca area Alice was a great person and a terrific speaker she was always willing to help anyone*



Virginia Wiedenfeld - May 20 at 09:10 PM

JS

“ *Dear Richards family: Very sorry for your loss. Sounds like you raised a wonderful Mom and grandmother! God bless you as you celebrate her life.*

John Schmitz - May 20 at 11:55 AM

SS

“ My condolences to the entire family. I have many fond memories of Orlen and Alice going back early days in music and 4H and then later in church activities. She certainly lived her life following her convictions and had a positive influence on all she met. Shirley Steiner

Shirley Steiner - May 20 at 08:30 AM

JF

“ A lovely lady who loved the Lord. It was a joy to hear her preach! Such a devoted woman. May she rest in peace with her savior.

Jennifer Foley - May 19 at 10:10 PM

SK

“ SKARDA lit a candle in memory of Alice May Richards



SKARDA - May 19 at 04:01 PM

SK

My condolences to Pastor Alice's family. She was a inspiration to all she met.

SKARDA - May 19 at 04:03 PM

JP

“ Sympathies to the Richards Family.

Julie & Rick Pine - May 19 at 02:35 PM

DR

“ *The last words I heard her speak were, "You have to listen to God!"
She left this world living what she loved.
What a blessing to be remembered that way!*

Duane Rohn - May 19 at 12:53 PM

DN

“ *So sorry for your loss she was a wonderful example of an older lady
teaching a younger lady the things of the Lord Deb*

Deb Niemeyer - May 19 at 11:08 AM

GP

“ *Extending warmest thoughts of sympathy... 🙏*



ginger parkhurst - May 19 at 09:57 AM