

**In Memoriam**  
**Aartje (Ardis) Elbertha Kuik**

*October 30, 1927 – September 28, 2025*

Aartje (Ardis) Elbertha Kuik was born in Den Hulst, the Netherlands. She was the eldest of 5 children born to Cornelus and Aaltje van Donkersgoed

Ardis attended elementary school in Nieuwleusen. During WWII, for a period of about three years, and often under difficult circumstances, she had to travel 18 kms by bike to Zwolle and back every day for further education.

At the age of 12, Ardis became one of the organists in church. Her ability to play the organ and piano proved to be a real blessing not only in Holland, but Canada and the mission field as well. After her school years, Ardis moved to Ermelo to take up nurses' training in a hospital. This abruptly ended because on her 19th birthday Ardis and her mother were involved in a serious automobile accident where large hay bales fell onto them. This accident left her mother physically disabled for life and Ardis also suffered serious injuries. Although Ardis recovered well, she decided to terminate her studies and move back home to care for her mother.

It was during these years that she became a pen pal to a Dutch soldier who was serving his country in Indonesia. Ardis corresponded with John for more than two years. Upon his return to the Netherlands after the war, the two met for the first time. This 'soldier friend' became her boyfriend and some years later her husband. Before the 'I do's' were said, John and his family immigrated to Canada in 1950. Ardis remained in The Netherlands and said farewell to her boyfriend. Three months later she embarked on an ocean liner (first class!) to the USA. After nine days at sea, Ardis docked in New York where she then travelled by train to Chicago. She finally arrived in Sheldon, Iowa to stay with friends her father had made some forty years prior during his initial years of studying for the ministry. For nine months Ardis resided with the Swets family and she worked in a nursing home called "Holland Home".

After this time she would finally get reunited with her boyfriend in Homewood, Manitoba, Canada. On December 25, 1951 they became engaged. Ardis worked as a nurse at Carman Memorial Hospital for several years mostly on the maternity ward. She enjoyed this very much.

Although distant from her dear parents and siblings Ardis remains close to them and their growing families throughout her life. In 1965, Cornelus van Donkersgoed, a dear father and pastor passed away at the age of 80. Her

mother, who still lived in Nieuwleusen until the day of her death, passed away on April 27, 1993 at the age of 90. She was a widow for 28 years. For many of those years Ardis would visit her mother on her birthday.

The early years of farming in Carman were not easy, but life on the farm brought many joys as well. Initially, Ardis hesitated to tell her family back in Holland of working in the beet fields and among the smelly mink. This being said, Ardis had their full blessing living in Canada on a farm. Great company, friends and laughter alongside a freshly painted house, white picket fence, and flowers in the garden were some of her favourite things. Ardis taught Saturday school in Carman for 18 years. This too was something she really enjoyed. Many of these connections remained strong throughout her life.

After a long wait but in God's perfect timing, John and Ardis were richly blessed with three children from the Lord; Ronald, Jacob and Alinda. The children were 10, 8, and 6 when the family uprooted and moved to Brazil in August of 1972. One year prior, the reformed churches of North America began supporting mission work in Brazil. Reverend Van Spronsen, the first missionary felt the need for assistance in social areas. The Kuik family, John, 47 years old and Ardis, 45 years old at the time were found willing to help and settled in Sao Jose. Soon they were exposed to a new language and embraced a new culture. Before long, they opened their home to malnourished and dehydrated children for long-term care, not offered locally at the time. Ardis' nursing experience was invaluable. They hosted generally 6 to 12 babies in a room adjacent to their bedroom for around the clock care. Their own children went to the local school as well as being homeschooled in English.

In 1982, the family moved back to Canada and Ardis began work at Premier Printing as a proofreader, something she enjoyed until retiring at the age of 71. During these years the children married and began their own families which brought the blessing of grandchildren.

John and Ardis celebrated 60 years of marriage together. Only two weeks later, on July 14, 2013, God called John home to eternal glory. For eight years, Ardis lived at the assisted living in Devonshire House, where she made many friends and enjoyed many happy moments. In September 2022, she moved into Bethania Personal Care Home where she was treated with much love and care by the staff till her last breath just a few days ago. Ardis has been blessed with 13 grandchildren and a growing number of great grandchildren. Throughout her life Ardis remained strong in faith and recognized what it means to be a child of God. She lived a life of joy in His presence. Our mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend will be fondly remembered and dearly missed.