

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE OF

Ruth Marie Harden

SUNRISE:
FEBRUARY 4, 1940

SUNSET:
FEBRUARY 6, 2024



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2024 ~ 11:00 AM

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH ELGIN
3916 COUNTY LINE ROAD | ELGIN, TX 78621**

**UNDER THE AUSPICES OF
PLEASANT HILL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
1838 SAYERS RD | BASTROP, TX 78602**

PASTOR RONALD CARTER, OFFICIATING

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF RUTH MARIE HARDEN



Ruth Marie Harden was born to Viola and Isom Reese, Sr. in Bastrop, Texas (Sayers) on February 4, 1940. Ruth attended school in the Sayers community through the 8th grade and beginning in the ninth grade, she attended Emile High School. While in high school Ruth took homemaking classes (setting up her love for sewing) and was a member of both the track and basketball teams. Ruth graduated from high school in 1957 as the Salutatorian of her graduating class of six students.

Ruth accepted Christ at an early age and was baptized at the Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist Church (MBC) under Pastor S.M. Metters. She served as a faithful member all her life and was passionate about her role as an usher. While at Pleasant Hill MBC she served as the Usher President for over 50 years and was active in the St. John's District Baptist Association (Dale Subdistrict). Ruth was an "old school" usher and made sure everyone

understood the appropriate things to "do", and "not do" while in church. She stressed no moving during prayer or while the Pastor was speaking, passing through the pulpit, chewing gum, and engaging in anything that wasn't part of the church program. Ruth also took pride in seeing her family and friends at the Usher's Annual and Family and Friends Day program. She made sure to invite family far and wide since she wanted their presence at church on these special days. She also attended church every Sunday and was a faithful Sunday School attendee. Prior to his passing, she was taken to church by her husband "Moze", and following his death, her nieces ensured she made it to church every Sunday.

After high school, Ruth moved to Austin in 1960 where she shared her first apartment with her cousin Ella Wilson. While she lived in Austin she worked as a Dormitory Keeper at the University of Texas at Austin in the women's dormitories. Later in life she worked at Winn's Store and the cafeteria at Ortega Elementary in Austin, Texas. Ruth further developed her love and craft for sewing by making clothes for family, friends, and customers. She was such an avid seamstress that she often made clothing, hats, and other items with no pattern to guide her. She was truly a clothing designer that was ahead of her time.

Anyone that knew Ruth also knew that she was a wonderful baker. She baked pound cakes, pecan pies, and most notably tea cakes like no one else. There wasn't a friend or family member that wouldn't ask for tea cakes immediately upon coming into her presence. When she blessed you with tea cakes, you knew you were special to her. She also loved to plant vegetables in her garden at the farm, and barbecue for the family. But, until a few years ago we always thought that Dad/Pops was barbecuing these delicious meats – until she finally told us she was the pitmaster and he was merely tending the fire.

Ruth married Mozel Harden and to this union three sons were born – Artie, Eric, and Andrew. Her sons were her pride and joy and she always referred to them as her "boys". Although Ruth was called home to be with her Lord and Savior on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, in Austin, Texas, she was able to live back on the farm with her beloved husband and near her birthplace in the Sayers community the last five years of her life. Ruth leaves to cherish her memories and legacy, her sons Eric (Cheryl) Harden of Cedar Creek, Texas, and Andrew (Sherrie) Harden of Buda, Texas, her sister Viola Faye Goodman of Bastrop, Texas; twelve grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, and a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

She was preceded in death by her son Artie Baxter Harden; husband Mozell Harden; parents Isom and Viola Reese; brothers Isom Jr. (Man), Ruben (Pie), Earlie, Sam, Earnest, and Woodie; sisters Mary Lou Benford, Dovie Washington, Narcissus (Shug) Canada, Omega Harden, Ida Mae (Big Baby) Dove, and Ivory Mae (Tina) Flowers.

Love Letter to Mama

Today we celebrate the life of an extraordinary and strong black woman – Ruth Marie Harden. She was a loving mother who was also a wife, grandmother, sister, auntie, cousin, and friend who left an indelible mark that cannot be removed, nor erased in our hearts.

Although our hearts are heavy, it is with deep gratitude that we remember the beautiful soul who touched all of our lives in countless ways such as through: Communication (mama was a real-life coach), Cooking (mama made the best soul food and tea cakes), Sewing (mama loved to mend clothes and do patch work for family and friends), and Gardening (she was hands down the green thumb of the family).

Our mother had an immense love for everyone, as her nurturing nature extended far beyond immediate family members. She had a heart that welcomed others with open arms, offering kindness, compassion, and a listening ear to anyone who needed it. Her generosity knew no boundaries, and she taught us the importance of giving selflessly to others.

Mama had an extraordinary ability to make us feel cherished and valued – always putting her husband and family first. Her warm smile and jokes could brighten even the gloomiest of days, and her gentle touch could heal the deepest wounds. Her presence was a sanctuary, a place where we found solace and encouragement. She also had an unwavering belief that we could achieve anything we set our minds to, and that God was always there for us.

As we say goodbye, we honor your memory by carrying forward the values you instilled in us—love, kindness, resilience, belief in the power of family and our ancestor's deep faith in God. You are the guiding light as we navigate the challenges that lie ahead, and let your love be the anchor that keeps us on a solid rock foundation.

Although your time with us may have come to an early end, or so it seems, your love will continue to live on and will be forever etched in our hearts. We are eternally grateful for the gift of having you as our dear mother, and though we will miss you, we take comfort in knowing that you will forever be watching over us. We also know that you will welcome us with open arms when we leave our earthly journey and join you and the heavenly Harden/Reese family, where we will all walk around heaven all day.

Mama, please rest in eternal peace, forever.

Love always, Rick



Order of Service - Homegoing Celebration

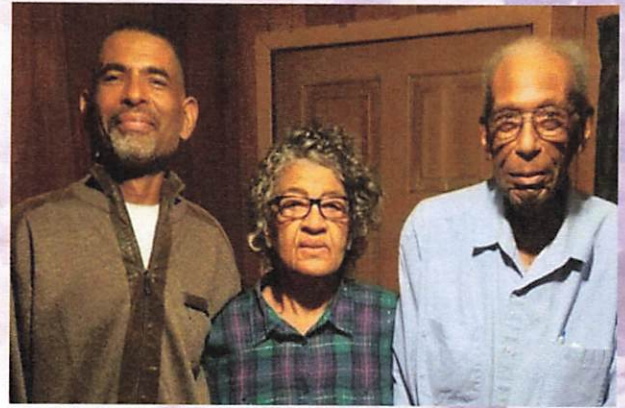
- Musical Prelude.....Sis. Carolyn Carter
- Processional.....Clergy, Pallbearers, and Family
- Musical Selection....." *This Little Light of Mine*"
Sis. Carolyn Carter
- Reading of the Holy Scriptures
- Old Testament.....Rev. Luchus McShan
Mt. Carmel Missionary Baptist Church – Elgin, Tx.
- New Testament.....Rev. Don Miller
Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist Church – Bastrop, Tx.
- Prayer.....Pastor Herbert Coleman
Rising Star Baptist Church – Dime Box, Tx.
- Resolutions.....Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist Church
St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church
- Musical Selection....." *I Won't Complain*"
Debra Edwards
- Silent Reading of Obituary and Love Letter to Mama
- Musical Selection....." *Precious Lord*"
Rev. Luchus McShan
- Expressions.....Margaret "Cookie" Owens
LaShonda Reese
Annie Coleman
Andrew "AP" Mitchell
Windy Hill
Gloria Pouncil
- Musical Selection....." *Amazing Grace*"
Kedrin Wilson
- Eulogy.....Pastor Ronald Carter
- Musical Selection....." *When The Gates Swing Open*"
Byron Mitchell
- Recessional....." *I Still Hear Mama Praying*"

MAMA

You can only have one mother
Patient kind and true;
No other friend in all the world,
Will be the same to you.
When other friends forsake you,
To mother you will return,
For all her loving kindness,
She asks nothing in return.
As we look upon her picture,
Sweet memories we recall,
Of a face so full of sunshine,
And a smile for one and all.
Sweet Jesus, take this message,
To our dear mother up above;
Tell her how we miss her,
And give her all our love.

Andrew aka "Shorty"

"Her children rise and call her
blessed..." (Proverbs 31:28)



Grandkids

Letter to Grandma Ruth

Thank you for always being who you were and for the genuine love you gave to each of us, the lessons you were able to teach us, for forever be grateful for your nurturing, care, encouragement, and strength. The force and fortitude you showed taught us how to deal with anything we may face, in this thing called "life". Your spirit will live on forever.

Grandma Ruth - you did your job and did it well so now it's time for you to rest. We love you; you are forever in our hearts.

Psalms: 73:26 - My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever. (NLT)

With the purest love,

Your Grandkids



Great Grandkids

“A grandmother’s love is forever and always.”

“A Garden of Love Grows in a Grandmother’s Heart”



Family Memories



ACTIVE PALLBEARERS

Rather "Binky" Reese
Jonathan Gratten
Jerome Reese

Tony Reyes
Danny Gratten
Havean Reese

Duane Aldridge
Robert Nunn

HONORARY PALLBEARERS

Sammy Reese
Clint Reese
Marvin Heard
Homer Johns

Dence Kellogg
Billy Joe Reese
Dewayne Harden
Donald Reese

Jesse Reyes
Marvin Harden
Jerry Reese

GRATITUDE

The family wishes to acknowledge with deep appreciation the many expressions of love and concern shown through every prayer, card, food, flowers, and thoughtful gesture during this time of bereavement.

Special thanks to Dr. Jacqueline Kerr (longtime Primary Care Physician), Ascension Seton Bastrop Hospital, Dr. Jeffrey T. Meynig (Austin Surgeons), Dr. Irfan Hydari and Dr. Yu (Ascension Seton Medical Center Austin – Palliative and Hospice Care), and all the nurses and staff that took care of our loved one during her time at their facility.

She will Rest Peacefully at...

Pleasant Hill Cemetery
Bastrop, Texas

Repast

First Baptist Church Elgin
3916 County Line Road | Elgin, TX 78621

FINAL ARRANGEMENTS ENTRUSTED TO:
ELGIN FUNERAL HOME | JOSHUA AND JAMIE HAUSLADEN, OWNERS
712 NORTH AVENUE C | ELGIN, TEXAS 78621

Programs provided by: Papergirl Creations
Sheila Carr Wilson—(512) 663-3767—sheila@papergirlcreations.com

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Ruth Marie Harden

February 4, 1940—February 6, 2024

Scan to view program



Scan me!