



Mrs. Mary Shanks

November 22, 2017

Mary Ellen Shanks was born the second of three children to the union of Bruce and Rhoda Caroline Peck Upton on June 20, 1922 in Sweetwater, Tennessee. She spoke fondly and often of her early church life, including baptism as a young girl, at sunrise, at the river.

In her youth, she was a loving daughter, niece, sister, and devoted friend. She was also a diligent and talented student, earning the May Queen crown. After graduation from Swift Memorial College in Rogersville, Tennessee, Ellen moved to the big city of Knoxville where she met John Tyler Shanks and married six months later, on

November 20, 1945. Together, over the course of forty-eight years, they made their home in Tennessee, North Carolina, Ohio and finally Georgia, where John died in 1993.

After many years of marriage, Ellen received her most cherished wedding anniversary gift, a daughter named Christy Frances. Ellen proved to be an incredible mother, sharing her love with many children over the course of her lifetime. In 1985, she warmly welcomed a son into the family, Christy's husband Keith Dennis.

While never seeking recognition for herself, Ellen was always active in her

church community and her neighborhood. She could be depended upon as a school volunteer and served as the neighborhood canvasser for every charitable cause imaginable. She loved to bake for her church and family. She enjoyed knitting and was an avid reader. She enjoyed travel, especially returning to her hometown, Sweetwater. She had a genuinely joyful spirit and a resolute faith that enabled her to be content in all circumstances. She was always willing to do anything she could to assist others, displaying compassion and kindness to everyone.

In the years to come, Ellen would welcome her beloved granddaughters Alexis Christine and Lauren Mariel Dennis into the world. Ellen was a doting grandmother, acquiring many frequent flyer miles between Shaker Heights, Ohio and Georgia. Through the years, she was an ever present, loving, and encouraging spirit in the household. She taught Alexis and Lauren their first Bible verses, how to read, how to cook, and walked them home from school on a regular basis. She was present for nearly every major life event for both Alexis and Lauren. She would often say, "I pray the good Lord will let me live to see these girls through college." Her prayer was answered.

Ellen was an active, faithful member of Zion Missionary Baptist Church. She loved her church family, especially serving with her friends on the Mother Board, her Wednesday morning Bible Study class, all of the Senior Ministry events and the many children she met and loved over the years.

After a lengthy illness, Mother Ellen permanently changed her home address at 10:32 p.m. on the eve of Thanksgiving, with her daughter, Christy, holding her hand. Her beloved older brother, Thomas Mansfield and sister Agnes Joann Upton Walden both departed this life in 2006. She is survived by her daughter, son-in-law, and two granddaughters of Marietta, GA. She also leaves to mourn one sister-in-law, Dorothy Shanks of Oakland, CA and many nieces

and nephews including: Freddie (Edna) Harrison of Philadelphia, TN; Carolyn (Otis) Latham, Bruce (Mary) Upton, Allen Upton, Sandra Hawkins, Orlando Upton, Victor (Jerri) Upton, and Faye (Fredrick) Paris, all of Sweetwater, TN. Her memory will be cherished by many friends and relatives she loved, including Christine Asbury of Marietta, GA; Timothy C. Ivey, Esq. of Solon, OH; and Eric Dean Seaton of Los Angeles, CA.

Mother Ellen lived ninety-five (95) years. Her life reflected her desires: to live simply, but fully; embrace those whom the world often does not; and please her Lord and Savior – living one day at a time, fully present, rejoicing in each moment, and wholly thankful for each day. She will be missed.

Funeral Services for Mrs. Mary Ellen Shanks will be held Saturday, December 2, 2017, 11am at Zion Missionary Baptist Church, 888 Zion Circle, Roswell, GA 30075.

Visitation 9:30-10:45am at the church.

Burial at Sweetwater Memorial Park, Sweetwater, TN

Previous Events

Visitation

DEC 2. 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM (ET)

Zion Missionary Baptist Church
888 Zion Circle
Roswell, GA 30075

Celebration of Life

DEC 2. 11:00 AM (ET)

Zion Missionary Baptist Church
888 Zion Circle
Roswell, GA 30075

Tribute Wall



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Mrs. Mary Shanks.*



November 30, 2017 at 09:53 AM



“ *To family and friends, please accept my deepest condolence for the loss of your love one. During this difficult time may you find comfort and peace in reading 2nd Corinthian 1 :3, 4.*

*S. Whiting
Atlanta, GA*

Sharon whiting - November 30, 2017 at 08:43 AM



“ *Sending prayers and condolences to Christy, Keith, Alexis and Lauren.
I pray that the love, laughter and strength which Mrs Shanks naturally emitted will keep you strong in these difficult days. I also pray that this same love will bring you laughter and light as you move forward and carry her legacy. I know she is smiling in heaven, free of earthly limitations. She will always be a part of you and will live forever in your hearts.
Love always, the Harrell family!*

Margaret - November 29, 2017 at 10:17 PM



“ *Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Mrs. Mary Shanks.*



November 29, 2017 at 12:47 PM