



Grace Gilley

March 22, 1920 - March 27, 2020

Grace Gilley

John A. Patten Kindergarten Teacher for 32 Years

Grace (Rogers) Gilley of Chattanooga, Tennessee, born on March 22, 1920 to Katurah Selma and Joel Ellison Rogers, went home to be with the Lord on March 27, 2020, where she was reunited with her beloved husband, W.C. Affectionately known by her family as “Amazing Grace,” she exemplified grace and love throughout her life in all that she did. She had just celebrated her 100th birthday, at her home, surrounded by family.

Grace was a loving wife of 69 years, beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and the golden heart of her family. Born and raised on Sand Mountain in Geraldine, Alabama, she worked on the family farm, and helped care for her seven siblings. She played basketball at Geraldine High School, and was named Miss Geraldine in 1939. She met the love of her life, W.C., in her mother’s strawberry patch, and they soon married and moved to Chattanooga. At the onset of WWII, they moved to Detroit for two years where W.C. helped build the Spitfire airplane, and Grace became one of “Rosie’s Riveters,” building large cylinder tanks that were filled with supplies to drop to the troops. Grace and W.C. returned to Chattanooga after the war and built their home, where a lifetime of family memories were made.

Grace had a gifted connection with children and was blessed to find her calling with the Chattanooga School System as a Kindergarten teacher for 32 years, primarily at John A. Patten. After serving as PTA President for many years, she was awarded the distinction of Honorary Lifetime Member of the PTA by the Tennessee Congress of Parents and Teachers. She loved her community and is fondly remembered by many former students as “their favorite teacher.” Whether it was her kindergarten class, teaching Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, cooking for her family, or coaching softball, these things brought her great joy. When school was out, it was always Grace’s yard where the neighborhood children could be found—playing ball, hide and seek and catching lightning bugs.

As a member of Lookout Valley Baptist Church, she enjoyed her Sunday School class fellowship, monthly Senior Neighbors gatherings, and quilting with her friends in the Busy Bee Quilting Club. Her quilting club produced many beautiful heirloom-style quilts that will be handed down through families for generations. She loved to sing in church, and sang with her sisters-in-law in a gospel trio on the WAPO radio show for more than a year. She had a room in her home all to herself, a small room with a window, dresser, mirror and chair, dubbed her “powder room” where she would get “dolled up” for W.C. for their fun social outings, with makeup and jewelry and a “snazzy” outfit.

Summers were filled with a bountiful crop of vegetables from the garden, which she graciously shared with family, friends and neighbors: home-grown tomatoes, okra, squash, beans and watermelon were just a few of the mouth-watering delights. Her homemade buttermilk biscuits, banana pudding, chocolate pie, and coconut cakes were family favorites, made from scratch with love, “a pinch of this and a dash of that,” and all made to perfection. Grace loved spending time outdoors, camping in their Scotty camper and

fishing on the area lakes. She would be the one to hook the big bass, with a giant smile on her face, as W.C. nodded and grinned with approval. Family vacations to Hawaii, Sedona, St. Augustine and annual beach trips fill the memory books—spending time with family meant the world to her. In her later years, she could be seen relaxing on her front porch while visiting with family and friends, and admiring the hummingbirds and flowers in her memory garden.

Grace is survived by her children, Don Gilley (Beverly), Tim Gilley, Myra Gilley Fuller (Lee); granddaughter, Tiffany Gilley Tabb (Greg); and great-granddaughters, Finley and Harper Tabb. She was preceded in death by her loving husband of 69 years, W.C. Gilley. She set a shining example for living a grace-filled, godly life. She was deeply loved and will be greatly missed. Her memory and spirit will continue to live on in the hearts of her family and friends, whom she loved so dearly.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to: Chattanooga Ronald McDonald House, 200 Central Avenue, Chattanooga, TN 37403.

Funeral services will be held on Thursday, May 28, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. at Lookout Valley Baptist Church. Burial will follow in Lakewood Memory Gardens, West. The family will receive friends from 12:00 noon until the service hour on Thursday at the church. Social distancing and CDC guidelines will be observed. The service will be live-streamed on the Lookout Valley Baptist Church Facebook page and on YOUTUBE.

Cemetery Details

Lakewood Memory Gardens, West

3509 Cummings Rd
Chattanooga, TN 37419
(423) 894-4206

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 28. 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM (ET)

Lookout Valley Baptist Church
23 Lilac Ave
Chattanooga, TN 37419
1-423-825-5335
<http://lookoutvalley.org>

A Celebration of Life

MAY 28. 2:00 PM (ET)

Lookout Valley Baptist Church
23 Lilac Ave
Chattanooga, TN 37419
1-423-825-5335
<http://lookoutvalley.org>

Tribute Wall



“ *Grace Gilley*

October 09, 2023 at 03:12 AM



“ *What a wonderful family. We are saddened for your loss. Barry and Alyce Brooks*

Barry Brooks - April 05, 2020 at 10:54 AM



“ *So sorry to hear of your loss*

Mike Weaver - April 03, 2020 at 08:50 AM



“ *Tim, I am so sorry to hear about your Mother. I know you will miss her. Be safe.*

Jackson Case, epb Retiree

Jackson L Case III - April 02, 2020 at 01:50 PM

BM

“ *Tim & Family,*
My deepest condolences for your loss. I never met your mother but what a wonderful life it sounds like she had. I do remember for your birthday each year your mom would make Ham and Cheese sandwiches/sliders I think they were called "heavenly ham and cheese sliders". They were out of this world delicious, you would bring and share with all of us in Engineering at EPB. We all looked forward to your birthday so we could enjoy your mom's sandwiches and of course celebrate your birthday as well. Peace be with you and your family.
Brenda Morgan/EPB

Brenda Morgan - April 02, 2020 at 09:51 AM

RF

“ *Amazing Grace is right. Grace was a beautiful lady both inside and out. She will be missed by all who knew her. Prayers for Myra, Tim, Don and the entire Gilley family.*

Ruth M. Feathers - April 01, 2020 at 02:54 AM

BC

“ *Mrs Grace was such an inspiration to all who knew her. My daughter loved kindergarten because she was there to inspire her with her love and encouragement along her way. There are not enough words to describe what an amazing, loving, caring, giving, and inspiring woman of God she was. She will be dearly missed but I know the cherished memories she left behind will warm the hearts of all. Our prayers go out to her family and multitude of friends left behind. May God comfort and bring peace to you all.*



Betty Raines Chapman - March 31, 2020 at 04:20 PM

LL

“ Aunt Grace was my great aunt. I knew her and Uncle Dub mostly through my parents' stories, who held them both in virtual awe. This, particularly from my understated momma (Ida Maye) was quite a compliment.

Of the many things they admired of both Uncle Dub and Aunt Grace, perhaps most often mentioned was Aunt Grace's cooking-- Momma was embarrassed that she and Daddy had overstayed some long ago Sunday afternoon visit, and was then astonished that Aunt Grace just whipped up a fried chicken dinner 'just like that!' Momma was not easily impressed, but that must have been a memorable meal as she told this over and over through the years.

That, and their gardens. Both Momma and Daddy were so impressed with both the ornamental gardens in Aunt Grace's yard, and and the beautiful vegetable gardens from which they canned and preserved every year.

Hers was indeed a life well lived; I only wish I'd known her better.

-- Lisa Lipham Lemza (Shillinger), Chattanooga, TN

Lisa Lemza - March 31, 2020 at 03:34 PM

DR

“ Don, we are saddened by her passing. She had a beautiful life. Our sincere condolences to you and your family

Don and Judy Ryan

Don Ryan - March 31, 2020 at 10:07 AM

RA

“ *She sounds like an amazing woman Mrs Myra! May God bless your family and friends and comfort you all during your loss!*
Bro Ray Griggs & Carla 💖💖

Ray - March 30, 2020 at 10:56 PM

TB

“ *Myra. I'm so sorry for your loss. Wish that we could be with you. Praying for you and your family. Teresa and Chuck Byers*

Teresa Byers - March 30, 2020 at 10:25 PM