

In Loving Memory

Your life was a blessing,
your memory a treasure.
You are loved beyond words
and missed beyond measure.

ALMETA *Joann*
SMITH

A WOMAN OF GRACE, STRENGTH,
AND UNWAVERING LOVE

Sunrise
June 29, 1951



Sunset
August 25, 2026

Saturday September 5th, 2026
10:00 A.M.

New Life Ministries
202 S. Main St.
Taft, OK 74463

Pastor Denise Gaulden, Officiating
Pastor Michael Gaulden Sr., Eulogist

Celebrating the *Life & Legacy* of *Almeta Joann Smith*

On Friday, June 29, 1951, a beautiful baby girl was born to Mattie Mae Phillips, who proudly named her Almeta Joann. As a little girl, Joann would gain a bonus dad, Billy Phillips, and together Mattie Mae and Billy raised her with love. Joann grew up in Taft, Oklahoma, where she received her formal education at Taft-Moton Public Schools, graduating with the Class of 1969 — “The Home of the Chocolate City Panthers.”

Almeta's home and heart were filled with the loves of her life — her children and grandchildren, whom she loved beyond words. Family meant everything to her, and the love she gave them was constant, strong, and unconditional.

Those waiting for her at heaven's gates proceeding her in death her mother Mattie Mae Phillips

As she began her working career, Almeta dedicated herself to serving others. For 28 years, she was employed with the State of Oklahoma, working at both Oklahoma Children's Center-North in Taft and the L.E. Rader Center in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. No matter which location she served, the children and her coworkers loved her dearly.

There was hardly a life she encountered that she did not touch, and if you were in her presence, she was never afraid to share her faith or lead a heart toward Christ.

As a faithful member of New Life Ministries for over 38 years, under the leadership of Michael and Denise Gaulden Sr., Almeta served faithfully and wore many hats. Lovingly known as Mother Smith, she served wherever she was needed. From singing in the choir, to working in the kitchen, to loving on members of the community, Almeta made sure her hands stayed busy doing all that she believed God had called her to do.

If you knew Almeta, you knew she was a strong, loving, and faith-filled woman who never turned her back on anyone. She always had a smile, a prayer, and a word of encouragement ready to help someone along the way. She believed deeply in the power of prayer. It was not something she simply talked about; her life was a daily example of what it meant to “pick up your cross” and follow Christ daily.

Almeta made sure everyone around her knew that no matter what life brought their way, God was always the answer. She encouraged others to keep Him first and to allow Him to remain the head of their lives. And on Wednesday August 25, Almeta answered the call of her Lord and Savior to come home.

Even though her passing feels untimely on this side to those who loved her, Almeta would remind us that God never fails. She would tell us that “He always works everything out for the good of those who love the Lord and are called according to His purpose.”

So, on today, we, the family of Almeta Joann Smith, will honor her the way she would want us to — by celebrating not only her memory, but also the Lord she loved so much. And through our tears, our memories, and our gratitude, we thank God for allowing us the privilege of loving her, being loved by her, and witnessing a life well lived.

Those waiting for her at heaven's gates as she entered in were her mother Mattie Mae Phillips, her grandmother Odell Jones, her husband John Smith, her aunt Pattie Fae Hamm, and her grandsons Rashad Buckner and Reuben Thomas along with her very special friend Joyce Gaulden.

Those left to cherish her memory are her sons: Bryant Shipp, Coweta, OK; Kermit Thomas III., Haskell, OK; Kristopher Shipp Sr., Haskell, OK and one daughter Martinca (Gerald Sr.) Witherspoon, Muskogee, OK. Her siblings: Brenda (Earnest) White; Ricky (Starla) Phillips; Calvin (Bobby) Feilds; and Tequila (Stanley) Titsworth long with a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, extended family and special friends who will love and cherish her memory forever.

Order of Service

Musical Prelude

Processional Funeral Directors, Clergy and Family

Musical Selection New Life Praise Team

Comfort From the Scripture

Old Testament Minister Nicholas Gaulden

New Testament Pastor Anthony Wooden

Prayer of Comfort Pastor Denise Gaulden

Musical Selection New Life Praise Team

Reading of Obituary (Silently)

Resolutions and Acknowledgements Cheri Collins

Reflections Family and Friends

Out of respect for the family, please limit to two minutes - Thank You

A Special Video Presentation

Words of Comfort

Pastor Michael Gaulden Sr.

"A Glimpse, Til Glory" Keith D. Biglow Funeral Directors

Recessional

Interment

Green Hill Cemetery

1500 N. York Street

Muskogee, OK 74403

Please drive with your hazard lights flashing on for safety

We Love you always

Forever Missed-Forever in our Hearts





A Message to My Children

Bryant, Kermit, Martinca and Kristopher
My precious children, hear my heart
Though I am gone from your sight
My love for you will never depart.

Hold on through every tear-filled day
And do not let your hope give in
For God is still before you
And He will carry you through the pain within.

When the road feels long and lonely
And the weight is hard to bear
Remember to keep God first
For His love is always there.

Do not give up, keep pressing on
Even when the nights feel long
Lean on the Lord for all your strength
And He will help you carry on.

Bryant, keep standing in faith
Kermit, keep trusting God
Martinca, keep walking in strength
Kristopher, keep holding on with courage.

Live in love, stay together
And let prayer lead your way
For when you keep God at the center
He will guide you day by day.

So wipe your tears and lift your hearts
And let His peace your comfort be
Because the God I trusted all my life
Will faithfully watch over thee.

Eternal Love always, Moma





A Tribute — from — **Grandchildren & Great-Grandchildren**

Our hearts are forever grateful for the love our grandmother showed us. She loved us deeply, prayed for us faithfully, and made sure we knew the importance of keeping God first. She took us to church, taught us how to pray, and showed us through her life what faith, strength, and unconditional love truly looked like.

No matter what we faced, she was always just a phone call away. When life felt heavy and the world seemed rough, she never judged us. Instead, she welcomed us with open arms, wise words, loving correction, and unwavering support. Her presence made us feel safe, seen, and loved.

The lessons she poured into us will remain in our hearts forever. We will carry her prayers, her love, her strength, and her example with us every day. We honor her legacy by living out the life she showed us — loving others, standing in faith, helping when we can, and keeping God at the center of all we do.

With all our love,
Grandchildren & Great-Grandchildren

Pallbearers

Friends/Family

Flower bearers

Michelle Gaulden

Angie Gaulden

Cherri Collins

Aretha Pierce

Starla Phillips

Latonya Faulk

Margaret Taylor

Acknowledgements

The family of Almeta Joann Smith acknowledges with sincere appreciation the comforting messages, phone calls, floral arrangements, and acts of kindness during this time of bereavement. May God bless you all we love you.

Special Thanks

We would like to say to the New Life Ministries church family, there are no words that could ever be enough to say how much we love and appreciate all the years of love shown to our mother and this family. You all have held us in our deepest heartbreak and God knows we would have been lost without your support.

Professional Services Entrusted To

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