
Pallbearers

Kennedy Berry
Daniel Feldmann
Samuel Jones
Matthew Feldmann

Francis Feldman
Adam Frierson
George Ricks

Honorary Pallbearers

Leon Berry
Elie Green
Jordan Pugh
Kevin Berry

RJ Frierson
Jamar Pugh
Jarrol Pugh
Jackson Arnett

Flower Bearers

Delores Campbell
Margaret Gilmore
Luevonnia Clark
Karen McCloud

Carolyn Shipman
Michelle Walker
Chanda Davis
Ada Feldman

Rose Anderson

Acknowledgements

Perhaps you sang or
sat quietly in a chair,
Perhaps you sent a floral spray,
If so, we see it here.
Perhaps you spoke the kindest words,
as any friend could say.
Whatever you did to console our hearts,
We thank you so much, whatever the part.

The Family

Final Resting Place

Crown Hill Memorial Park & Mausoleum
11825 Pippin Road, Colerain Township, Ohio 45231

Repast

Immediately Following Interment
Gray Road Church of Christ
4826 Gray Road, Cincinnati, OH 45232



Known for Excellence. Trusted for Value.

Celebrating THE LIFE OF



Mary Elizabeth Rutland

Sunrise: April 18, 1935 - Sunset: February 5, 2026

February 21, 2026
Visitation: 10:00am
Funeral Service: 11:00am
Gray Road Church of Christ
4826 Gray Road
Cincinnati, OH 45232
Kevin Berry, Officiating

Obituary

Mary Elizabeth (Johnson) Rutland, age 90, passed away peacefully in her sleep on February 5, 2026, at her Dayton home.

Mary was born at home to Mary Fannie Ricks and Oscar Johnson in Sheffield, Alabama in Colbert County on April 18, 1935. At an early age she obeyed the Gospel and was baptized at the Nineteenth Street Church of Christ in Sheffield. Mary attended grade school at Sheffield Colored School and graduated from Sterling High School in June of 1953. She lettered in Basketball, an achievement for which she was very proud. Mary married Kerney Eugene Rutland Jr., and together with their son Howard Eugene Rutland, the family moved to Cincinnati, Ohio where the Rutland family adventures really began. Together Mary and Kerney built a homemade, two-seater, Stits Playboy aircraft. It started on the living room coffee table, moved to the garage, and when it got too big for the garage it was lovingly placed on top of their VW Bug and carefully driven through the streets of Cincinnati to a hangar at Lunken airport. Once they completed the build, Kerney went on to successfully fly their plane while Mary and Howard cheered him on. Mary & Kerney were members of the Cincinnati Tailspinners Chapter of the Experimental Aircraft Association, a national organization for builders of do-it-yourself aircraft. Mary and Kerney enjoyed many hours flying their plane to see family and friends all over the United States.

Mary worked for the United States Environmental Protection Agency. She served as a biological technician in the Drinking Water Research Division. She participated in two high priority studies of note: the Newport Water Treatment Plant and Distribution System Study and the Cincinnati Municipal Water System Study. In 1975, Mary received a Certificate of Merit as a result of her contribution and achievement within the program. One superior of hers said, "Mary's honesty, integrity and loyalty are above reproach. I consider Mrs. Rutland to be an employee of the highest caliber." Mary loved working with people and later in life she stayed busy by working at the historic Amos Shinkle Bed & Breakfast in Covington, KY with her dear friends Harry Nash, whom she had worked with previously at the USEPA, and his partner Mayor Bernard J. Moorman. She also helped at the Six Acres Bed & Breakfast with owner, Kristin Kitchen, an historic stop on the Underground Railroad for escaped slaves to sleep in a third-floor attic room. Mary enjoyed many hobbies including needlepoint, crochet, latch hook rug making, ceramics, and stained glass but what she loved most was helping people. She would visit shut-ins, take the elderly shopping, as well as volunteer wherever help was needed.

Mary is preceded in death by her mother, Mary Fannie Ricks, favorite uncle, Fort Ricks, brother, Albert Johnson, sister, Margaret Berry, and son, Howard Eugene Rutland. She is survived by her brother, Leon Berry, nieces and nephews Debra Berry, Kennedy Berry, Darlene (Kelvin) Pugh, Jordan Pugh, Jarrol Pugh, Jamar Pugh, Kevin Berry, Dena (Ronald) Frierson, grandchildren, RJ Frierson, Adam Frierson, Jasmine Frierson, more nieces and nephews Elie Green, Eric Armstrong, Sonia Johnson, Linda Johnson, Wanda Lewis, Brittany Phillips, Jamaya Williams, cousins Nancy Ricks, Michael (Diane) Ricks, KaSandra (Francis) Feldmann, George Ricks, Daniel Feldmann and a host of other relatives and friends.

Mary absolutely loved serving her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Through the years, she taught children's bible class and served at the food pantries of: the 19th Street Church of Christ in Sheffield, Alabama; the Madisonville Church of Christ in Cincinnati, Ohio; the Main Street Church of Christ in Middletown, Ohio; the Gray Road Church of Christ in Cincinnati, Ohio; and then at the Needmore Road Church of Christ in Dayton, Ohio. She was faithful in her service to God unto her death.

Order of Service



Master of Ceremony: Richard Melson Needmore Road Church of Christ

- Musical Prelude
- Parting View Immediate Family
- Congregational Singing Chris Poole
- Opening Song *A Friend Like You*
- Prayer George Williams
- Scripture Kennedy Berry
Old Testament: Psalm 116:15 / New Testament Revelation 14:13
- Congregational Singing Chris Poole
- Song: *Because He Lives*
- Obituary Richard Melson
- Resolutions & Cards Michelle Walker
- Special Remarks Richard Melson
- Congregational Singing Chris Poole
- Song *The Great Redeemer*
- Eulogy Kevin Berry
- Congregational Singing Chris Poole
- Song *Home of the Soul*
- Benediction Kevin Berry
- Recessional Clergy, Pallbearers, & Family

