

Tributes from the Sons
YOU WILL ALWAYS BE IN OUR HEARTS!



RALPH JEROME MATHIS

Seeing Mama every day meant I got to witness her love in the little things—her laughter, her strength, and her way of making everyone feel at home. She knew I'd protect her, but the truth is, she was always protecting me too.



GREGORY LEON MATHIS

Mama, I couldn't wait to give you a hug again, and thank you for always keeping me in your heart.



JAMES DAVID MATHIS, III

Mama passed down her wisdom to me, especially the importance of patience. Her steady presence taught me how to stay calm, think things through, and move with purpose.



ERIC RAYNARD MATHIS

Mama could count on me to make the tough calls. She trusted my judgment, and I carry that responsibility with pride. She was my rock.



RODNEY KIMBALL MATHIS

Mama always made space for my voice, my questions, my journey. She believed in me—and that belief became the foundation I still stand on today.

Pallbearers

- Jamaal Mathis
- Jamarcus Mathis
- Gary Grimes
- Cody Mathis
- Micheal Kennedy
- Ennis Grimes Jr



Acknowledgments

On behalf of her beloved sons, We want to extend our sincere appreciation to all of you who took the time to attend our beautiful Mother's funeral service. Your presence, kind words, and condolences have been a source of comfort during this difficult time. We will always remember your support and love.

- Ralph, James, Eric and Rodney



Arrangements Entrusted to
Edwards Small Mortuary



Interment

Willow Lake Memorial Garden
Fort Valley, Georgia

Repast

The Historic
Central Union Missionary
Baptist Church
Fort Valley, Georgia



A CELEBRATION OF LIFE
FOR
Emma Pearl Mathis



JUNE 4, 1937 – MAY 15, 2025

SATURDAY, MAY 24, 2025
1:00 PM

The Historic Central Union Missionary Baptist Church
502 Preston Street, Fort Valley, GA

Pastor Anthony J. Thomas, III, Officiant

Rev. James D. Rice, Eulogist
Associate Minister

The Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
D'Iberville, Mississippi

Remembering Pearl

Emma Pearl Mathis, affectionately known as “Pearl,” was born on June 4, 1937, to the late Emmitt and Lessie Grimes in Crawfordville, Georgia. As the youngest of three children, Pearl lived a life marked by unwavering faith, deep devotion to family, and a heart committed to serving others. She touched the lives of many through her kindness and selflessness, living in such a way that, upon her arrival, Heaven welcomed her with the words, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

She received her early education in Greene County before her family relocated to Fort Valley, Georgia, in 1947. Pearl graduated from H.A. Hunt High School in 1955 and attended Fort Valley State College. She later served the college as a telephone operator and in public safety, where she became a trusted and steady presence. Known for her straightforward nature and quiet strength, Pearl offered guidance, encouragement, and compassion to students and colleagues alike.

A devoted member of Central Union Missionary Baptist Church, Pearl served as an Usher and worshipped with grace and humility. Her faith extended beyond the church and was evident in her daily life—she treated others with warmth, stood firmly on her values, and believed in doing what was right. She raised her children with love and discipline, cared for the sick, and uplifted those in need. Her life was her ministry, and her faith was her foundation.

Pearl was united in marriage to the late James David Mathis, Jr. Together, they raised five sons: Ralph Jerome, Gregory Leon, James David III, Eric Raynard, and Rodney Kimball Mathis.

Though the youngest of her siblings, Pearl stood out with her wit, wisdom, and charm. She lit up any room with her presence. As the matriarch, she shaped generations with her steady hand and open heart, nurturing not only her sons and grandchildren but also nieces, nephews, and cousins who found comfort and belonging in her home. Her house was a haven of love and joy. Thanksgiving at her table, filled with home-cooked favorites, was a cherished tradition. She nourished both body and soul, leaving a lasting legacy of love, wisdom, and strength.

Pearl was a proud Fellowship Member of the Pride of Fort Valley #480 Order of the Eastern Star. She was known for saying what she meant and meaning what she said. She instilled in her children the values of compassion, unity, and peace. Her bond with her sister and best friend, Lillian, was known to all—where one went, the other followed. They were truly inseparable.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Emmitt and Lessie Grimes, her husband James David ‘JD’ Mathis, Jr., her siblings: Lillian Kennedy and Ennis Grimes, Sr., and her son Gregory Mathis.

Pearl leaves her memories to be cherished forever by her sons: Ralph J. Mathis, James D. Mathis III, Eric R. Mathis (Joicy) and Rodney K. Mathis; grandchildren: Wendy N. Boozer, Jasmine N. Mathis, Jamaal R. Mathis, Jamarcus G. Mathis, Jade A. Mathis; sisters-in-law: Mildred Houston, Bettye Jean Clark, Jewel Mathis, Shirley Mathis, Doris West, Lois Mathis; a host of great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, cousins, other relatives and friends.



Order of Celebration

A Service Honoring the Life of Emma Pearl Mathis

PRELUDE

PROCESSIONAL

OPENING RAYER

Rev. Anthony J. Thomas II

SELECTION

Min. Dexter Davis

SCRIPTURES

Old Testament

Rev. Samuel Wayne West

New Testament

Rev. Keith Rountree

REFLECTIONS

Ernestine Johnson

Jamie Mae Jones

Minnie Marks Jones

Charlie Roy Evans

SELECTION

Min. Dexter Davis

TRIBUTE TO GRANDMA

Jasmine Mathis Jade Mathis

Jamarcus Mathis Jamaal Mathis

Wendy Boozer

SELECTION

Min. Dexter Davis

EULOGY

Rev. James D. Rice

Associate Minister, Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BENEDICTION

RECESSIONAL

POSTLUDE