

YOUR LIFE WAS A BLESSING YOUR MEMORY A TREASURE

ACTIVE PALLBEARERS

Grandsons & The Willow Spring Church

FLORAL BEARERS

Grandaughters & The Willow Spring Church



GOD'S GARDEN

God looked around His garden  
And found an empty place.  
The then looked down upon the earth,  
And saw your tired face.  
He put His arms around you  
And lifted you to rest.  
God's garden must beautiful,  
He always takes the best.  
He knew that you were suffering,  
He knew that you were in pain.  
He knew that you would never  
Get well on earth again.  
He saw the road was getting rough  
And the hills were hard to climb.  
So He closed your weary eyelids  
And whispered, "Peace be thine."  
It broke our hears to lose you  
But you did not go alone...  
For part of us went with you  
The day God called you home.

The Family

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thank you to caretaker  
Farrah Janell, Jackie Mason and  
Linda Dunston-Alston

*Interment*  
*Piney Grove Cemetery*  
*Barber Mill Road*  
*Clayton, NC 27520*

CELEBRATING THE LIFE & LEGACY OF

*Mother Josephine*  
"RAY" WILLIAMS-HERRING

SEPTEMBER 22, 1923 ~ MARCH 24, 2025

Sunday, March 30, 2025 12:00PM

The Willow Spring Church  
3623 Polenta Drive Clayton, NC

ALWAYS & FOREVER MISSED BEYOND WORDS

Mother Ray was born September 22nd, 1923, to the late Johnny and Patsy (Rowland) Williams in the rural Johnston County area. She traded this life for an eternal crown on Monday, March 24th, 2025, at Johnston UNC Health Hospital in Clayton, NC.

Born the fifth of seven children into the Williams family during the harsh years of the GREAT Depression, Mother Ray faced early tragedy. The loss of her mother in childbirth cast a long shadow, leaving her and her sisters to be raised by their father, Johnny. A sharecropper by trade, he instilled in them a strong work ethic, teaching them the demanding labor of the farm. They rose to the challenge, becoming skilled partners in their livelihood. Mother Ray's formal education began at Ransom Academy and Short Journey, culminating at Johnston County Training School. Amidst the rigors of farm life, she discovered a passion for the precise logic of mathematics and the intricate workings of chemistry, subjects that sparked her imagination.

Mother Ray was a cornerstone of her community, generously sharing her knowledge and skills. She introduced countless young people to the world of work, often bringing them along to assist local farmers. Her grandchildren learned the value of labor, particularly the art of barn tobacco, earning money for their school needs. Beyond practical skills, she nurtured minds and spirits, teaching children the alphabet, numbers, Bible verses, and public speaking, always emphasizing the power of prayer.

Her culinary talents were legendary, especially on weekends, when her home became a haven for hungry neighborhood children. Later, she served as a respected dietitian at Meredith College until her retirement. Mother Ray's life was defined by service. She cared for everyone, a trait she inherited from her father, and extended this dedication to her church, where she served as custodian. She also sang in the Cleveland Community Choir.

A skilled seamstress and avid quilter, she formed a singing group with her quilting friends, performing throughout the county. She also possessed a deep love for fishing, demanding quiet and patience from those who joined her. Mother Ray had a flair for style, always impeccably dressed in matching hats, wigs, high heels, and jewelry, believing in presenting herself well for her husband and the Lord.

Her life spanned significant historical events, from wartime rationing to the Civil Rights Movement and the election of President Barack Obama. Despite facing adversity, she remained a beacon of strength and love. She was predeceased by her husband, James Cleveland Herring; her mother-in-law, Estelle Peterson; sons Howard and Ray Charles Williams; daughters-in-law Willie May Montague and Katie Williams; son-in-law Kenneth Eugene Sanders; sisters Vandella Hinton, Annie Florence Sanders, Eliza Mae Session, and Lila Hodges; brothers Jesse, Ransom, and Leonzo Williams; grandchildren Dwight Williams and Sonya Harris; and great-grandchildren Trey Perry and Austin Graham.

She leaves to cherish her precious memories five sons Raymond Williams (Minnie) of Clayton, NC, Robert Williams (Angela) of Raleigh, NC, James Williams (Debra) of Clayton, NC, George Williams (Amanda) of Angier, NC and Cardell Williams of Smithfield, NC; one daughter Margaret Sanders of Benson, NC; and one daughter in love JoAnn Howard of Garner, NC. 3 god-grandchildren Ida Morton, Wyatt Ragland and Ernetta Smith; 28 grandchildren, 65 great grandchildren, and 35 great great grandchildren and a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, and friends along with her special friend and classmate Mother Bernice Smith.



# Order of Service

The Processional..... Clergy and Family  
 Officiating ..... Elder Douglas Barnes  
 Selection .....Sis. Kareema King

## The Holy Scriptures

Old Testament Reading (Psalm 23) ..... Pastor Fred McNeill  
 New Testament Reading (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) Pastor Oscar Holland

Prayer Of Comfort..... Pastor Wyatt Ragland

Organ Selection ..... Apostle Clayton Lee

Acknowledgements & Tributes ..... Sis Mildred Burtch

## Obituary

Remarks (2 minutes please)

Representative of the Family: James Williams

Representative of the Community: Dr. Eva Mitchell

Representative of the Church: Mother Frances Hinton

Selection ..... Sis Maureen Gupton

Eulogy ..... Pastor La'Quon Rogers

Invitation/Benediction ..... Pastor La'Quon Rogers

Recessional ..... Clergy and Family

