



## Ms. Bessie Armstrong

November 26, 1923 - June 1, 2022

### Obituary

#### The Story of Bessie Mae Armstrong

Bessie Mae Tabb was the eighth child of 18 children born to Walter and Hattie Jackson Tabb, on November 26, 1923, in Greenwood, Mississippi.

Bessie was educated in Money, Mississippi through the third grade at which time she was needed to work on her family's sharecropping farm.

She accepted Christ at an early age, and often helped her mother express the love of Christ through taking those who were sick and shut in home-cooked meals.

Bessie married Eddie Lee Smith at the age of 16, and they were blessed with 10 children. In 1946, after having their fourth child, she and Eddie Lee moved to Kansas City, Kansas.

In 1960 they moved to Kansas City, Missouri, and joined Wabash Avenue Church of God. There, Bessie learned to read. Despite her third grade education, Bessie had an incredibly sharp mind. She became a leader, in charge of the kitchen ministry where she organized, prepared and served meals for all major events through 2000. Her favorite items to cook for church

members were chicken, dressing and peach cobbler.

In addition, Bessie was the head of the Usher Board, and a children's church teacher. She also enjoyed attending Church of God conferences, fellowshiping with other believers and growing deeper with the Lord.

Mother Bessie, as she was lovingly known at church, has helped many generations of Wabash members, (now Bethel Family Worship Center), grow closer to God through her kindness, dedication, generosity and prayers.

Bessie's two passions were her family and cooking. She loved to make large Sunday meals for her family. And friends have fond memories of her whipping up meals for them whenever they dropped in.

In addition, Bessie enjoyed planting beautiful flowers yearly. Her neighbors said she had a "green thumb". Bessie also would plant vegetables (green onions, peppers, greens and tomatoes) for her family to enjoy.

In the 1960s through 1976, Bessie worked as a short order cook at Powel's Restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri. And in her later years she worked as a cook at Santa Fe Elementary School, also in Kansas City. But she most enjoyed starting her own in-home daycare business in 1976. She provided care for the children of many educators, and her own grandchildren. She ran her business for 15 years.

In 1979 Bessie met and married Curtis Armstrong. He preceded her in death.

Bessie's foundation throughout her life was her faith in Jesus. She taught her children, and grandchildren that God is good, faithful, and he never forsakes those who believe in him. As she grew older, and was less able to

attend church, she still loved to sing hymns, quote scriptures and pray. There is no doubt that the faith in God that was passed on from her parents she has passed on to her children and others.

Bessie is preceded in death by her dear parents Walter and Hattie Tabb. Her brothers: Scott, George, Manuel, John, Walter Jr., Randle, Jacob, and Mosell. And sisters: Syby, Lucille, Ester, Dora, Lillie Dell, Laura, Arie, JoAnn, and Katie. She is also preceded in death by six of her beloved children: Ophelia Johnson, Carmen Miranda Tidwell, Joel Smith, Vernon G. Smith, Darryl Andrew Smith, and Sammie Lee Smith.

Bessie is survived by her children: Eddie Lee (Lori) Smith, Jr., of Darby, Montana, Barbara Jean (Robert) Rashad of Kansas City, Missouri, Dr. Tyrone Prescott (Teresa) Smith of McDade, Texas, and Elvira (Kaseem) Hurley of Raymore, Missouri. Bessie also had two special women in her life that she also considered her daughters Isabell Nash and Althea Henderson.

Bessie had a special place in her heart for her 26 grandchildren: Tekhan Manyatta a.k.a. Byron Smith, Lee Smith, Arbra Shari Smith, Almitra Buzan, Ashley Washington, Ricky Randle, Joi Johnson, Kermit Johnson, Roy Johnson Jr., Trenton Johnson, Dr. Michael Tidwell, Leslie Tidwell Franklin, Huston Snell, Shanell Jackson, Lee J. Washington, Darryl Washington, Yale Washington, Chauntae Robinson, Felicia(Niecy) Smith, Vernon Smith, Roxanne Randolph-Tinner, Alexander Randolph, Tiffany Avery, Tyrone Smith, Jr., Dale Purnell and Charles Purnell. As well as a host of great grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Funeral Service will be held Saturday, June 18, 2022, 11:00am at Bethel Family Worship Center. Interment XII Gates Memorial Gardens. Visitation will be from 9am-11am at the church. Service conducted by Lawrence A. Jones &

Sons Funeral Chapel. Condolences may be shared on our website.

To send flowers  
to the family or plant a tree  
in memory of Ms. Bessie Armstrong, please visit our floral store.

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# Tribute Wall



“ *A Memorial Tree was planted for Ms. Bessie Armstrong  
We are deeply sorry for your loss ~ the staff at Lawrence A. Jones  
& Sons Funeral Chapels-Missouri - Lawrence A. Jones & Sons  
Funeral Chapels  
Join in honoring their life - plant a memorial tree*

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**A Memorial Tree was planted for Ms. Bessie Armstrong** - May 25, 2023 at 11:53 AM