

Celebration of Life
for



Sunrise
09-09-1931

Sunset
03-27-2020

Mrs. Estelle Florence Ferguson Durham

Thursday, April 2, 2020 - 11:00am
Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church
1101 Roe Ford Road
Greenville, South Carolina 29617
Dr. Toney C. Parks, Pastor

Order of Service

Pastor W. LaVelle McCray, Presiding
Rocky Mount Baptist Church, Greenville, S.C.

Prelude

Processional.....Clergy, Family and Friends

Scripture Readings:

Old Testament.....Minister David Taylor, Mount Sinai Baptist Church

New Testament.....Deacon Seddrick Bell, Mount Sinai Baptist Church

Prayer.....Mr. Corey Ferguson, Meadow Fork Baptist Church

Solo.....*Great Is Thy Faithfulness*.....Mr. Stephen Foster (Son-in-law)

Remarks:

Mrs. Betty Sue Parham (Friend)

Dr. Antonia Arnold-McFarland (Niece)

Words of Comfort.....Dr. Toney C. Parks

Recessional



Obituary

Estelle Florence Ferguson Durham was born September 9, 1931, to the late Elisha and Mable Ferguson in Travelers Rest, South Carolina. She was the third oldest child of 10 (not including a baby who passed as an infant). She courageously received her call to glory on Friday afternoon, March 27, 2020, after battling several medical complications.

Estelle was named after her maternal grandmother, Florence Williams, who was married to Choice Williams of Pickens County. She gained a strong sense and appreciation of family from both her Williams and Ferguson lineage. Her maternal grandparents, Choice and Florence had 8 children. Her paternal grandparents, Jessie and Fannie, had 14 children. As a result, she gained a wealth of knowledge on the family lineage. Estelle was one of the historians who helped document the Ferguson Family lineage. Her vintage photos, video interview and extensive contact list helped unveil the family history to younger generations. She played a major role in networking that helped connect 350 people to attend the Inaugural Interstate Ferguson Family Reunion in 1999 in Greenville, South Carolina. She had attended each bi-annual event since then and was one of the oldest living relatives.

Estelle was baptized at an early age and was a longtime member of the Mt. Sinai Baptist Church where she loved being a Sunday School teacher and singing tenor in the Mt. Sinai Ensemble Choir. Her love for Christian living and the church was instilled by a legacy of strong faith from family lineage at Mt. Sinai Baptist (Greenville), Aiken Chapel (Taylors), St. John United Methodist Church (Travelers Rest), Shoals Creek Baptist Church (Easley) and Soapstone Baptist Church (Pickens County). She and her sisters sang gospel music locally as The Ferguson Sisters with their peak duration in the 1950s-1960s, and later as the Ferguson Family (including brothers).

She attended Athens Church School, in Travelers Rest South Carolina. Her sacrificial love for family led her to leave school early to go to work and assist in supporting the family. Her inner strength always allowed her to persevere in difficult times. Estelle was also admired for her physical endurance and ability to be productive and efficient in farming duties. She knew how to milk cows, churn milk into butter, chop firewood and pick crops. She was known for her effectiveness, rate and production in cotton picking. It paid well based on the weight of the bag. Therefore, Estelle's abilities brought her popularity.

Estelle enjoyed living a simple modest life to match her modest personality. She had a bright smile and an infectious laugh. She was attractive and very stylish in her dress, at all ages. She was a “home body” who was satisfied with working and helping in the home whether it was her own or someone else’s. She enjoyed taking care of others in many forms. Estelle loved to iron clothes for others, to prepare a delicious meal, to bake gingerbread, to call and check on the sick, to plant and take care of flowers and to keep friends and family straight. She thrived on ensuring the welfare of others. Her check-ins encouraged so many others to make it through personal trials, to gain self-discipline, to finish college, to avoid the wrong crowd and to be the best one could be. She nurtured and mothered the community and was the backbone that motivated and inspired achievement in others. She also scolded when needed, regardless of one’s age. Her temperament was easy going most of the time, yet she did not hesitate to speak up as needed. She was a woman of few words who did not waste her time on unproductive talk. She had a low tolerance for nonsense, foolishness and wastefulness. Estelle was also God-fearing, dedicated, devoted, direct, to the point and efficient.

She assumed the matriarch role to her siblings, nieces and nephews after her mother Mable passed. This included taking care of her widowed father and younger siblings. Her genuine sisterly love to her brothers was very special. She was close to her sisters and enjoyed sharing her stylish wardrobe with them. Most of her nieces and nephews never knew their grandmother, yet they have received the love, wisdom and family history from their Aunt Estelle, filling the void that a grandmother would have provided.

Estelle was married to the late Talmadge Durham and their union produced one daughter, Venita Durham Foster. In addition to Venita, she leaves to cherish her loving and obliging son-in-law, Stephen Foster; three brothers, Alton and Earl Ferguson who are longtime devoted caregivers of the home, and Harvey Ferguson of Greenville, SC; three sisters-in-law, Cynthia Ferguson (of the late LC Ferguson), Charlotte (of the late Fred Ferguson) and Margaret Durham Hill of Greer; two brothers-in-law, Raymond Arnold, Jr., (of the late Mary Ferguson Arnold) and Thomas Perkins (of the late Ozella Ferguson Perkins). She was known as “Nana” to two god-granddaughters, MacKenzie McCray (daughter of LaVelle McCray) and Nia Baker (daughter of Fara Baker); a number of special friends and a host of nieces, nephews and cousins.



We Didn't Want to Give You Up

We didn't want to give you up;
We'll miss that smile on your face,
But comforted are we by this thought,
In Heaven you will take your place.

We didn't want to give you up;
Your passing though doth make us sad.
But still we're comforted with this thought
In Heaven you will be glad.

We didn't want to give you up;
Yet we know you've gone to rest,
So comforted are we by this thought,
To be in Heaven is the best.

Acknowledgement

The visits you made comforted us,
The sustenance you brought, sustained us,
The messages and words, consoled us,
The flowers you sent brought joy to us,
The prayers you prayed lifted us,
Whatever you did to console our hearts,
We thank you so much, whatever the part.

The Foster and Ferguson Families



Flower Attendants
Nieces

Pall Bearers
Deacons

Interment
Mountain View Memorial Park
7 Duncan Road
Travelers Rest, South Carolina 29690

Please be advised that the Greenville County Sheriff's Department and the City of Greenville Police Department no longer provide escort services for funeral processions. Therefore, all drivers should obey traffic signals. Persons who are not riding in the funeral home limousines should meet the family at the cemetery.



Services Entrusted to
Watkins, Garrett & Woods Mortuary, Inc.
1011 Augusta Street
Greenville, SC 29605
(864) 242-1144