



Jean Estes Woodruff

March 21, 1928 - May 22, 2024

Jean Estes Woodruff, age 96, of Louisville, Mississippi went home to be with her LORD and Savior JESUS Christ on May 22, 2024. She was a loving, devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, daughter, sister, aunt, and friend to those who were dearest to her as she dedicated her life to serving others. Funeral services will be 11 a.m. on Friday, May 24, 2024, at First Baptist Church of Louisville with Reverend Heath Hillman and Trey Woodruff officiating. Visitation will be the day of the service from 9:30 a.m. until service time at the church. Interment will immediately follow the service in Memorial Cemetery.

Jean was born March 21, 1928, in Winston County, Mississippi to her parents Lottie Craig Estes and Littleton Worthy (Wert) Estes. Growing up in the Calvary community, she was the third of eight children in a family of two sisters and five brothers.

Jean graduated from Noxapater High School in 1946 and attended East Central Junior College to receive an associate degree in education and soon began teaching in rural, county schools and living in teacher housing in Winston County during the early 50's. She often expressed that those days were difficult as there were few and inadequate amenities in the rural schools. She taught combined grade levels grouped in one classroom which had a chalk board and few textbooks. Jean furthered her education at Mississippi

College where she completed a BA degree in secondary education. At Louisville High School, she taught her favorite subjects which were English and literature. Mrs. Woodruff's high expectations for her students to incorporate grammar and mechanics into composition earned her a legacy of being remembered as their favorite English teacher. Her love for teaching touched many students' lives over the span of 38 years that she taught in the local school system.

Jean met the love of her life and husband Don Woodruff by accepting a double date arranged by a close teacher friend Mary Catherine McGee and her husband James (Fibber) McGee. She and Don were married on February 11, 1965 at Calvary Baptist Church with only the pastor, his wife, Donnie Woodruff and Donnie's grandfather, Oscar Thompson attending. She and Don enjoyed a wonderful marriage of twenty years until the time of Don's death in 1985.

Jean was a caregiver with a servant's heart for her family, friends, and neighbors. She always seemed to effortlessly have the time needed to take care of her family members and help out with her grandchildren, nieces and nephews who always held a special place in her heart and home. Her love for serving others was spent helping her friends and neighbors who needed meals, rides to church, grocery shopping or taking them to appointments.

Her favorite past time and hobby was found in her own back yard where she made sure there was a plant for every season. She found simple joy in seeing her garden grow, flowers blooming, and getting to add a treasured plant given to her from a friend or a fellow gardener. Jean took pride in meticulously caring for her lawn and garden independent of any help. In fact, she was the sole gardener mowing her lawn with a self-propelled lawn mower until she was 91 years old.

Jean was a member of First Baptist Church of Louisville where she continued her love for teaching. She would spend countless hours studying God's Word and preparing lessons. Over a period of 40 years, she was a dedicated Sunday School teacher to many different groups of ladies. However, her favorite years were spent teaching her age group known to her as "The Golden Girls" and being a member of the JOY group which they were proudly known as Just Older Youth. She was awarded FBC's Senior Saint of the Year in 2004.

Jean and her close friends enjoyed sharing lunches, programs at the church each month and taking bus tours with Bro. Billy Bowie. Jean truly enjoyed playing cards with her group of card playing buddies who met faithfully on Friday nights to play Rook. Saturday nights were reserved for a trip out of town to eat catfish. The big decision was, "Who wanted to drive?"

At the age of 93, Jean became a resident at the Bee Hive Home of Louisville. Instantly the staff and fellow residents developed a special bond of friendship and love with Jean. She enjoyed the comradery and the loving, caring atmosphere where she would live for three years.

As a norm, a 95th birthday, if you live to be that old, is definitely considered to be a mile marker in life. Against much persuasion to celebrate her 95th birthday with a grand birthday party, Jean Woodruff refused. Rather than focusing on herself, she chose to raise \$95 and donate the money to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital only asking for a one-dollar gift. The Chief of Operations of the Bee Hive Assisted Living, Melba Reed, posted "Mrs. Jean's" request on their Facebook page. The staff immediately raised \$20, but the request went viral. Cards began flooding the mail each day with donations in honor of Jean from family, friends, former students, and from people she did not even know. Within a matter of weeks, the 95-year-old Jean Woodruff had

raised and donated over \$2300 to St. Jude. She took great pleasure in keeping every one of her cards and counting each dollar.

Jean is survived by her son, Donald M. Woodruff, Jr. and wife, DeLaine; her brother, Jerry Estes and wife, Ilene, all of Louisville. One of her greatest joys was her two grandchildren, Trey (Allison) Woodruff and Joy (Stephen) Busenlehner; her great-grandchildren: Mallory Busenlehner Meyer (Mac), Maddie Busenlehner, Andrew Busenlehner, Colin Woodruff, and John Woodruff. She also leaves behind four sisters-in-law: Patty Estes, Faith Estes, Jane Estes, and Jean Claire Woodruff; as well as loving nieces, nephews, other family members, and friends. Jean was preceded in death by her husband, Donald M. Woodruff, Sr., her parents, and her siblings: Dee Estes, Bob Estes, Wayne (Sylvia) Estes, M. O. Estes, Maxine (Dee) McCool, Elsie (J. C.) Carter, and nephew, Craig Estes.

Jean enjoyed a blessed life of 96 years. She valued the simple and important things in life. And if she knew you, she valued her relationship with you beyond measure. Her motto in life was to "Keep it simple." Only could we offer this tribute to her posthumously, for she would have only agreed to a short paragraph about her awesome life.

We, the Woodruff family, would like to thank the staff of the Bee Hive Home of Louisville, Dr. Gentry, Winston Medical Center, and Quality Hospice Care, Inc. for the exceptional care that they have given to Jean which went far beyond our expectations.

Services are under the direction of Nowell Massey Funeral Home, 724 North Columbus Avenue, Louisville, MS. Memories and condolences may be shared with the family by signing the guest register at www.nowellmasseyfuneralhome.com.

Cemetery Details

Louisville Memorial Cemetery

18075 East John C. Stennis Drive
Louisville, MS 39339

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY **24**. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church
205 S. Church Avenue
Louisville, MS 39339

Service

MAY **24**. 11:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church
205 S. Church Avenue
Louisville, MS 39339

Interment

MAY **24** (CT)

Louisville Memorial Cemetery
18075 East John C. Stennis Drive
Louisville, MS 39339

Tribute Wall

JM

“ Ms. Jean... bless her! What a wonderful lady! The words above are precisely her. Her smile was so genuine and the JOY girls, they had a special friendship... my Momma sure enjoyed their friendship. They enjoyed life!




Jenise McGraw-Greer - May 31, 2024 at 03:18 AM

KC

“ Ms. Jean was such a precious lady and a great friend to my mom! They enjoyed those Friday Rook nights so much!

Kristi Mills Carter - May 24, 2024 at 09:21 PM

CB

“ I will always remember the time I drove Lois McBrayer to Jackson for a check up and Jean called me before we left and said that she had to go with us so we could catch up on things. As I drove these two fabulous ladies we just had a blast, the greatest time I've ever had! Visiting a few great restaurants as we traveled, we three talked about everything. Ms Jean and Ms Lois is having a time up there in Heaven!!

Corey Bagwell - May 24, 2024 at 11:08 AM

KP

“ I'll always think of Mrs. Woodruff as a very professional teacher and beautiful, dignified woman. How blessed were all of us that were touched by her teaching! Go rest high on that mountain, Mrs. Woodruff.
With sincere condolences and much respect,
Kathy (Jauch) Pickett, LHS Class of 1974

Kathy Jauch Pickett - May 24, 2024 at 08:22 AM

JK

“ Sincere condolences to all of the family. Jean Woodruff was a beloved teacher to so many and a special lady throughout the years.

Joyce Kirkpatrick - May 24, 2024 at 01:41 AM



“ Praying for comfort to all of the family. Jean Woodruff was a beloved teacher to so many and was a favorite of mine as well as a kind, lovely lady throughout her years.

May 24, 2024 at 01:38 AM

DM

“ Sincere sympathy, wonderful teacher,
Debbie Hull Miller

Debbie Hull Miller - May 23, 2024 at 08:43 PM

MH

“ Sincere sympathy,
Mozell Hull

Mozell Hull - May 23, 2024 at 08:37 PM

DW

“ Louisville schools had very strong teachers in English. She has always stood out as outstanding. Even more than being an excellent teacher, she had a great sense of humor and made learning fun. She always cared about her students. What a beautiful long life!!

Dianne Bennett Wells - May 23, 2024 at 01:20 PM



“ *Such a beautiful, precious cousin, prayers for her precious family. 🙏*
🙏❤️❤️

Nadine Estrs - May 23, 2024 at 12:30 PM

MR

“ *A fine lady. A wonderful teacher. A smile for all. She a had an impact on so many lives. Our condolences to all who love her especially her family!*

mary reed - May 23, 2024 at 10:35 AM

PF

“ *She was a favorite teacher of many of us whom she taught. She was Miss Estes when she taught our class, and she was thorough, yet had a sense of humor and always looked so pretty with colorful earrings and pretty dresses. She was a joy in the classroom, the kind of teacher one never forgets. So thankful for her life.*

Patsy Foster - May 23, 2024 at 09:04 AM

SJ

I came to know her as a beloved mother and grandmother who invested her love, time, energy, life, and resources in her family! She was a life changer and a woman of great faith. She led by example of love and kindness!

Scoggins June - May 23, 2024 at 10:45 AM