



## Joseph Leon Merritt

May 27, 1919 - January 13, 2020

Mr. Leon Merritt, age 100, passed away surrounded by his loving family Monday, January 13, 2020, at his residence in Louisville, Mississippi. Visitation will be Thursday, January 16, from 5:00 p.m. until 7 p.m. at Nowell Massey Funeral Home in Louisville. Funeral services will be 10 a.m. Friday, January 17, at Poplar Flat Baptist Church with Bro. Dan Robertson officiating. Graveside services and interment will immediately follow the service in Poplar Flat Cemetery with Bro. Doug Wise officiating.

Leon was born May 27, 1919, to B. F. and Lula McCann Merritt in Sturgis, Mississippi. He was a member of Poplar Flat Baptist Church where he faithfully served as the music director for many years; he was also a deacon; and a Sunday school teacher. Over the years, he also led the music for many revivals. Leon was also active in the Brotherhood and Visitation Ministry of Poplar Flat Church and in the Winston County Baptist Association. He answered the call of his country by serving from 1942 to 1946 in the United States Marine Corp. Leon spent two and one-half years in the South Pacific Theater of World War II where he participated in actions against the enemy in two major battles: Battle of Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands in 1943 and Battle of Saipan fought on the island of Saipan and Battle of Tinian fought on the island of Tinian both in the Mariana Islands in 1944. He returned from his overseas duty and married the love of his life, Gladys Taylor of Louisville. Leon was the founder and owner of Merritt Plumbing and Water Well Company which he

operated for more than 30 years.

Leon is survived by his son Joe Merritt and wife Diana of Dallas, Texas; his daughter Carol Higginbotham and husband Robert of Louisville; and his sister Bertha Vickers of the Morgantown Community. One of his greatest joys was being “Granddaddy” to his six grandchildren: Megan (Bob) Thomas, Emma (Wesley) Teague, Josh McNeill, J. D. (Katelin) McNeill, Julee (Bennie Ray) Watkins, and Kiel (Lara) Higginbotham. He also enjoyed being “Granddaddy” to his six great-grandchildren: Maci McNeill, Maggie McNeill, Tara Thomas, Joseph Thomas, Jett Higginbotham, and Lake Higginbotham; he is also survived by numerous nieces, nephews, and friends. He is preceded in death by his wife Gladys Taylor Merritt; his parents; four brothers: Thomas Merritt, Kline Merritt, Lamar Whatley, and Howard Harrod; and three sisters Lurlene Josey, Lena Heflin, and Mabel Harrod.

Serving as active pallbearers are Josh McNeill, J. D. McNeill, Kiel Higginbotham, Gerald Whatley, Robbie McMillan, and Norman White; while Bobby Stubbs will serve as an honorary pallbearer.

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](http://www.nowellmasseyfuneralhome.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Poplar Flat Cemetery

2188 Poplar Flat Road  
Louisville, MS 39339

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 16. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Nowell-Massey Funeral Home Chapel  
724 N Columbus Ave  
Louisville, MS 39339  
nowellfuneral@bellsouth.net  
<http://www.nowellmasseyfuneralhome.com>

## Service

JAN 17. 10:00 AM (CT)

Poplar Flat Baptist Church  
2188 Poplar Flat Road  
Louisville, MS 39339

# Tribute Wall



“ *Joseph Leon Merritt*

January 29, 2023 at 06:32 AM



“ *1 file added to the album Carol Higgimbothon*



**Tarah Thomas** - March 24, 2020 at 03:31 PM



“ *From Tarah Thomas:*

*I wish Granddaddy could live forever! And I'm happy I got to meet him and be in his family.*

**Megan Thomas** - January 18, 2020 at 01:08 PM



“ *Mr. Merritt was so sweet. I'll never forget seeing him in the choir. He loved to sing. I'm so proud he made it to a 100. He will be missed by many. Proud I got to know him.*

**Mona Dempsey** - January 16, 2020 at 05:32 PM



“ *Peace, Prayers & Blessings - Blue and White was purchased for the family of Joseph Leon Merritt.*



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January 16, 2020 at 12:35 PM



“ *Shades of Purple was purchased for the family of Joseph Leon Merritt.*



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January 16, 2020 at 10:51 AM



“ *Joe and Carol, I am so very sorry to hear of your Dad's passing. What a fine man who faithfully served our Lord. I do know he is in a better place and has joined your Mom hand in hand in Glorious bliss. Please know my thoughts and prayers are with through this time. God bless you and your families.*

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**Debbie Ball Williams** - January 15, 2020 at 06:44 AM



“ *So very sorry for your loss. Praying for all of you.*

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**Pam Thomas** - January 14, 2020 at 06:26 PM



*My daddy Morris Massey talked about your daddy a lot we he was alive. Mr Leon made it to 100 and daddy always said he was going to live to be 100. My prays are with the family.*

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**Sandra Morgan** - January 14, 2020 at 07:23 PM



“ *Blue & White Sympathy Basket was purchased for the family of Joseph Leon Merritt.*



January 14, 2020 at 04:06 PM



“ *Such a fine gentleman who served his God, his country, his family and his community with quiet dignity. Well done good and faithful servant. Kay and I are thinking of you all as you celebrate such a remarkable life.*

*Kay and Giles Ward*

**Giles Ward** - January 14, 2020 at 08:28 AM



*Our deepest sympathy . We know how much he will be missed . Ricky and SueEllen Miller*

**sueEllen Miller** - January 14, 2020 at 01:52 PM



*I am so sad to see this..  
I only knew him as Uncle Leon even if not related..a long and blessed life for sure*

**Dyanne Quinn** - January 14, 2020 at 09:43 PM



*Sorry for the loss of a good man but he will be in our hearts forever and we all love him so much*

**Tarah Thomas** - March 24, 2020 at 03:19 PM