



Betty Jean Wansley Bird

August 25, 1935 - January 20, 2024

Betty was born in Laurel, MS on August 25, 1935 to Otto M. Wansley, Sr. and Louise Davis Wansley. On February 22, 1957, she married the love of her life Grady E. Bird who preceded her in death in August of 2021.

Betty attended Laurel City Schools graduating from George S Gardner High School. She went on to work as a secretary at Garland Lewis Machine Shop which became the family business Wansley Machine and Welding. It was there she met the man she would spend the next 64 years loving. Betty and Grady had two daughters and at the young age of 24 with children in tow she followed him to Venezuela where they lived for several years. They moved back to Laurel, built a home and added a son to the family. Both worked at Wansley Machine until they retired.

Her life changed when in the 5th grade she answered an altar call, along with two of her brothers, and gave her life to Christ. She has been an active member of West Laurel Community Church (formerly West Laurel United Methodist Church) since her move back to Laurel. Through the years she has served as a Communion Steward, sang in the choir, was a member of the United Methodist Women and attended the Timothy class serving as a substitute teacher. She was a very strong spiritual guide to all her family.

Betty loved to read, garden, sew and was very much an artist. Most of all she

loved her family. If her husband was doing something she could always be found close by helping and supporting him anyway she could. As for her children, grandson and great grands she was always there. She was available to read a book, play a game, go on an adventure or anything else that was requested. She served as a Girl Scout Leader and home room mother but most importantly she just loved them all through the good, the bad and the ugly.

She was preceded in death by her parents and husband; brothers Lester O. Wansley and James Hugh Wansley; sister Joyce (Sis) Wansley Blackledge and son-in-law Steve Thompson.

Betty is survived by her daughters Susan Bird Thompson and Patricia Ann (Patti) Bird; son Grady Lee Bird (Joan); grandson Michael L Thompson (Stephanie); great grandchildren Aubrey Thompson and Aiden Thompson; brothers Otto M. (Jr) Wansley, Jr., Gerald Ray (Jerry) Wansley (Jan) and Jack D. Wansley (Brenda).

Services will be Wednesday, January 24th at West Laurel Community Church, 523 N 14th Ave, Laurel. Visitation will be at 10:00 a.m. and service will follow at 11:00 a.m. Interment will be at Lake Park Cemetery. Pallbearers will be Michael Thompson, Ian Douglas, Karl Kaiser. Jim Rose, Mike Jordan and David Creel.

In lieu of flowers memorials may be made to West Laurel Community Church.

To sign the online guest book, visit www.memorychapellaurel.com.

Cemetery Details

Lake Park Hills Cemetery

2806 Emmy Dr.
Laurel, MS 39440

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 24. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

West Laurel Community Church
523 N 14th Avenue
Laurel, MS 39440

Service

JAN 24. 11:00 AM (CT)

West Laurel Community Church
523 N 14th Avenue
Laurel, MS 39440

Tribute Wall

LM

“ *Ms. Betty was such a beautiful person, Inside and out. She loves her family and always made me feel welcome around her. I always thought she was the prettiest lady around. I will miss her, but never will she be forgotten. Fly high beautiful, and rest in Peace. Love you always!*



Lisa Murray - January 23, 2024 at 08:33 PM

FB

“ *Betty was so beautiful inside and out. I can't imagine how much she will be missed by everyone. We are so so sorry for your loss. Love in Christ, Ted and Faye*

Faye Brent - January 22, 2024 at 12:17 PM