



## Grace Keyes Blackledge

March 5, 1926 - July 2, 2024

Vera Grace Keyes Blackledge, age 98, of Laurel, MS went to be with her Savior and Lord on July 2, 2024. Grace was born on March 5, 1926, to Lillie Mae Goss Keyes and Deavours E. Keyes. Her life took a challenging turn when her mother passed away when she was 8 years old, followed by her father's passing just before her 10th birthday. She was then sent to Texas to live with relatives but eventually, she returned to Jones County to live with her uncle and aunt, Clyde and Elma Keyes, in the Mill Creek community. Despite the hardships, Grace found solace in her uncle and aunt's family, where she was embraced with love and care.

Grace met the love of her life, Jasper Milton (JM) Blackledge, and married on May 15, 1943. Together, they welcomed two children, Helen Doris Blackledge Stanley and Jasper Milton Blackledge, Jr. She embraced the roles of homemaker and devoted mother, while also caring for her elderly, wheelchair-bound mother-in-law, Hattie. As her children grew up and pursued their own paths, she embarked on a new journey by attending nursing school at Jones County Junior College and Charity Hospital, earning her LPN certification. She served as a school nurse at Myrick Elementary School in the early 1970s, then she furthered her nursing career at Jones County Community Hospital/South Central Regional Medical Center until her well-deserved retirement. After retiring from nursing, she continued to serve her community by driving a school bus for Myrick Elementary School and volunteering with

the Red Cross. Additionally, she played an active role at Mill Creek Congregational Church, taking on various responsibilities such as Sunday School Secretary, choir member, VBS volunteer, and cemetery secretary. Her love for her community, church and church family shone through in all that she did.

In 1995, her husband, JM, suffered a serious stroke. Instead of placing him in a care facility, she chose to look after him at home until his passing in 1998. Later, in 2009, she faced another challenge when she was diagnosed with breast cancer, but she fought through it and became a cancer survivor. Known for her strong work ethic, she remained active for as long as she could. Despite her own battles, she found joy in helping others. Often her granddaughters would return home from a long day of work to find “Mammaw” had visited their house, performing household chores while they juggled work and caring for their young children. Her grandchildren and great-grandchildren loved going to “Mammaw’s” and she enjoyed her time spent with them.

Grace was preceded in death by her husband JM Blackledge, Sr.; grandson Jeffrey (Jeff) Milton Blackledge; parents Lillie Mae Goss Keyes and Deavours E. Keyes; Aunt and Uncle Clyde and Elma Keyes; brothers and sisters-in-law, Eugene (Gene) and Catherine Keyes, Benjamin (Ben) and Nell Keyes, Johnny Paul and Clomae Keyes; sisters and brothers-in-law Kathryn Keyes Adcock and Bob Adcock, Dorothy Keyes Byrd and Eddie Byrd.

She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law, Helen Blackledge Stanley and Wayne Stanley; son and daughter-in-law, Jasper Milton Blackledge, Jr. and Lynne Blackledge; special cousin, Faye (Sis) Keyes Ishee; granddaughters and grandsons-in-law Lisa Blackledge Elmore and Jeff Elmore, Angela Stanley Culpepper and Nub Culpepper, and Amy Stanley Tisdale and Mike Tisdale; granddaughter-in-law Misty Blackledge; great grandchildren Kathryn Jade Blackledge Chisolm (Zach), Mallory Claire

Blackledge Gainey (Tayler), Hannah Grace Hankins Gibbs (Spencer), Jackson Stanley Tisdale, Lauren Elizabeth Hankins, Jacob Matthew Blackledge, Andrew Wyatt Hankins, and Casen Slay Tisdale; great-great granddaughters Elliott Claire Chisolm and Emersyn Fern Chisolm.

Graveside services will be held at Mill Creek Church Cemetery on Friday, July 5th at 11:00 a.m. Rev. Bill Myers will officiate. Pallbearers will be Jeff Elmore, Nub Culpepper, Mike Tisdale, Jackson Tisdale, Jacob Blackledge, Andrew Hankins, Casen Tisdale, and Chris Blackledge.

To sign the online guest book, visit [www.memorychapellaurel.com](http://www.memorychapellaurel.com).

# Cemetery Details

## Mill Creek Cemetery

2319 Mill Creek Rd  
Laurel, MS 39443

# Previous Events

## Graveside Service

JUL 5. 11:00 AM (CT)

Mill Creek Cemetery  
2319 Mill Creek Rd  
Laurel, MS 39443

# Tribute Wall



“ Praying for the family during this difficult time.  
David & Angela Rudolph  
Nell Gieger

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**Angela Rudolph** - July 06, 2024 at 10:59 AM



“ Large Basket Garden was purchased for the  
family of Grace Keyes Blackledge.



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July 02, 2024 at 07:28 PM



“ Meg and Ronald Eason planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Grace Keyes  
Blackledge.

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**Meg and Ronald Eason** - July 02, 2024 at 07:28 PM