



## Judith "Judi" Young Holifield

January 11, 1954 - December 13, 2025

Judith Young Holifield (Judi) passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by her family, on Saturday, December 13, 2025.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Louis Young and Ethel Jefcoat Young of Soso, MS; her siblings, Julane Young and Jeff Young; and her husband, Neal Holifield.

She is survived by her children, Carrie Parker Cullum (Brian) of Madison, MS, Jenny Parker Steelman (Houston) of Nashville, TN, and Allen Holifield (Skyla) of Laurel, MS; her grandchildren, Joseph Cullum and Katie Cullum of Madison, MS, Zach Maples of Laurel, MS; and her companion of many years, Lowery Hicks.

Born in Laurel, MS on January 11, 1954, Judi graduated from West Jones High School and completed her degree in Music Education at the University of Southern Mississippi. She began her career as a choral director at Northeast Jones High School and went on to serve many other schools and churches, touching countless lives as a music educator. After an extensive teaching career, she put her passion for the arts to work at the Mississippi Arts Commission, and ended her career as the Executive Director of Laurel Main Street.

Whether as a teacher or community leader, Judi's door was always open for advice, big ideas, and encouragement. This open-door policy shaped her retirement, as her front porch became her new office. She leaves behind a legacy of excellence ingrained in all who knew her well.

Visitation will be held on Friday, December 19, 2025, at 9:30 a.m., with a Celebration of Life following at 11:00 a.m. at Laurel First Methodist Church.

To view or sign the online guest book, visit [www.memorychapel laurel.com](http://www.memorychapel laurel.com).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

DEC 19. 9:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Laurel First Methodist Church  
420 North 5th Avenue  
Laurel, MS 39440

## Celebration of Life

DEC 19. 11:00 AM (CT)

Laurel First Methodist Church  
420 North 5th Avenue  
Laurel, MS 39440

# Tribute Wall

KA

“ I can’t believe Judy is gone. What a life force she was. We were the same age and were born in the same month. She and Neal hosted me in their home when I was an Artist-in-Residence in Laurel. It was wonderful to observe such a lovely family. She was so proud of that family. As a Texan I loved her Mississippi accent. I will always remember it. We were both proud Southerners. The best story she ever told me was being at an important dinner party with some important people in the arts when one of them made a deliberately derogatory remark to everyone about Mississippi. Judy didn’t miss a beat and replied in that wonderful voice, “ Well at least in Mississippi we have the good manners not to insult the guests we invite to dinner.” What an exemplar of the grace and toughness of the Mississippi spirit. We will miss her, but she’s with Neal now.

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**Kay Thomas National Teaching Artist** - December 30, 2025 at 09:55 PM

KG

“ Ms. Judi was my 8th and 9th grade choir director at NEJ in 1979-80, 1980-81. She was so awesome. I remember she always chose popular songs for that time for us to learn to sing instead of "boring" songs. The way she taught a bunch of young tweenagers how to harmonize was amazing. We actually sounded good when she was through with us. I remember her short, curly hair and huge plastic glasses frames! She was so cute and spunky. I have great memories of Ms. Judi. My thoughts and prayers are with her family. Know that she touched SO MANY lives during her time her on Earth. ~Kathy Early Gilbert

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**Kathy Gilbert** - December 30, 2025 at 01:11 PM

VL

“ *Vernessa LeSane lit a candle in memory of Judith "Judi" Holifield*



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**Vernessa LeSane** - December 23, 2025 at 10:45 PM

DW

“ *I got to know Judi when our kids were friends at Nora Davis. Allen and Jon Michael also played soccer and baseball together for a few years. My prayers are with Allen and his family.*



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**Diane White** - December 20, 2025 at 01:15 AM

SC

“ *Susan C. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.*

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**Susan C.** - December 19, 2025 at 01:12 PM

SC

“ Judith once filled in as choir director at First Methodist and I was amazed at her excellence and professionalism. We were in church together but I got to know her best when we were both cheerleader mothers and when her husband worked at Jefferson Medical. She was so nice and easy to talk to. I knew she was greatly respected when choir director at Laurel High School, then in the state arts community and then in the redevelopment of downtown Laurel. I know she loved her children and they loved her. She modeled a Christian life. I am so glad to have known her. Love and deepest sympathy to Carrie, Jenny, and Allen and all her family. Susan Cannon

Susan S. Cannon - December 19, 2025 at 12:42 PM

JN

“ I am a fan of "HomeTown" and so enjoyed meeting her on that show. I loved the episode of her home renovation and all the other times she appeared on the show. Such a lovely and giving person. So very sorry for her passing.....Jan from Indiana.

Jan neuenschwander - December 19, 2025 at 11:54 AM

PV

“ Phil Crumbly & Ronnie Vaughn purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.



Phil Crumbly & Ronnie Vaughn - December 18, 2025 at 10:25 PM

PV

“ Phil Crumbly & Ronnie Vaughn planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.

Phil Crumbly & Ronnie Vaughn - December 18, 2025 at 10:25 PM

PC

“ Deepest condolences to the family. I will always cherish the many memories and laughs we shared with Judi and the family, reminiscing, making beautiful music together and making new memories along the way. Sending light, love, and hugs to the family. Judi made us all better for knowing her. Phil Crumbly & Ronnie Vaughn

Phil Crumbly - December 18, 2025 at 10:20 PM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.



December 18, 2025 at 05:28 PM

BT

“ Britt, Shas, Eb, Megan, Dallas, Tori planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.

Britt, Shas, Eb, Megan, Dallas, Tori - December 18, 2025 at 05:28 PM

LL

“ I loved getting to know Judi when my daughter Kelsey Lyon Darley attended pre school and Nora Davis with her son Allen. She was such a sweet lady and so talented. My thoughts and prayers are with the family. Judi will be missed.

Laura Lyon - December 16, 2025 at 10:03 PM



“ Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.



December 16, 2025 at 07:03 PM

ST

“ Sharon and Scott Thompson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.

Sharon and Scott Thompson - December 16, 2025 at 07:03 PM



“ Your Light Shines was purchased for the family of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.



December 16, 2025 at 07:00 PM



“ *Your Light Shines was purchased for the family of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.*



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December 16, 2025 at 05:04 PM



“ *Amy, Jason & Evan Reaves planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.*

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**Amy, Jason & Evan Reaves** - December 16, 2025 at 05:04 PM



“ *Nancy Bocek, Bill Buhr and Family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.*



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**Nancy Bocek, Bill Buhr and Family** - December 16, 2025 at 03:22 PM



“ *Nancy Bocek, Bill Buhr and Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.*

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**Nancy Bocek, Bill Buhr and Family** - December 16, 2025 at 03:22 PM

MB

“ *Mississippi Main Street Staff and Board purchased the Heavenly Grace Spray for the family of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.*



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**Mississippi Main Street Staff and Board** - December 16, 2025  
at 12:57 PM

JH

“ *Judi influenced countless young people for good. Her balance of high expectations and heart-felt encouragement made a profound difference in a great number of lives. Her legacy is golden. Many call her blessed and count themselves supremely fortunate to have called her Teacher -- John Helveston*

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**John Helveston** - December 16, 2025 at 12:46 PM

SE

*Judi Holifield was a pebble with far reaching rings of powerful positive influence in the field of arts education and in anything else she touched. She inspired those around her to do their very best. She was a powerful force and a mover and a shaker. She was definitely a hard act to follow in whatever she put her mind and skills to. Condolences to her beautiful family.*

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**Sally Edwards** - May 02 at 11:39 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.*



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December 16, 2025 at 12:17 PM

DW

“ Dr. Stacey Williams planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Judith "Judi" Young Holifield.

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**Dr. Stacey Williams** - December 16, 2025 at 12:17 PM