



Helen Frances Lee

August 18, 1925 - February 9, 2022

Helen Frances Lee (Mitchell)

In the love and comfort of her home with family by her side, Helen Frances Lee, 96 years, joined her Heavenly Father on Wednesday, February 9, 2022. Born on August 18, 1925, in Lynchburg, Virginia. Helen, an offspring of a second-generation slave family, was reared on a farm in Big Island, Virginia.

Helen met and married Bernard Nathaniel Lee, Sr., in 1944. The couple had four children, two boys and two girls, who traveled with them throughout the USA and Europe, while her husband served in the U.S. Army. Mrs. Lee is predeceased by her husband, daughter, Bernadine F. Dickerson, and nephew, Marcus V. Simms. Mrs. Lee is survived by Almaneta G. Lee of West Springfield, MA, Mercer W. Lee of Chandler, AZ, Bernard N. Lee, Jr. of Conyers, GA., and a host of cousins, grandchildren, great grandchildren, great, great grandchild, nieces and nephews, loving church members and friends.

Mrs. Lee's volunteerism began in 1958, while in Ansbach, Germany. Mrs. Lee worked with Social Services, giving assistance to families in need, acting as a liaison between the Army and civilian families. The Lee family returned to the USA in March 1961. While in Lawton, Oklahoma, Mrs. Lee organized and conducted a Missionary Circle that collected clothing from military families that

were leaving the area. The mission prepared and shipped the collected clothing to orphans overseas. Mrs. Lee worked with the Red Cross helping needy families. She made telephone calls to families, members of the military, and helped to assist in time of need after natural disasters, like tornados and floods.

In 1966, the Lee family relocated to Washington, D.C., and settled in Seat Pleasant, Md. Mrs. Lee established a day care center caring for children of families moving into Peppermill Village, which was a community of Seat Pleasant. Mrs. Lee attended Prince George's Community College to obtain certification for her center. For seven years, Mrs. Lee was a certified owner and operator of "Lee's Day Care."

Mrs. Lee worked tirelessly in the community. She served as secretary of the newly formed Citizens' Association and Block Captains organization. In 1967, she and seven women organized a group called Concerned Women of Peppermill. The group grew to eighty-six members and functioned as the backbone of the community.

In 1980, following her husband's return from Korea, Mrs. Lee organized a crime prevention program in Peppermill Village. She, and her husband, conducted meetings to encourage families to participate in engraving items for police identification and recovery. They also encouraged families to take turns riding through the neighborhood with the Neighborhood Watch Team. For her community services, Mrs. Lee received the "Governor's Award for Crime Watch" and the 25th Legislative District "Outstanding Service Award."

In addition to the community service awards, Mrs. Lee received the "Love and Labor Award" in 1984 from First Baptist Church of Highland Park, "Outstanding Community Service Award" in 1985 from Kiwanis International, "Special Recognition Award" in 1986 from the Peppermill Village Citizens'

Association, the "Community Service Award in 1987 from the Arlene Drive Block Club. Mrs. Lee worked, for years, with the Capital Heights /Seat Pleasant Boys and Girls Club collecting registration material for annual sports programs.

Mrs. Lee was busiest at her church, the First Baptist Church of Highland Park, Landover, Md. In 1978, she and a handful of other members decided to offer child-care services on Sunday mornings. The church nursery cared for the children - lovingly called "little people" by Mrs. Lee. In 1980, the Volunteer Nursery Program was sanctioned by First Baptist Church of Highland Park to operate in the Wyatt Annex on a larger scale. It grew into a comprehensive ministry of eighty-two trained adults and forty-six youth. The Day Care Center, and church Nursery Ministry, became the steppingstone for the Highland Park Christian Academy, which has been operating for over 42 years. The Pre-K through eighth grade school is one of the oldest of the 122 private schools in Prince George's County. In 1992, Mrs. Lee received the "Leadership Award" from the Volunteer Nursery at First Baptist Church of Highland Park.

Mrs. Lee had a strong and unwavering faith. Her faith was tested on December 9, 1988. An atrial tumor was found in her heart. Five days later, she had open heart surgery. The tumor was benign, but that experience led Mrs. Lee to share her faith with others. The day before the surgery, she authored a poem entitled, "The Mountain Journey." That poem became the first in her two published books of poetry. In 1995, Mrs. Lee published, "Looking Towards the Sky" and she followed with "Get Outta the Rut."

Mrs. Lee compiled an impressive body of written work over many years. She wrote poetry for the Highlighter, a monthly newsletter published by the First Baptist Church of Highland Park in Landover, Maryland. She composed a special poem, each year, and distributed it in her beloved Christmas Letter. Mrs. Lee shared the letter with her family, her church, and over one hundred

friends across the country.

After the passing of her husband in 2002, Mrs. Lee and her daughter, Bernadine Dickerson, moved from Upper Marlboro, Md., to West Springfield, Mass., where Almaneta, the youngest daughter lives. The two made their home at Landmark at Monastery Heights in West Springfield. Mrs. Lee didn't miss a beat with her writing and continued to supply poems to the Highlighter. Mrs. Lee also established a program at Monastery Heights for residents who enjoyed reading and writing poetry. The residents found the program refreshing and they eagerly attended her mid-morning poetry sessions.

Mrs. Lee joined St. John's Congregational Church in Springfield and attended church each Sunday with her daughter, Almaneta, family and friends. Mrs. Lee sat on the left side, last row of the church and many people paused as they were leaving the church to say, "Hello" and "Have a nice day!"

Mrs. Lee moved in with Almaneta in September 2019. The two of them enjoyed watching birds and other wonders of nature. They fed the squirrels, and the Blue Jays, peanuts every day. They watched the Hallmark channel and other religious movies as often as possible. They attended virtual Sunday services and continued to produce the annual "Christmas Letter" together. Mrs. Lee enjoyed being at home with her family and friends.

On February 25, 2022, a walk-through wake will be held at St. John's Congregational Church 45 Hancock St, Springfield, MA 01109, 413-734-2283. Wake from 6pm to 7pm.

On March 11, 2022, an in-person wake and service at the church, and streaming service will be held at First Baptist Highland Park 6801 Sheriff Road, Landover (Hyattsville), Maryland, 20785, 301-773-6655. Wake starts at

10am, services at 11am.

Live streaming will start at 10:55 AM EST for Helen Lee's funeral.

www.fbhp.org/watchlive/youtube

Cemetery Details

Maryland National

13300 Washington Blvd
Laurel, MD 20707

Previous Events

Public Viewing

MAR 11. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

First Baptist Church of Highland Park
6801 Sheriff Road
Landover, MD 20785

Funeral Service

MAR 11. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

First Baptist Church of Highland Park
6801 Sheriff Road
Landover, MD 20785

Tribute Wall



“ *Helen Frances Lee*

January 28, 2023 at 02:13 PM



“ *Helen Frances Lee*

January 28, 2023 at 10:26 AM

“Mrs. Lee was like a mother figure to me and it all started in 1983 when my husband James and I moved from Des Moines, Iowa to the Washington, D.C. area. Just a few years before, Mrs. Lee and a handful of others had decided to offer child-care services on Sunday mornings at First Baptist Church of Highland Park in Landover, Md., to relieve the anxiety and distractions young parents have during worship services. When we arrived in Maryland, Highland Park was the only church in the area offering such child care services on Sunday mornings.

Mrs. Lee made certain that the children in her care were taught about Jesus through Bible stories, art work and songs. She took her responsibilities serious and periodically held training sessions at her home. She also would counsel young parents on child care strategies.

While I greatly enjoyed the services, she frequently reminded us parents that our purpose was to give back the talents that God endowed them with. So, I reluctantly became a volunteer for the child-care program but soon found other great benefits in working with her and her talented daughter, Bernie. Together, we would hawk wares at yard sales, work on community plays and consult on Volunteer Nursery Projects.

Mrs. Lee was a prolific poetess, as you know. When I took over the helm of the newsletter at Highland Park in the mid to late 1980s and served for about 10 years as editor, she not only was the main poet but her contributions graced nearly every issue of *The Highlighter* for about four decades - long after I resigned. When Helen F. Lee put pen to paper her God-inspired creations encouraged, comforted, amused and entertained as if she instantly knew the exact balm needed for each person who scanned her work. Her poems were a testament to her determination to use her gifts to accomplish the tasks God had assigned.

Even when Mrs. Lee relocated to Massachusetts, we kept in touch.

In fact, she wrote a special poem that she read at my youngest daughter's graduation program at Brown University in 2007. We kept in touch by phone. My family traveled to Springfield, Mass. to help celebrate her 90th birthday and participated in a couple of zoom birthday parties after that. I greatly valued her friendship.

Others valued her too. In 1996, Mrs. Lee was nominated for the Seventh Women's Hall of Fame, along with such powerhouses as Dr. Beatrice P. Tignor, a former state legislator and school board chair, and Frances Hughes Glendening, a former First Lady of Maryland. Although she was not one of the five women chosen, she was recognized during that time with a special certificate during ceremonies at the County Administration Building in Upper Marlboro. Her name was placed on a "Scroll of Honor" as one of 14 Prince George's County Women of Achievement.

"We consider you a winner in your own right, as it is quite an honor to be nominated," said a letter sent to Mrs. Lee by Shirley A. Gravely-Currie, commissioner and chair of the Women's Hall of Fame Committee. "Your efforts on behalf of women and all the residents of Prince George's County have not gone unnoticed and are very much appreciated."

Tamara M. Cooke Henry, Ph.D

Tamara M. Cook Henry, PhD. - March 13, 2022 at 02:54 PM