

Remembrance

Ruth Thompson

94

Nov. 7, 1942 - Aug. 25, 2019

HARLAN – Ruth Thompson was born on November 7, 1924 in Harlan to Christian Rold and Esther (Larsen). Ruth was the second of four children: Vivian, Paul, and Robert. Growing up on her parents' farm in Shelby County, Ruth experienced the Depression first hand; however, that didn't diminish her fond memories of her family, especially her siblings and parents whom she loved dearly. She remembered walking to the one-room schoolhouse in Monroe

Township down the road from the farm where she would later become a teacher to the local children including her "baby" brother Bob. She graduated from Harlan High School in 1941 and moved with her family to Monrovia, CA.

She worked as a salesperson at JCPenny's and even won Miss Monrovia one year.

After her sister's death, she moved back to Harlan to help her parents raise her niece, Connie. It was here in Harlan where she met Charles Haddon Thompson who had also recently arrived from California himself to build houses in Harlan and work on finishing the Altamont church. They were the first couple married in the newly finished church in 1955, and a year later, their son David was born.

After David's birth, Haddon went to work for the Bureau of Reclamation; this led them to move a few times including stops in Denver, Seattle, Sacramento, and Phoenix, before finally settling in Carmichael, CA where Haddon built the family a home. Ruth kept busy as an active member of the First Baptist Church of Carmichael (later renamed American River Community Church) and continued her membership until her passing. At church, she volunteered as the children's music director, sang in the Chancel Choir, played the piano and acted as wedding coordinator. She always made time to see her family in Iowa though; David remembers taking the three-day train ride between Sacramento and Omaha for many summers. When David entered high school, Ruth went back to college herself and eventually earned a degree in special education from Sacramento State. She became a Special Education teacher for children with moderate to severe mental and physical disabilities at the Starr King School. Although she gave up this job once her grandchildren, Jodee and Jared, were born, she continued as a substitute teacher for many years afterwards. Ruth continued to always put her family first, spending many summers babysitting for Jodee and Jared, taking them on many trips to the zoo, the park, and the library. She also took them separately on trips to Washington D.C. when they each reached the fifth grade. She always enjoyed traveling; her favorite trip was to Denmark to study family genealogy. After Haddon passed away in 2006, Ruth moved back to Harlan once again to be closer to David and Diane.

Although her memory gradually declined over the years due to Alzheimer's, she enjoyed seeing her family, including her great-grandchildren who came to visit her at Salem Lutheran Home. Her love of music never diminished even when most of the other memories had slipped away.

On August 25, 2019, at age 94, Ruth passed away. She was preceded in death by her parents and her siblings; she is survived by her only son David (Diane) of Kimballton, her grandchildren Jodee (Arron Dixon) of Elk Horn, and Jared (Brittany) of Carmichael, CA, and her great-grandchildren, Cameron, Benjamin, and Abigail; and many nieces, nephews, and other family members.

An 11 AM Memorial Service was officiated by Rev. Gary Golike on Friday, September 27, 2019 at Altamont Baptist Church in rural Harlan. Inurnment was held at Cuppy's Grove Cemetery in rural Harlan.

Pauley Jones Funeral Home was in charge of arrangements.



Pauley Jones
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