



Cleo Ross

July 4, 1920 - June 10, 2023

By the grace of God and the power of Jesus' blood, Cleo Ross, 102, made her journey to her Heavenly Home on Saturday, June 10, 2023.

She was born on July 4, 1920 to the late Ernest and Bertha Shuping Poteat around 7am after her mother had hoed corn the day before. "Aunt" Nancy Jones, the midwife, delivered her.

Cleo and her older brother, Gerald, began their education at Salem School that was located in the field across from the present Salem Methodist Church. She entered the 6th grade at the newly built Salem Elementary School and met her future husband, Oliver Ross there. She finished her high school years at Morganton High School as a student in the 7th through 11th grades. There was no 12th grade then.

After her high school graduation, Cleo began working at Eagle's Dime Store part-time for 3 years. Then she worked full-time jobs at Suraski's, a day goods store, Morganton Hosiery Mill and Shadowline, from which she retired after 25 years. Later she worked at Valdese Weavers for Servomation of Hickory.

After serving in the Army in the South Pacific during World War II, Oliver was discharged in the fall of 1945. Oliver and Cleo were married in Sunday, January 6, 1946 at Burkemont Baptist Church by Rev. Luther Snipes after the morning worship service with 87 people in attendance. Due to the heavy rains the week before, Ernest

brought Oliver and Cleo to church in his farm wagon because the mud was too deep for his car.

They began a family with son, Keith, born in 1948 and Sybil in 1949. The family grew when Keith married Beth in 1972. When she became Grandma to Kade on July 2, 1979, two days before her birthday, that became her favorite title in the family.

But Kade changed that favorite title to Great-Grandma when he and Mary Margaret, who were married in 2013, added her “babies” Hayes and Louise to love on.

There were many activities which she loved throughout her life. Cooking favorite meals of chicken pie, sweet potato casserole or fried apple pies and her coconut cakes made with Oliver were much sought after by family and at church dinners at Burkemont.

She loved her church family at Burkemont Baptist Church where she accepted Jesus as her Savior at age 12. She served there until she was in her late 80s, singing in the choir, directing the Nursery, working in the 2nd grade in Sunday School, assisting in VBS, and singing in the Golden Voices senior choir at church and in nursing homes until she was 90 years old.

Cleo and Oliver enjoyed sharing their love with their grandson, Kade and great-niece, Ashley Brian before they started school. They continued by keeping Rob Tennille, their other “little boy” before Oliver died in 1998. Cleo enjoyed traveling with Sybil on church trips until 2004, when she became “Granny Cleo” to Nate Bunton, when he was an infant until he was 4 years old.

In addition to her parents, Cleo was preceded in death by her husband of 52 years, Oliver Ross; her brother, Gerald and his wife, Mozelle; their 3 children, Wayne Poteat, Linda Ferrell, and Kent Poteat.

Those left to cherish her memory are her son, Keith and his wife, Beth; daughter, Sybil; grandson, Kade and his wife Mary Margaret; great-grandchildren Hayes and Louise; her cousin and sister-in-law, Faye Ross; and many great-nieces and nephews whom she treasured as she did her children.

The family will receive friends from 10am to 11am Tuesday, June 13, 2023 at Burkemont Baptist Church. The funeral will be at 11am in the church with Dr. Eddy Bunton and Dr. David Mills officiating with Dr. Luke Lane, Dr. Darren Browning, Rev. Philip Shepherd and Rev. Greg Klapp assisting. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Burkemont Baptist Church Above and Beyond Funds.

The Ross family would like to express our appreciation to Dr. Courtney Mull and the staff of Amorem, especially Nurse Brooke Malmisten, Nurse Jenny Poteat, CNA Elizabeth Owensby and Emme Williams for their loving and compassionate care of our mother, Cleo.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall



A beautiful person, lived a beautiful life. -Terry and Julie Duckworth

—Julie Duckworth

A sweet lady who will be missed. I remember her and her family as I grew up at Burkemont Baptist Church. My son had her daughter Sybil in 3rd grade at Salem Elementary. She's with her family and friends who have before her to the heavenly Father..Prayers to you all

—Janet Anthony



—Libby & Mike Young

My deepest sympathy for your loss. Praise the Lord we know where her spirit is!

—Judy Pearson

Came to Burkmont in 1980. She was a great woman of God. I always looked up

to her and she was a blessing to me. I will miss seeing her but look forward to seeing her in heaven. See you later Cleo.

—Carol Mason



Mrs. Cleo was such a special lady. I know she will be missed. You all have our condolences. May God provide you with peace and comfort now and in the days to come.
Rama Jean and Bruce Franklin

—Bruce and Rama Jean Franklin



Dear Keith & Sybil, What precious memories you have of this beautiful mother! She was certainly a jewel, now an Angel, singing in God's heavenly choir. I'll be praying for the family if you don't mind. God bless, Donnie

—Donnie (Morrissey) Honeycutt

What a lovely lady and Child of God as described beautifully in your loving tribute to her. Wishing you God's Blessings and Comfort.

—Margaret Walters