



Joyce Merritt Rutherford

January 14, 1933 - September 25, 2020

Joyce Merritt Rutherford

Joyce Merritt Rutherford, 87, of Lee, Fla., entered into Heavenly rest surrounded by her family on Friday, Sept. 25, 2020. She was the daughter of the late Ervin Merritt and Mildred Ragans Merritt of Lee. She was predeceased by her husband J.W. Rutherford. She is survived by her four children: Deborah (Kirk) Rutherford Pittman, James (Jill) William Rutherford, Jr; David Alan Rutherford, and Timothy (Susie) Lee Rutherford. She had nine grandchildren: T.J. Rutherford; Matthew Rutherford; Kaitlyn (Alex) Burns; James (Dara) Rutherford, III; Marilee (Chris) Wade; Melissa (Joe) Parrott; Alexis Rutherford; Vanessa (Joel) Fultz; and Kirk Pittman, III; and 11 great grandchildren, whom she loved very much. She is also survived by a host of nieces, nephews, great nieces, and great nephews, all of whom she loved like her own grandchildren. Her long-term caregiver was Wahida Wallace.

Joyce was known in the community for her love and care for children. Born in Madison County, she and her husband moved to Jacksonville where they started their family. There, she managed the daycare at Woodlawn Baptist Church. Soon after she returned to Lee, she began her own daycare called Little Friends, which she operated for many years. Joyce was also active in her community and in her church, Lee First Baptist, where she served in the nursery and taught adult Sunday school. Joyce also enjoyed quilting, DIY

projects, and spending time with her family.

Funeral services will be held Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2020 at Lee First Baptist Church. The viewing will take place at 10 a.m. and the funeral will be held at 11 a.m. A graveside service will follow at Macedonia Cemetery in Lee.

Beggs Funeral Home is handling the services. In lieu of flowers you may send donations to Florida Baptist Children's Home at P.O. Box 8190, Lakeland, FL, 33802. You may send your condolences to the family at beggsfuneral.com.

Tribute Wall

LE

“ Wonderful memories of Joyce's beautiful interaction with all the children in her care. May she be at peace now and no longer in pain. Love, Leo Gordie

Leo - September 26, 2020 at 12:37 AM

BH

“ So many memories of Mrs. Joyce and her keeping my children. She is going to be missed. Love and prayers to everyone during this time.

Beth Hooker - September 25, 2020 at 06:42 PM