



Mrs. Rita Thigpen

January 2, 1931 - October 16, 2015

Anastasia Rita Garvin Thigpen, 84, of Deerfield Episcopal Retirement Community, was welcomed into the Church Triumphant on Friday October 16. On November 5 she would have celebrated 65 years of marriage to Luther B. Thigpen, who survives her. In addition to her husband, she is survived by her four children and their spouses, Doug and his wife Fran of Swannanoa, Gail Israel and her husband Lonnie of Candler, John and his wife Kelli of Rock Hill, SC and Patty Champion and her husband David of Hixson, TN, as well as nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She joins another great-grandchild, precious Ashton, among the heavenly host.

Rita treasured her strong Catholic faith and was exceedingly proud of her Irish ancestry. The eldest of ten children, she loved the times when the Garvins and their families gathered for reunions and other joyous occasions.

She is a graduate of Mt. de Sales Academy of Macon, Ga. and the nursing program at AB Tech, where she became a Registered Nurse.

Rita and Luther made their home in various places in the South as a result of his employment in the newspaper industry. Beginning in Macon, Ga. where they were both born, they moved to Augusta and then Atlanta before settling in Asheville in 1965, where Luther served as Executive Editor of the Citizen-Times. In 1980 Luther was named Publisher of the Clarksville, Tennessee

Leaf-Chronicle and Rita immersed herself in community improvement there. She was instrumental in the establishment of Clarksville's Hospice program and served seven years as its Chairman of the Board. After Luther's retirement as Publisher, they moved back to Asheville to be near their children and grandchildren.

The family wishes to express its deep appreciation to the dedicated staff at Deerfield for their unfailing attention to Rita's needs and wants, and to the people of CarePartners Hospice for their loving assistance in her final days.

The family will receive friends from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on Monday, October 19 at Morris Funeral Home, 304 Merrimon Avenue, and a Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at St. Eugene Catholic Church, 72 Culvern Street, Asheville, at 10 a.m. on Tuesday, October 20 with Father Pat Cahill officiating. Memorials in Rita's honor may be made to CarePartners Hospice Foundation, PO Box 25338, Asheville, NC 28813 or to a charity of one's choice.

Cemetery Details

Private

Previous Events

Family will Receive Friends

OCT **19**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Morris Funeral & Cremation Care
304 Merrimon Ave.
Asheville, NC 28801
(828) 252-1821
info@morrisfamilycare.com
<http://www.morrisfamilycare.com>

Funeral Mass

OCT **20**. 10:00 AM (ET)

St. Eugene Catholic Church
72 Culvern Street
Asheville, NC 28801
<http://www.steugene.org>

Tribute Wall



“ *Morris Funeral & Cremation Care created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Rita Thigpen*



Morris Funeral Home - October 19, 2015 at 12:29 PM



“ *Mrs. Rita Thigpen*

October 07, 2023 at 11:15 AM



“ *So sorry Luther I remember you both so well. Rita was a very sweet lady I know that she will be miss. My prayers and thoughts are with you all!*

Christy Odom - October 21, 2015 at 11:15 AM



“ To the family of Mrs. Rita and specifically to Gail and Lonnie Israel, My thoughts and prayers and with you. I know how much you love your mother and find peace in knowing you will see her again. I love you both and I am here for anything you need. With love, Jill Franklin



Jill Franklin - October 20, 2015 at 09:51 AM



“ 36 files added to the album LifeTributes



Morris Funeral Home - October 19, 2015 at 12:23 PM

JE

“ We send our condolences on the loss of Rita. We will hold her and your whole family high in prayer as you gather together to love and cherish each other as well as celebrate her beautiful life.

*Jennifer Pataky Keleher
Laurie Pataky Pappas
Karen Pataky Nix
and George Pataky*

Jennifer - October 19, 2015 at 09:49 AM

AZ

“ Anthony crognale, Bob and Kathy Zwanziger purchased the Garden of Serenity Bouquet for the family of Mrs. Rita Thigpen.



Anthony crognale, Bob and Kathy Zwanziger - October 19, 2015 at 09:03 AM

GI

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Gail Israel - October 18, 2015 at 05:32 PM

JN

“ *Patty, Luther, and family:*
Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this time of grief. We remember well the lasting contributions to our community Rita made while residing in Clarksville, TN. Rita always had a smile, and her compassionate spirit was always evident.
Joyce & Gary Norris (our daughter is April Norris Marklin who enjoyed a special friendship with Patty during their high school days)

Joyce Norris - October 18, 2015 at 03:06 PM



“ *Sacred Garden Spray was purchased for the family of Mrs. Rita Thigpen.*



October 18, 2015 at 01:15 PM

BF

“ *Barbara Williamson & Sis Shellenberger and our family purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Mrs. Rita Thigpen.*



Barbara Williamson & Sis Shellenberger and our family -
October 18, 2015 at 08:29 AM

GL

“ Geneva Berryman & Michael Long purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mrs. Rita Thigpen.



Geneva Berryman & Michael Long - October 17, 2015 at 07:37 PM

KA

“ Gail and family, know that you are held close in love and prayers as you travel this journey without your sweet Mama. She spread smiles wherever she went. Bill and Katie Kalarovich



Katie - October 17, 2015 at 05:36 PM

FR

“ Rita was always the kindest of the "older cousins" when we would visit Macon. She and her four sisters were a very special group of ladies. I know they and Luther, as well as the Thigpen children & grandchildren will really miss this grand Southern Lady.

Faye (Crump) Ruehling, St. Simons Island, GA

Faye Ruehling - October 17, 2015 at 05:32 PM

AT

“ Alan, Sue, and Brian Bunch and Derek & Lisa Tisdal purchased the Sweet Sincerity for the family of Mrs. Rita Thigpen.



Alan, Sue, and Brian Bunch and Derek & Lisa Tisdal - October 16, 2015 at 11:32 PM