



Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines

March 8, 1912 - August 11, 2014

SMALLEY-GAINES, Sister Bessie Lee - age 102, passed away Monday, August 11, 2014 at Heartland Health Care Center-Fostrian-Flushing, MI. Family hour 10 a.m. Saturday, August 16, 2014 at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, G-5443 N. Saginaw St. with funeral service commencing at 11 a.m. Bishop Neal Roberson officiating. Interment Gracelawn Community Cemetery, G-5710 N. Saginaw St. Friends and pallbearers will assemble at the church 10 a.m. Saturday. Sister Smalley-Gaines will lie in state in the Chapel of Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home, 906 W. Flint Park Blvd. and may be viewed Friday from 12 p.m.-8 p.m.

Sister Bessie Lee Gaines, aka "Granny Gaines", went home to be with the Lord on Monday, August 11, 2014. She was born March 8, 1912 in Lebanon, Kentucky to the family of William Henry and Mae (Clarke) Smalley. Sister Bessie was the sixth child out of nine brother and sisters. She graduated from Lebanon High School in 1930. Sister Bessie accepted Christ at an early age under the Methodist faith. Subsequently, she was encouraged in 1960 by her husband Henry to accept membership at Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church under the leadership of the late Rev. Ira Watkins and was baptized. At Macedonia she served in the capacity as supervisor of the Young Adult Choir for over 35 years. The choir had the highest respect for Sister Bessie and enjoyed her fun loving spirit. She was head of the kitchen committee for many years working beside many Christian sister and brothers preparing dinner for

all occasions. She was also, a member of the Missionary Society.

Sister Bessie was employed at Citizens Bank as an elevator operator. During the war she was a parts inspector for airplanes at Buick, until Henry returned from the war. She then became a homemaker. She let everybody know that Henry and her children were her first priority. Sister Bessie cooked a fresh meal everyday until her husband passed. At that time, she announced to all that her kitchen was now closed. Sister Bessie never hesitated to help any and all of her neighbors when they were in need of advice or clothing. She was also, the first employer of her children. She showed them how to follow directions each Saturday morning by cleaning the house. Sister Bessie was a mother who taught her seven children and she was never questioned, if you did something wrong, out came the chair and belt. On November 24, 1944, Sister Bessie married the love of her life Henry Gaines in Flint, Michigan on his lunch hour from Buick. She walked as a loving spirit beside her husband. They were married for forty-four years until his home going on February 6, 1988.

Sister Bessie Lee Gaines leaves to cherish her loving memory: 3 daughters: Mary Cross, Nancy (Charles) Murphy, Flint, Patricia (Minister Leon) Adams, Grand Blanc; 3 sons: George (Esther) Smalley of San Antonio, Texas, Henry (Gwendolyn) Gaines, and Joseph (Sheila) Gaines, of Flint, MI, 25 grandchildren, 22 great grand children, 13 great-great grandchildren. One brother: Richard Smalley of Lebanon, Ky and a host of nieces, nephews, and many friends, special girlfriends, and her Macedonia Church family.

Special thanks to Macedonia, Mt. Olive, Grace Emmanuel, Flint, MI and Beth Eden Baptist Church, Detroit and all of the staff at Fostrian Nursing Home; Dr. Calvin Calloway, Dr. Reddy and Dr. Matt Weiss.

Sister Bessie was preceded in death by: her husband, Henry Gaines, One son

Irish Gaines, One daughter Ruth Gaines, parents, sisters, brothers and special cousin Edith Buckner.

Cemetery Details

Gracelawn Cemetery

5710 N. Saginaw St.
Flint, MI 48505

Previous Events

Public Viewing

AUG **15**. 12:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Lawrence E. Moon Funeral Home Chapel, Flint
906 W. Flint Park Blvd.
Flint, MI 48505
(810) 789-MOON (6666)
lemoonfhflint@gmail.com
<http://www.lawrenceemoonfuneralhome.com>

Family hour

AUG **16**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church
G-5443 N. Saginaw Street
Flint, MI 48505

Service

AUG **16**. 11:00 AM (ET)

Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church
G-5443 N. Saginaw Street
Flint, MI 48505

Tribute Wall



“ *Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*

October 09, 2023 at 07:02 AM



“ *We are saddened to hear of your loss....Our prayers are with and for you!*

Revs Leion and Lois R. Watkins

Lois R Watkins - August 21, 2014 at 10:47 PM



“ *I'm sorry for your loss losing a loved one can be so tragic. So I would like to offer you encouraging thoughts at Revelation 21:4-he will wipe out every tear from their eyes and death will be no more neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.*

Lisa Wright - August 16, 2014 at 11:14 AM



“ *I cannot begin to express my sympathy in the loss of our wonderful friend Ms. Bessie. She brought such love, joy, laughter and care into our lives. When I arrived in Flint as a student at the U of M, I knew no one. By the time I graduated I was a part of the Gaines and Murphy family. My family sends the condolences, love and prayers from the city of Detroit. Love and Prayers, Tina and Family*



Tina - August 15, 2014 at 07:47 PM

MF

“ *Mary Kelly And Family lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Mary Kelly and Family - August 15, 2014 at 02:55 PM

MF

Praying for you and your family in the loss of such a lovely person as Mother Gaines. She was a beautiful lady and her smile will dwell in my heart forever. God bless all of you today and always.

Mary Kelly and Family - August 15, 2014 at 02:58 PM

CM

“ *Carolyn McClendon lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Carolyn McClendon - August 15, 2014 at 09:16 AM



“ *Monique Burley lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Monique Burley - August 14, 2014 at 08:56 PM

PR

“ To the Smalley-Gaines Family:

I'm sorry to hear about the loss of your love one. Many wonder why we grow old and die (rom 5:12) answer that question. It says because of Adam sinning his punishment was death and sin and death was passed on to us. However, our loving God, Jehovah (1John 4:8) made a way out for us by sacrificing his son (John 3:16) God promises us we will see our loved ones again (John 5:28,29).For more information go to www.jw.org and you can find answees to any question you may have.

JESUS CHRIST-John 3:16

JEHOVAH-John 17:3

LAST ENEMY-1 COR 15:26

*Yours truly,
Patricia Rison*

patricia rison - August 14, 2014 at 12:37 PM

JA

“ Javonka lit a candle in memory of Sister
Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines



javonka - August 14, 2014 at 08:31 AM

LB

“ *Linda Baxter lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Linda Baxter - August 13, 2014 at 10:43 PM

CR

“ *Crystaljones27@yahoo.com lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



crystaljones27@yahoo.com - August 13, 2014 at 10:32 PM

CR

“ *My condolences are with Granny Gaines friends and family. Granny Gaines was truly a blessing to know. I remember Granny Gaines always walking around the house holding her hands behind her back with a graceful smile. I admire her grace and faith. Rest in peace Granny Gaines love Crystal*

crystaljones27@yahoo.com - August 13, 2014 at 10:31 PM

EB

Beautiful

Edwin Bivens - August 14, 2014 at 09:33 AM

JM

“ Ms Gaines was a very nice lady and will be truly missed, When I lived in Michigan she use to stay down the street from me, I use to cut her grass, I raked her leaves a few times with her son Joseph Gaines and I shoveled her driveway a couple times, it was a pleasure to be at her 100th Birthday celebration, those are just a few memories I have of her, to the family I'd like to say my thoughts an prayers are with you, the bible says: Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted!!!!

Jory Mickens

jory mickens - August 13, 2014 at 08:30 PM

EP

“ My sincere condolences to the Gaines family.
Evangelist Carlene Powell-Youngblood

Evangelist Carlene Powell-Youngblood - August 13, 2014 at 08:24 PM

CW

“ Carolyn Walker lit a candle in memory of
Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines



Carolyn Walker - August 13, 2014 at 03:50 PM

LT

“ Le'Brio Turner/Brianna Turner lit a candle in
memory of *Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Le'Brio Turner/Brianna Turner - August 13, 2014 at 03:37 PM

CA

“ *Carrie Adams lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Carrie Adams - August 13, 2014 at 03:34 PM

LP

“ *LISA PAYTON lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



LISA PAYTON - August 13, 2014 at 02:32 PM

AH

“ *Anthony And Carol Hill lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Anthony and Carol Hill - August 13, 2014 at 01:28 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines.*



August 13, 2014 at 01:28 PM

MT

“ *Love You, Mrs. Gaines. I will miss you.*
Beatrice Taylor



Meriann Taylor - August 13, 2014 at 11:21 AM

MT

“ *Blessings to the family. My condolences.*
Rev. Dr. Meriann Taylor



Meriann Taylor - August 13, 2014 at 11:20 AM

DD

“ *Dionne Dickerson lit a candle in memory of*
Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines



Dionne Dickerson - August 13, 2014 at 10:31 AM

LB

“ *Lynn Barbee lit a candle in memory of Sister*
Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines



Lynn Barbee - August 13, 2014 at 08:24 AM

LJ

“ *LeeAnn Tarver & Cherie Johnson lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



LeeAnn Tarver & Cherie Johnson - August 12, 2014 at 04:58 PM

PB

“ *Patricia Barker lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Patricia Barker - August 12, 2014 at 03:55 PM

TC

“ *Janea my prayers are with you and your family. I know its hard put just keep praying. It gets better. Love you!! Toni, Amber. Baton Rouge, Louisiana.*

Toni Camel - August 12, 2014 at 03:05 PM

LC

“ *Linda Chilton lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Linda Chilton - August 12, 2014 at 02:56 PM

EB

“ *The Greatest of the Great you are,
In lifes movie you are the star*

*Through all the ups and downs,
Youve always been around,
Now heaven is where you are.*

*Memories of you will last forever
The love we share will remain
Although it hurts now to know your gone
The lord will heal our pain*

*You were blessed to see age 102
A blessing of which in its own
Now i will write you letters of love
An address them to Heaven .. your home.*

*Lord watch over my Great Grandmother.
Keep her close to your side.
And i will love and think of her every day
And keep her spirit alive.*

*To my family and friends that loved her too.
Dont worry, are hearts will mend.
And Granny Gaines, i will miss you forever.
UNTIL I SEE YOU AGAIN.*

I love you..

Edwin

Edwin Bivens - August 12, 2014 at 01:29 PM

GH

“ *Glenda Henderson lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Glenda Henderson - August 12, 2014 at 12:12 PM

ST

“ *My heart and thoughts are with you. If I can help by listening, please let me know. Love Villian*

Shannon Tatum - August 12, 2014 at 11:44 AM

TW

“ *Tommy "Poochie" Williams lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Tommy "Poochie" Williams - August 12, 2014 at 10:32 AM

MW

“ *Mary & Diane Williams sent a virtual gift in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines*



Mary & Diane Williams - August 12, 2014 at 10:31 AM

BF

“ Our prayers and condolences go out to the family for your loss, however we rejoice with you in this home-going. Mrs. Bessie has blessed the world through over a century with her presence and the legacy she leaves behind is her family.

*Blessings,
Brad & Cassandra Frank
Niagara Falls, New York*

Brad & Cassandra Frank - August 11, 2014 at 07:57 PM

GD

“ Our thoughts and prayers are extended to the entire Gaines family.

Greg & Cynthia Davis

Greg & Cynthia Davis - August 11, 2014 at 03:32 PM

GD

“ Greg & Cynthia Davis lit a candle in memory of Sister Bessie Lee Smalley-Gaines



Greg & Cynthia Davis - August 11, 2014 at 03:23 PM