

## *Casket Bearers*

Corey Fox            Matt Hogan            Paul Coleman  
Larry Huggins      Lorenzo Ballard      Ronald Mitchell  
Cleven Huggins    Keith Wakes Jr.

## *Acknowledgements*



We would like to take this time to express our sincere appreciation and heartfelt gratitude for all expressions of sympathy shown during our time of bereavement. Your condolences have helped to lighten our burden of sadness. We want each of you to know that we shall remain forever grateful for your kindness and thoughtfulness.

*The Family of Mardie Estor Kelley*

## PEACEFUL REST FUNERAL CHAPEL

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*Visit Mardie's interactive celebration page at:*

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## *Homegoing Celebration* *for* *Mardie Estor Kelley*



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July 22, 1941 - November 22, 2015

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## *Service*

Wednesday, December 2, 2015  
12:00 P.M.

True Vine Missionary Baptist Church  
307 SE Tefft Street  
Topeka, Kansas

## *Officiant*

Rev. McCoy Caraway, Pastor  
St. Luke Missionary Baptist Church

## *Precious Memories*

Mardie Estor Kelley, known by everyone as "Maude Esther" arrived into this world on July 22, 1941 in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. She was the fifth child born to Andrew R. Holmes and Mary Allee Luster Holmes.

She received her early education in Pine Bluff Public Schools.

As a teenager she moved to Topeka, Kansas and united in holy matrimony to Rufus Kelley, Jr. on July 20, 1957.

Mardie accepted Christ at an early age and united with St. Luke Missionary Baptist under the pastorage of Rev. Ruby L. Kirtdoll where she remained a lifelong member. There she was a member of the adult choir and served on the deaconess board for many years before her sickness.

Mardie was a homemaker. She was a good cook and loved to try new recipes. She kept busy by crocheting, doing all kinds of crafts, going fishing, pressing and curling hair.

She would speak her mind and she stood for what was right. Mardie was always willing to lend a helping hand and supported in any way she could.

Mardie loved taking care of children in the family. She named many babies and was known as the "Baby Namer" in the family.

After many years of not bearing a child, she and Rufus sought adoption and a beautiful baby girl, Michele, became the first child to this union. Three years later her first born son, Rufus Demetrius, was conceived and then later she conceived two more daughters, DeLetha and Mary.

Her deep love for children grew more when an article published in the Topeka Capital Journal newspaper stated a need for two sisters to be adopted.

A family meeting was held and two more daughters, Debbie and Cassandra, were added to the family.

Then another son, Cornelius, was adopted into the family since the girls outnumbered the boys.

The family kept growing when guardianship of Twanna was given to them and she was welcomed into the Kelley family as another daughter.

Having become familiar within the adoption agency, they were called upon to again adopt three more children of who were all related. And without hesitation more room was made for another son, Christopher, and two more daughters, Tiesha and Christian, that were added to the Kelley family.

The Kelley family made a trip to the governor's office to receive an honor and have family pictures taken with then Governor Hayden for the National Adoption Week.

Mardie loved being a mother, and with the completion of the Kelley family now with 8 daughters and 3 sons, she did all she knew, with the help of her husband; to love, teach, raise, nurture, lead them to Jesus Christ and encourage all of her children to be the best that they could be.

When the grandchildren started to come, she loved sharing in the upbringing of them as well. The joy they brought her would just make her smile. She never got enough of those precious little ones.

Found in the Family Bible that had rested on the coffee table for many years she had written these words on the page of "Events To Remember in the Life of Our Family..."

*To all my adopted children:*

*You may not be flesh of our flesh or bone of our bone but you all are the desire of our heart.*

*Your Mom & Dad*

*Mardie Kelley & Rufus Kelley, Jr.*

*Precious Memories*

*Daughters, Sisters, Mothers, Grandmothers, Friends...*

*Order of Service*

And directly under that she continued to write:

*And to all my other children that are flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone you are also the desire of our heart and we thank God for all of you for fulfilling our life with you all. We love you all very much.*

*Your Mom & Dad  
Mardie Kelley Rufus Kelley, Jr.*

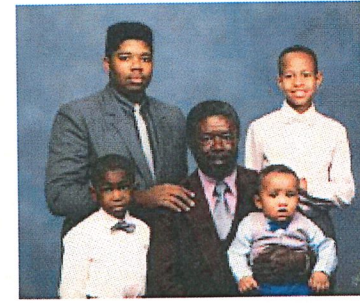
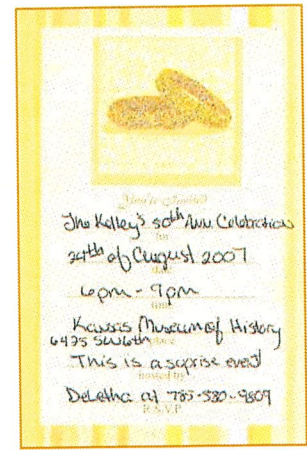
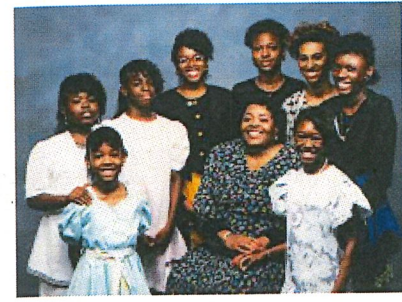
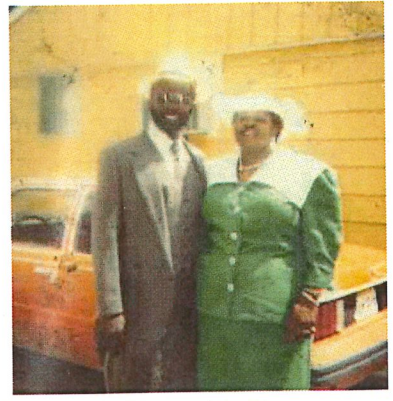
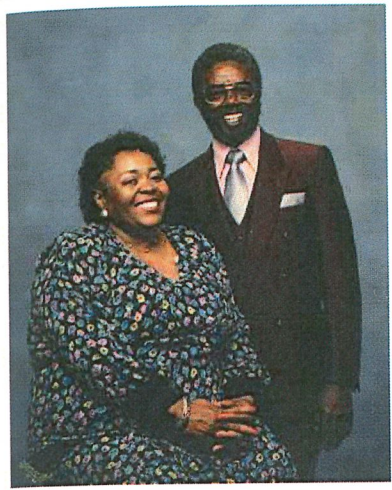
Family was everything to her and she tried to be the best wife and mother that she could possibly be.

In 2004 Mardie had a heart attack and she began having many health problems. She later had a stroke that caused her to use a wheelchair. She made many trips to the hospital and rehab over the past few years. But she kept a smile on her face. Her caretaker during it all was her loving and devoted husband of 58 years, Rufus. In 1957 he made a vow to Mardie and the Lord that they would stay together in the good times and the bad, in sickness and in health; for better or for worse. Rufus kept his promise and stood by "the wife's" side with great pride until the very end.

On Sunday morning November 22, 2015 while at home she quietly transitioned to her heavenly home. A place where there is no more sickness, no more sadness, no more heartaches, no more sorrow but a place where every day will be a day of jubilee and never no more good byes. She fought a good fight, she finished the course, she kept the faith.

Mardie shall always be remembered as woman with a big heart that loved her husband, children and grandchildren. There will forever be a void in our hearts that can never be filled, but we thank God for the gift of her in our lives. She may be gone but never, ever forgotten. So, just knowing that she is safe in the arms of Jesus, we the family accept that the Lord has spoken and we say AMEN.

Mardie is survived by her husband, Rufus Kelley Jr., of Topeka, Kansas; sons, Rufus D. Kelley (Carla) of Florissant, Missouri and Christopher D. Kelley (Shannon) of Roseville, California; daughters, Michele Fox, Debbie Kelley, DeLetha Kelley, Tiesha Martin (Daniel), Mary Kelley, Christian Kelley and Cassandra Kelley all of Topeka, Kansas; sisters, Ruby Vaughn and Flossie Bean both of Omaha, Nebraska; 20 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; 2 godsons and a host of other relatives and friends who loved her and will miss her.



*Daughter, Sisters, Mother, Grandmother, Friend...*

*Order of Service*