



Virginia Ruth Hutchings Sparkman

FEB 4, 1925 - JAN 20, 2024



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Virginia Ruth Hutchings Sparkman went home to be with Jesus on January 20, 2024 at age 98 in Fort Myers, FL. Born in Sparta, TN on Feb. 4, 1925, she was the daughter of Ora Kirby Hutchings Sarten and Carrick D. Hutchings. She was preceded in death by her parents, stepfather Lefford Sarten, brothers Dean Hutchings and Dillard (Dutch) Hutchings, and her beloved husband of 70 years, Grady Sparkman.

Virginia eloped with her high school sweetheart, Grady, when she was 17 and he was 20. After Grady's time in the military, she worked for Dr. Robert Baker in Sparta as his "nurse" in the early 1950s. After trying to have a baby for 15 years, Virginia and Grady put in an application to adopt a baby. They had asked for a girl and were approved when Virginia found out she was pregnant.

Virginia gave birth to her only child Denise, and devoted her life to raising her. She volunteered at Denise's schools, Girl Scouts, church and band programs. Virginia and Grady ran the Band Booster concession stands for all home football and basketball games at White County High School, along with driving their station wagon full of band instruments to every away game and competition. They were members of First United Methodist Church in Sparta, where Virginia and Denise both sang in the choir.

Virginia and Grady lived in Sparta until 1982, when they retired to Florida. Virginia and Grady were members of McGregor Baptist Church in Fort Myers and charter members of the Beacon Sunday School class. They volunteered for many years in the church kitchen preparing Wednesday night suppers and choir meals, in the office folding newsletters and stuffing envelopes, and at the McGregor Food Pantry for several years. They were also volunteers at Lee Memorial Hospital in the Courier's office for 15 years.

When their only grandchild, Dylan, was born, Virginia became an amazing grandmother. Her devotion to him was immeasurable.



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Virginia loved the Lord, her family, making a home for them, cooking, and baking. She was a true Southern woman. Her lifelong passion was baking and she dearly loved making desserts for others. In the 1960s, she ran the Bloodmobile Canteen, serving homemade baked goods to all who gave blood. When she had visitors at her home, she always had homemade dessert in her freezer that she would quickly thaw to serve or send home with them. When her husband of 70 years died, she baked pound cake the next morning so she could serve friends who would visit her. She thought of others more highly than herself, always put herself last, and was generous to anyone in need. Fiercely independent, Virginia lived alone until the age of 95. Her final years were spent at Discovery Village Assisted Living, where many of her caregivers called her "my favorite."

Virginia faced several health challenges throughout her later years. But she was as resilient a woman as they come, and persevered through many painful days. Her family has peace because she is now pain-free, living with Jesus in Heaven.

Virginia is survived by her daughter Denise Sparkman Plunkett, son-in-law Don Plunkett, and their son, Dylan Plunkett. As a mother and grandmother, she loved them unconditionally.

Virginia will be buried next to her husband, Grady, in Highland Cemetery in her hometown of Sparta, TN. A private service will be held at a later date. If you would like to honor Virginia's memory, you may donate to the McGregor Baptist Church Food Pantry as a fitting tribute to Virginia's years of service there.

Arrangements are in the care of Hunter Funeral Home in Sparta, TN and Fort Myers Memorial Gardens.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Virginia by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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