



## Ruth Mitchell

January 19, 1930 - April 16, 2016

Ruth Ellen Bates Mitchell was born on January 19, 1930 in the Highland Community of Dark Corner of Northern Greenville County to the late James Davis Bates and Maude Irene Cox Bates and went to be with the Lord on April 16, 2016.

Ruth Ellen always put God first in her life and was always dedicated to God. She was the organist at Redeemed Baptist Church for 23 years, while her daughter served as pianist. Ruth Ellen enjoyed playing the piano, the organ and being with family and friends. She loved everyone that she met and never met a stranger.

Ruth Ellen became saved at an early age and lived with her parents serving the Lord and sharing God's word, the KJV Bible. She led a biblically conservative lifestyle being an integral part of the ministry sharing of God's love with everyone. She would witness to anyone about the love of God and would say that we all needed to "live for Jesus every day." Her favorite beatitude was always, "Blessed are the Peacemakers."

Ruth Ellen served in various capacities of the following churches: Tyger Baptist Church, Beaverdam Baptist Church, Pacolet Hills Baptist Church, Cross Plains Baptist Church, Washington Avenue Baptist Church, Shady Grove Baptist Church, Redeemed Baptist Church and Blue Ridge Baptist Church. She served as a pastor's wife, mother, daughter, friend, faithful church member, pianist, organist, VBS Director, Sunday school teacher, Training Union Director, Training Union Teacher and VBS Youth Leader. She

served in these various positions with joy, not complaint. Ruth Ellen is a faithful member of Blue Ridge Baptist Church on Pennington Road, Greer, SC, where she served as a door-greeter. She served the Lord with gladness and thought of others first. She always handed out candy and lollipops to the children.

Ruth Ellen graduated from Jordan High School where she excelled and went from the 11th grade directly into North Greenville University and Furman University.

Ruth Ellen is a retired educator teaching in Greenville County Schools for 33 years. She taught 17 years at Tigerville Elementary then taught 16 years at Ebenezer Elementary School.

She loved her students and went the extra mile to encourage them. Ruth Ellen designed the Challenge Program of Greenville County School District with teaching these advanced children so that the smarter children were advancing and not being held back. She motivated others and wanted her students to succeed. Due to her desire to help students reach their potential with the Challenge Program, some students were promoted to the next grade level. Ruth Ellen was always willing to do any job that she could do for the Lord. She has always been a PRAYER warrior. She would stop what she was doing and immediately pray when someone asked her to pray or she felt that someone needed prayer.

Ruth Ellen supported her daughter with piano lessons, orchestra, GCYO, 4-H, Girl Scouts, and did it all without complaint.

Ruth Ellen and her daughter, Tonya, were more like sisters, than parent/child. Ruth Ellen enjoyed spending time with her daughter, dressing alike, laughing, visiting the sick and shut-in's, and trying to show care to everyone.

Tonya's musical talent was a joy for her parents and grandparents. It pleased Ruth Ellen for Tonya to play for God where all praise and honor goes to God. Ruth Ellen never complained about taking Tonya to violin lessons, orchestra, school events, 4-H, and Girl Scouts, all while trying to assist her daughter to develop the talents that God gave her.

If someone passed away, as late as 3 weeks ago, mother would bake a cake or cook a full meal for a sick friend. She never expected anything in return but seeing the joy that it brought others.

April 7, 2016 Ruth Ellen accompanied Tonya and Brian to MUSC Hospital Charleston regarding Tonya's brain tumors and chronic migraines. She enjoyed riding around and seeing Fort Moultrie, the beauty of Sullivan's Island and dining at Paige's Okra Grill and Taco Mamacita. She was able to eat, drink and enjoy the time.

Her last breathe on earth were hard to deal with as she was septic (colon) issues and UTI infections off and on the past 4 months.

This is taking a terrible toll on Tonya, Ruth Ellen's Daughter. Ruth Ellen was 37 when Tonya was born. They have always been more like sisters as we wore matching outfits to church. Ruth Ellen and Tonya loved each other. Ruth Ellen enjoyed special times and trips shared. They served 23 years as organist and pianist of Redeemed Baptist Church on Blackstock Road, Landrum, SC 29356.

Tonya feels like part of herself left when her mother took her last breath here on earth. Her comfort comes in knowing that her last breath on earth was her first breath in Heaven.

Ruth Ellen is survived by her daughter, Tonya Sabrina Mitchell and her son-in-law, Brian L. Pace; a sister, Betty Jean Bates Ward (Charles Ken Ward); and sister-in-law, Mrs. Lena Johnson Farr (Homer Farr).

She was predeceased by her husband of 55 years, Rev. George J. Mitchell. Funeral services will be held 3:30 p.m. Friday at Blue Ridge Baptist Church, conducted by Rev. Michael Pittman and Rev. Buddy Robbins. Entombment will follow in Hillcrest Memory Gardens Mausoleum.

Visitation will be held 2:00-3:15 p.m. Friday at the church.

The families are at their respective homes.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Hopewell Independent Baptist Church, Attn: Pastor Michael Pittman, 1919 Hwy 11, Landrum, SC 29356 or

Blue Ridge Baptist Church Debt, Mortgage or Music Fund, 3950 Pennington Road, Greer, SC 29651.

If you would like to send a card to the family of Ruth Ellen Bates Mitchell:

Tonya Sabrina Mitchell & Brian Pace, PO Box 1132, Travelers Rest, SC 29690  
or Betty Jean Bates Ward and Ken Ward, 100 Tigerville School Rd, Taylors,  
SC 29687.

Online condolences may be made at [www.thewoodmortuary.com](http://www.thewoodmortuary.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Hillcrest Memory Gardens Mausoleum

14050 East Wade Hampton Boulevard  
Greer, SC 29651

# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR 22. 2:00 PM - 3:15 PM (ET)

Blue Ridge Baptist Church  
3950 Pennington Road  
Greer, SC 29651

## Service

APR 22. 3:30 PM (ET)

Blue Ridge Baptist Church  
3950 Pennington Road  
Greer, SC 29651

# Tribute Wall



“ *The Wood Mortuary created a Tribute Video in memory of Ruth Mitchell*



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**The Wood Mortuary** - April 22, 2016 at 08:44 AM



*Memories of my dear Mother, Ruth Ellen Bates Mitchell...*

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**Tonya Mitchell** - April 11, 2018 at 07:32 PM

AI

“ *I have wonderful memories of my mother's cousin at the farm!! RIP Ruth Ellen.*

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**Amy Ireland** - December 27, 2018 at 11:00 AM

DM

“ *Tonya, I am so sorry to hear about your Mother's death. She was an very kind woman and also your mother Tonya! I pray that you and Brian will have Comfort and Peace from God.*

*Dan Martinsson*

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**Dan Martinsson** - August 27, 2016 at 10:00 AM

JO

“ Tonya,

*Thinking of you during this difficult time. I know the days after a loved one passes away are often the hardest, when the funeral is over and friends have gone home, the loneliness can set in. I wanted to use this platform to share some memories I have of your mother. Many of them include you as well.*

*I remember going with your mom to pick strawberries in the spring. We went to several places. Ferguson Farms, Beachwood Farms and another one near Locust Hill. I remember Saturday afternoons going with your mom to the grocery store. She had to buy her own groceries and groceries for you Nana and Papa so she needed help. As a teenager, it was a treat for me to go. I would laugh because she would get in a hurry and toss items into the carts so hard! I remember once on these outings her brand new car broke down on us in the Burger King drive thru. She didn't miss a beat. We were blocking the window so she started bringing food to people's cars as they drove around us. We were finally able to push the car out of the way.*

*I remember trips to Cleveland Animal Hospital on occasion to take cats, dogs or whatever animal needed to go. The one time she was wearing a bejeweled whistled that her friend gave her. The office staff loved it and she demonstrated how it really worked and all the dogs who were there started barking!*

*I remember trips to Calabash West in Fletcher on Friday night, and going up to Tops for Shoes in Downtown Asheville. We were trendy and didn't even know it, hanging out in Downtown Asheville before it was the place to be!*

*I remember her coming over to my grandmother's so my grandmother could do her hair for Sunday church. She would sit under the hair dryer in Lois' kitchen and we'd make faces at each other.*

*I remember trips to the Anderson Flea Market, Hendersonville for Aunt Evie's birthday dinners, the many trips she made with my grandma Lois and grandpa Tom to Black Mountain for his medical treatments and of course, trips to the Pig Parlor!*

*I remember her making us lunch while you and I spent Saturdays lounging in the pool.*

*What I don't remember is your mom without a smile, without a kind word or without love in her heart. As far as I'm concerned that's because those things never happened. She was always such an upbeat person and regardless of what happened, if someone was unkind to her or she was having a bad day, you never knew it.*

*She will be greatly missed but I hope, despite how sad you are and may always be, that you can look back on her life and see it was full. She has left a legacy of service, love and happiness. She left the world a better place and that makes her passing that much more difficult. We have lost a beautiful lady who was a wonderful example to us all.*

*Much love,*

*Jimmy Owens*

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**Jim Owens** - May 05, 2016 at 08:47 AM



*Thanks BROTHER Jim. Mother enjoyed her times with you as you both shared in the humor. I am blessed to call you my Brother. I am thankful for all of our times shared and changing the lyrics of certain songs...I love you!*

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**Tonya Mitchell** - July 16, 2016 at 11:41 PM

GM

“ Tonya, I will always have special memories of Ruth that go back to when I was a child and I cut her wedding picture out of the paper to keep in my scrap book. Hardly anyone I knew had a church wedding back then. She wanted to see my book when I told her about it. She was always a "teacher" and loved my granddaughters at church and brought them gifts from her trips. She will be remembered for the many little things she did for children to make them feel special. No more sickness and pain for her and for that we thank God. My prayers for you and the family as you go through this difficult time.

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**Gail Morgan** - April 22, 2016 at 06:24 PM

BW

“ Tonya, we are so sorry to hear about your Mother's death. We pray that you and Brian will have Comfort and Peace from God.

*Friends in Christ,  
Buddy & Juanita Williams*



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**Buddy & Juanita Williams** - April 22, 2016 at 02:40 PM

MC

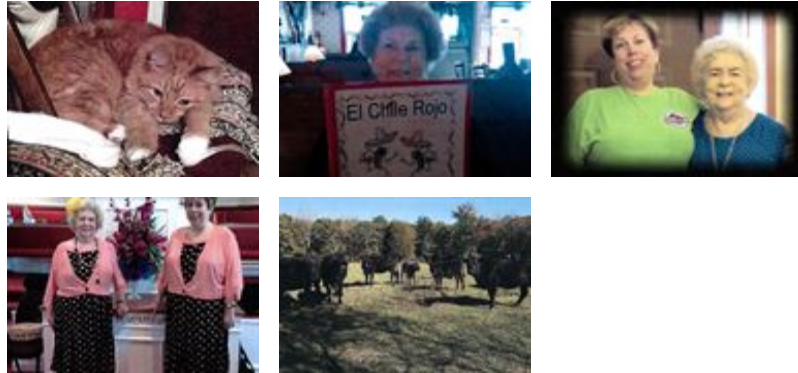
“ Tonya, I am so sorry for your loss. I can tell from the wonderful pictures how many lives she touched, and she will be missed. I pray your happy memories will bring you some comfort. My prayers and deepest sympathy to you and your family. ~Melissa

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**Missy Cashman** - April 22, 2016 at 09:01 AM



“ 31 files added to the album Life Tributes



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**The Wood Mortuary** - April 22, 2016 at 08:35 AM



“ 0 file added to the tribute wall

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**The Wood Mortuary** - April 22, 2016 at 08:05 AM



“ *Oh, Tonya, I am so, so sorry for your loss and the loss to our community. Your mom was such a beautiful, special lady. Her warm, outgoing personality meant she never met a stranger, and I loved talking with her. She will be so missed!*

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**Samantha Bell** - April 21, 2016 at 10:27 AM

DR

“ I loved your mama and will forever cherish my memories of her playing the organ at church for my whole childhood. She had a true calling for making beautiful music . I was fortunate enough to be able to take a few vacations recently with this sweet lady and honored to get to help her can some stuff a couple of years ago. I loved her and know she is resting with her Lord and Savior. And most importantly she's no longer sick. May she rest in peace .. Until I see you on the other side. She will be greatly missed . Y'all are in my thoughts and prayers . Donna Blackwell Robertson

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**Donna Robertson** - April 19, 2016 at 04:47 PM

JY

“ So sorry for your loss,I remember spending nights with Tonya growing up. Ruth Ellen would take us to Lake lure,swimming,and I would ride with them to Church,go down to the river lots of Good times she will be missed.Tonya you all are in our thoughts and prayers love always 😊

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**Joanne Yearwood** - April 19, 2016 at 04:40 PM

LJ

“ Tonya, you and your family are in my prayers. Ruth was always a sweet lady to me - so many years ago at Shady Grove Baptist. Lisa Jones (Crenshaw)

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**Lisa Jones** - April 19, 2016 at 09:35 AM

HE

She was a great teacher at Ebenezer Elementary School!!!! I'm truly sorry for your loss.

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**heather** - April 20, 2016 at 07:53 AM

TM

“ *Ruth Ellen Mitchell was a wonderful Witness for Jesus, a caring and compassionate daughter, a supportive Pastor's Wife, and the Best Mother in the Entire World. She never complained about taking me to Piano, Violin, 4-H, Girl Scouts, or any other activity. If it were not for my sweet and loving Mother, I would not be where I am today. She and I were friends, not just Mother-Daughter. Living on Earth without her will be hard. Through Salvation, Eternal Security and by God's Word, the KJV, I know that I will see her and unite with her again in Heaven. Heaven grows sweeter every day and I grow more homesick for Heaven. I will always love my Mother and Daddy. I have their memories in my heart and will strive to live as they taught me; serving Jesus, Playing the Piano for God, being a bold witness, and keeping God first. This separation is just temporary and I long to be with Mother in Heaven...in much prayer, love, and sadness, Her one and only child, me. Tonya Sabrina Mitchell*

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**Tonya Sabrina Mitchell** - April 19, 2016 at 06:06 AM

WG

“ *Tonya you would not remember me as you were jut a baby when we attende Cross Plains Church. The thing that always stood out to me ,your mom always had a bow in your hair even when u didn't have any hair she taped it there. To cute but always a memory. Sorry for your loss.*  
*Wanda Pruitt Gambrell*

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**Wanda Gambrell** - April 18, 2016 at 01:38 PM

SM

*Mrs. Mitchell was my first grade teacher at Tigerville Elementary 1959. I still have happy memories of her and how she made first grade special for a little Tigerville girl. I am sorry for your loss*

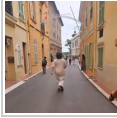
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**Sharon Poole McFeely** - April 18, 2016 at 06:01 PM

SP

*Our Thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time of loss. Ms. Ruth will be missed, but I know she now is pain free and having a great time in Heaven. Love & prayers Sherri & Donnie Poole*

**Sherri M. Poole** - April 19, 2016 at 08:40 AM



*I loved her so much and she loved me she talked about me all the time and I will miss her forever. She will always be in my heart.*

**Dillon Davis** - April 22, 2016 at 01:54 PM