



Mrs. Emma R. Arrington

July 28, 1923 - February 10, 2016

Emma Ray Hartfield was born July 28, 1923 to the union of Emmanuel Hartfield, and Molly McDowell in the tiny southern village of McLain, Mississippi. She was the fifth of nine children as well and the third of the couple's five daughters. Emma Ray, and her siblings grew up on a parcel of farmland purchased by Emmanuel's hard work and together they cultivated it and while it produced "pinewood" for the local lumber industry, the children attended the McLain/Greene County Schools (for Negro Children) until the depression hit hard and the older children went about doing various jobs to keep the family secure.

This practice prompted Emma Ray to love the agricultural life and as time would have it, she was eventually recognized as a wonderful gardener that successfully raised vegetables as well as seasonal florals in her backyard to the wonder and amazement of many. At the onset of World War II, Emma went to work in the "Dental Facility" at Camp Shelby, near Hattiesburg, Mississippi. She took pride in her work and was noted as a great asset to the staff of doctors, nurses, and hygienist. She recalls seeing service men come to the camp and then eventually leave journeying to parts unknown to defend the United States.

At the conclusion of the war, Emma returned to domestic positions in and around McLain and she polished her hobbies and gifts of cooking, baking

along with gardening and needle point. Of course being the spiritual enthusiast that she was, she confessed Christ Jesus, as Lord and Savior while still very young and she worked in areas of missions, prayer bands, and visitation to the homebound at Moody's Chapel United Methodist Church, McLain. She often shared stories of how she received the Holy Ghost at a Wednesday night prayer gathering hosted in the home of her cousin. From there, she was never found to be without a church home or with hands that were exempt from doing the work of Him that called and sent her to care for the sick or to witness to those that crossed her path wherever she went.

Late in the 1940's, Emma met the love of her life "At Last," and after a timely courtship, she married James Charles Arrington in 1950 and followed him to Benton Harbor Michigan where he sought to learn the craft of radio repair and communications services. The couple took up residence in the area of Benton Harbor known as the "Flats" and eventually, J. C. as she fondly called him, began working for the Spellman Vinegar Company. Upon the advice of friends, the family now blessed with two small children and the need to secure gainful employment, moved to Cleveland, Ohio where J. C. found work for a short time and eventually migrating back to Benton Harbor following layoffs caused by industry downturns.

Emma made her spiritual home at Union Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Church (Colfax and Bond Streets) joining under the Rev. Preston, and demonstrated her confession of faith in Jesus Christ for over 55 years, as she served on the Stewardess Board, the Board of Stewards, the Church Kitchen staff, and the beloved Gospel Chorus. She was a member of the Board of Stewards for more than 20 years, and as a hard working woman, Emma was employed by Michigan Fruit Cannery of Benton Harbor, the Dynic Corporation, and the Arrigo Brothers of Chicago, Illinois for over 27 years.

Emma is well known for taking pride in her family and her home and she

made her residence at 380 North McCord Street, not only a splendid sight to gaze upon through seasonal florals and a variety of vegetables, but she also worked and manicured the landscape there to the pleasure of neighbors and passerby's season in and season out. She resided there for over 40 years and was passionately known as a "good Christian neighbor and a friend to young and mature. She slept away peacefully during the early morning hours of February 10, 2016 at the St. Anthony Memorial Hospital, Michigan City Indiana.

Emma Ray leaves to embrace her memory three of her four Children, Albert (Kathy) Arrington, of Michigan; the Reverend Mrs. Charlene (J. C.) Moore, of Indiana; Alvin (Natasha) Arrington, of Colorado. Grandchildren, Organdy (Quinque) Harris, Okinawa, Japan, Torrye Clark-Thurman, James, Calvin Jr. (Angela), of Colorado. Sharrie L. Robinson and Nicole of Michigan, Tiphaine and Winnetta Clark of Georgia; Allyshaun of Florida. Special friends Mildred Battle, Barbara J. Jones, and God Son, Lenward Taylor. She was preceded in death by her husband of 49 years, James, one son, Calvin, three grandchildren, her parents, four brothers, Esau, Lester, Willie, and James; four sisters, Ethelene, Jarutha, Erma, and Lenore.

Cemetery Details

Fort Custer National Cemetery

15501 Dickman Road
Augusta, MI

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 16. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Union Memorial A.M.E. Church
911 S. Crystal Avenue
Benton Harbor, MI

Family Hour

FEB 17. 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Union Memorial A.M.E. Church
911 S. Crystal Avenue
Benton Harbor, MI

A Service in Loving Memory

FEB 17. 10:30 AM (ET)

Union Memorial A.M.E. Church
911 S. Crystal Avenue
Benton Harbor, MI

Tribute Wall



“ Harper Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Emma R. Arrington



Harper Funeral Home - February 15, 2016 at 08:40 PM



Rest in Heaven Aunt Emma Rae 🕊️🕊️🕊️. I wish I had really got to know you before you passed away. Esau Hartfield (deceased) my grandfather was your oldest sibling 💖. I only saw you once in person at a family funeral, but before I became pregnant with my first child 🍼. I think I was 20yrs. old at the time I met you. Much love to you and my deceased grandfather 💖💖. From Pamela Hartfield.

Pamela Hartfield - August 27, 2019 at 02:03 AM



“ Mrs. Emma R. Arrington

October 23, 2023 at 06:06 AM



“ Mrs. Emma R. Arrington

October 06, 2023 at 10:42 AM



“ 73 files added to the album Life Tributes



Harper Funeral Home - February 15, 2016 at 08:24 PM