



Mrs. Josephine Sudduth

March 9, 1933 - March 8, 2026

ATTN: FAMILY & FRIENDS---PLEASE NOTE THE PUBLIC VIEWING ON THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026 FROM 5:00 P.M. TO 6:30 P.M. AT OUR FUNERAL HOME. PLEASE SCROLL DOWN PAGE TO SEE ALL SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS LISTED

***NOTE: A SERVICE IN LOVING MEMORY OF MRS. JOSEPHINE SUDDUTH WILL BE HELD FRIDAY, MARCH 27, 2026, AT THE GALILEE BAPITST CHURCH. THE DOORS OF THE CHURCH WILL OPEN AT 10:00 A.M. FOR VISITATION.

***PLEASE SEE VISITATIONS & SERVICE TIMES AND LOCATIONS BELOW*

***NOTE: MASKS AND HAND SANITIZER CAN BE PROVIDED BY REQUEST.

***ATTENTION TO THOSE WHO WOULD LIKE TO VIEW SERVICES ONLINE YOU HAVE (4) OPTIONS TO CHOOSE FROM:

1. Go to Galilee Baptist Church's website at: gbckazoo.org
- Or
2. Go to YouTube and type in The Galilee Baptist Church Lives Stream

-Or

3. Go to Facebook, if you have a Facebook account. after logging in, type in Galilee Baptist Church

-Or-

4. Use the GBC App, Instagram or Twitter

The Obituary

Josephine (Plair) Sudduth was born on March 9, 1933 in Starkville, Mississippi to her parents, Ezell Plair Sr. and Sarah (Wilson) Plair, and was raised on a family-run, one hundred plus acre farm in a close family alongside eight other siblings. Due to a family farm life of total self-sufficiency, youth in that generation often postponed high school graduation.

As a young adult, Josephine migrated north with her siblings and husband, Brutus Caesar Sudduth, to Kalamazoo, Michigan, where she raised three daughters: Evangelist Missionary Dorothea “Ann” Sudduth-Holloway, Vivian “Nan” Berryhill, and Ottillia “Kaye” Davis. Her daughters, The Sudduth Sisters, were well-known and were often likened to The Clark Sisters, singing the gospel across multiple denominations wherever they would travel. Determined as she was, she later in life obtained her high school diploma and associate degree. Mom and Granny was godly proud of all eight of her grandchildren who were inspired by her example to also graduate from college with their own advanced degrees.

Josephine worked cleaning homes and carried herself with dignity, grace, and a strong work ethic. She was intuitively gifted in mathematics and was significantly instrumental in the desegregation of the Gibson Guitar Factory. Where Black people (then referred to as “Negro”) were typically unwelcome, Josephine pursued justice by blazing a trail of social activism and civil rights throughout the community and beyond. After retirement from Gibson, Josephine continued work with the Upjohn Pharmaceutical Company.

Later in life, Josephine re-invented herself again to serve with Kalamazoo Public Schools as a paraprofessional for numerous years at Milwood Junior and Loy Norrix High Schools. Josephine's skill of bringing groups of people together spawned another interest where she became an avid bowler, known as High Rollin' Jo. She would recruit equally talented bowlers into a league of highly trophy rich competitions across state and national tournaments.

Josephine and former husband loved the Lord and their children deeply. Her faith was not quiet, but a steady presence that guided her life, shaped her kindness, and sustained her through every season and circumstance with full confidence in a sovereign God.

She found her greatest joy in being around people, making new friends, telling jokes, creating new memorable folksy sayings, playing cards, talking on the phone, and making sure that when you came to her house, you never left hungry. She was famous for her home made bread rolls, fried chicken, egg custard pie, coconut cakes, pound cakes and banana puddings.

On March 8, 2026, Josephine peacefully transitioned away in her sleep, on the exact same date as her daughter, Vivian Sudduth-Berryhill, who preceded her in death. What a joy! She was also preceded in death by seven of her eight siblings: Ezell "Junya" Plair, Jr., Celia "Sista" Carpenter, Eddie Mae "Bird" Clingman, Ernestine "Menn" Deloney, Artie C. Plair, James "Jimmie" Plair, and Freddie "Doll" Plair, Sr.

She is survived by her youngest sister, Elma Gene "Sweet" Jackson, daughters Dorothea and Kaye, eight beloved grandchildren: Oujettia, Attiya, Cyndee, Chris, Jerome "Saint," Adrienne, Jared, Ashley "Nashon," eleven great-grandchildren, many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends. She both

loved and was beloved by her Sister In-Laws Connie 7 Augusta Plair, Sister-Friends Olivia Calhoun, Lula "Dooley" Erve and her daughter, Janice Richardson, and caregivers Jackie Scott and Frida Boyd of Suji AFC, as well as her other special children Thomas, Wanda, Brenda and Brutus.

Josephine will be remembered for her humor and bright soul, a woman whose heart was as lovingly generous as her spirit was strong. She never hesitated to share a meal, her time, or even her last dollar with those in need. She was never a stranger to anybody, and she never failed to encourage, uplift, strengthen others with limitless charity and love. In her memory, we can imagine that she stands at heaven's gate waiting and "lookin' for you with both eyes."

Cemetery Details

Riverside Cemetery

1015 Gull Rd
Kalamazoo, MI 49048-1733
(269) 337-8227

Previous Events

Public Viewing For Family & Friends

MAR 26. 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM (ET)

Harper Funeral Home, Inc.
521 Douglas Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
(269) 342-1000
info@harperfuneral.com
<https://www.harperfuneral.com>

Visitation For Family & Friends

MAR 27. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

The Galilee Baptist Church
1216 North Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

A Homegoing Celebration

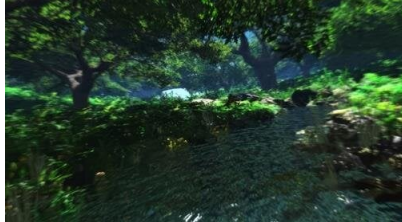
MAR 27. 11:00 AM (ET)

The Galilee Baptist Church
1216 North Westnedge Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Tribute Wall



“ Harper Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Harper Funeral Home - March 24 at 09:06 PM

BT

To The Family of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth. We were saddened to hear that she had passed. .What a very nice Lady to have known. Our Sympathy, Condolences, and Prayers, are going out to all of you; her family. Sincerely, your Friends, Robert and Bonnie Terrentine

Bob and Bonnie Terrentine - March 26 at 07:30 PM

CP

“ Cerita Plair lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Cerita Plair - April 08 at 05:24 PM

MB

“ Mrs. Sudduth, always smiling, always kind whenever I run into her at the store. May she rest in eternal peace my condolences to her family, daughters, and granddaughter and grandson.



Merry Battles - April 05 at 02:33 PM

CT

“ *My sincere condolences to your family.
love,
Charlotte (Turner) Luke and mother Doris
Turner*



charlotte Turner Luke, Doris Turner - March 31 at 10:16 PM

CG

“ *Cordell&Brenda Gardner lit a candle in
memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



Cordell&Brenda Gardner - March 31 at 05:35 PM

IR

“ *Ida Robinson lit a candle in memory of Mrs.
Josephine Sudduth*



Ida Robinson - March 31 at 04:52 PM

LO

“ *LorenePhillips lit a candle in memory of Mrs.
Josephine Sudduth*



LorenePhillips - March 27 at 11:21 AM

GK

“ Gordon Kelley lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Gordon Kelley - March 27 at 04:34 AM

TW

“ Tammie Winfield lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Tammie Winfield - March 26 at 08:40 PM

DJ

“ David J. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth.

David J. - March 26 at 06:01 PM

DJ

“ David & Irma Johnson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



David & Irma Johnson - March 26 at 05:54 PM

SC

“ Steve & Shery Clomon lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Steve & Shery Clomon - March 26 at 02:14 PM

BB

“ Brad Buchanan lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Brad Buchanan - March 26 at 02:05 PM

RO

“ Rickie Oziet lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Rickie Oziet - March 26 at 01:55 PM

GW

“ Georgia Williams lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Georgia Williams - March 26 at 12:04 PM

HM

“ Howard And Debra McCullough lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Howard and Debra McCullough - March 26 at 09:14 AM

ML

“ Malinda (Linda) Ligon-Whitley lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Malinda (Linda) Ligon-Whitley - March 26 at 12:56 AM

TC

“ Trudy Carr lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Trudy Carr - March 25 at 10:34 PM

ML

“ Mary Ligon-Goens lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Mary Ligon-Goens - March 25 at 08:31 PM

AS

“ *Alma Snell lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



Alma Snell - March 25 at 05:37 PM

GW

“ *Gloria Wilkerson lit a candle in memory of Josephine Sudduth*



Gloria Wilkerson - March 25 at 02:15 PM

DS

“ *My deepest condolences to the family of Mrs Josephine.*



DaNikka Snell - March 25 at 01:00 PM

DH

“ *Mrs. Sudduth was a dear friend of my family and I thoroughly enjoyed her company and quick wit. Her smile was warm and contagious. I haven't lived in Kalamazoo in years now, but I would occasionally visit with her on my return trips. Sending prayers of comfort and peace to the family. Diane Hamlett Cooper*

Diane Hamlett - March 25 at 12:51 PM

DH

“ *Diane Hamlett lit a candle in memory of Josephine Sudduth*



Diane Hamlett - March 25 at 12:36 PM

TW

“ *Sending my heartfelt condolences and prayers to the entire family during this time. May God continue to comfort and strengthen you all.*



Tammy T Willis - March 25 at 10:40 AM

JR

“ *My Condolences to the Family and Friends of Sister Sudduth.*



Janis Richard - March 25 at 09:29 AM

PG

“ *Pauline Gardner lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



Pauline Gardner - March 25 at 08:26 AM

RF

“ Randy and Kippi Plair & family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth.



Randy and Kippi Plair & family - March 25 at 12:23 AM

HB

“ HAL & JANET BUCHANAN lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



HAL & JANET BUCHANAN - March 24 at 09:57 PM

SW

“ My sincere condolences to the family.



Sonia Wilkerson - March 24 at 08:43 PM

RW

“ RJ & Anita Wilkerson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



RJ & Anita Wilkerson - March 24 at 07:30 PM

CV

“ *Clara Vincent lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



Clara Vincent - March 24 at 05:15 PM

CW

“ *A beautiful soul!*



Carolyn Walker - March 24 at 03:34 PM

PF

“ *PATTERSON FAMILY lit a candle in memory of Josephine Sudduth*



PATTERSON FAMILY - March 24 at 10:56 AM

NB

“ *N.Z. and Marion Bryant purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth.*



N.Z. and Marion Bryant - March 24 at 10:54 AM

NB

“ N.Z. and Marion Bryant planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth.

N.Z. and Marion Bryant - March 24 at 10:54 AM

HF

“ Henria McGee and family purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth.



Henria McGee and family - March 24 at 09:45 AM

TF

“ The Prude Family lit a candle in memory of Josephine Sudduth



The Prude Family - March 23 at 11:11 PM

ET

“ Elder Kelvin Thomas lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Elder Kelvin Thomas - March 23 at 07:51 PM

MM

“ *Merry Mitchell-Battles lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



Merry Mitchell-Battles - March 23 at 07:49 PM

JP

“ *James & Barbara Phillips lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



James & Barbara Phillips - March 23 at 07:49 PM

GH

“ *Guenetta Harris-Gordon lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



Guenetta Harris-Gordon - March 23 at 07:12 PM

DC

“ 8



Darla Cummings - March 23 at 04:47 PM



I'm so sorry to hear of the passing of Josephine. She has been a family friend for years. My heart felt condolences to the Sudduth family.

Darla Cummings - March 26 at 09:15 PM

TW

“ *She was the most loving and caring woman and I thank God that I had the opportunity of knowing her, talking with her and spending time with her...she was my friend and I am saddened by her passing. However, I shall rejoice in knowing that she is at peace 🙏
...A servant of God and a friend to many.*

Talene Williams - March 23 at 04:31 PM

TW

“ *Talene Williams lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



Talene Williams - March 23 at 04:24 PM

DF

“ *Daniel Family sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth*



Daniel Family - March 23 at 02:05 PM

GW

“ Georgia Williams lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Georgia Williams - March 23 at 01:30 PM

JD

“ Jack Dunigan lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Jack Dunigan - March 23 at 12:37 PM

MJ

“ My sincere condolences to the family.- Josephine & I were friends back in the "Emanuel Chapel" days - we were the same age - I moved away - it has been many many years since I have seen her.- rest well my friend. . Marilyn Jefferson (Coleman)

Marilynn Jefferson - March 23 at 11:28 AM

CO

“ Cynthia Owens-White lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Cynthia Owens-White - March 23 at 07:48 AM

JE

“ JoAnn Embrey lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



JoAnn Embrey - March 22 at 11:01 PM

DB

“ Donald & Ruby Barbee lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Donald & Ruby Barbee - March 22 at 08:53 PM

HB

“ Hal & Janet Buchanan lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Hal & Janet Buchanan - March 22 at 05:39 PM

HB

“ Hal & Janet Buchanan lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Hal & Janet Buchanan - March 22 at 05:36 PM

EG

“ Edith Gardner lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Edith Gardner - March 22 at 04:18 PM

EG

“ Edith Gardner sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Edith Gardner - March 22 at 04:18 PM

EG

“ Edith Gardner lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Edith Gardner - March 22 at 04:16 PM

DM

“ Diane McPherson-Carver lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Josephine Sudduth



Diane McPherson-Carver - March 22 at 03:20 PM