



Ms. Magnolia E. Bodley

July 7, 1936 - May 12, 2026

NOTE: Funeral Arrangements to be announced soon

OBITUARY

Magnolia E. “Maggie” Bodley passed away on May 12, 2026, in Kalamazoo, Michigan, at 89. Born July 7, 1936, in Tupelo, Mississippi, to Samuel Ezell and Mable Depriest, she lived a life marked by warmth, generosity, and purpose.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her brother and two of her children, Marques Ezell and Teresa Lynn Johnson.

Maggie often said, “I have never met a stranger,” and anyone who met her knew it was true. She made people feel seen, through a kind word, a warm embrace, or one of her perfectly timed greeting cards. If something worth celebrating happened in your life, Maggie remembered it. Helping others was second nature to her, and she never needed to be asked twice.

She built a long career as a Quality Control Inspector at The Upjohn Company, but her commitments outside of work reflected her deepest values. In 2012, she was named the State of Michigan Volunteer of the Year, a recognition that felt fitting to all who knew her. Her volunteer work took many forms over the years, supporting community programs, helping at local events, serving as a Boy Scout leader, and giving her time faithfully as the first

volunteer of Lending Hands, as well as volunteering with the Deacon's Conference and assisting with food pantries through the Eastside Neighborhood Association and her church. Her dedication to service and to opening doors for others made it especially meaningful for her to stand among the crowd in 2009 and witness President Barack Obama take the oath of office as the nation's first Black president.

Her interests were wide-ranging. She was a skilled quilter and knitter, enjoyed casino trips, worked puzzles with her son Kevin, and never turned down a good board or card game. During the holidays, her home became a Christmas wonderland, filled with the smell of cookies and the traditions she loved sharing. She took great joy in her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Maggie lived her faith openly as a devoted member of the Church of Christ in Kalamazoo. Over the years she taught Sunday School, ushered, organized potlucks with joyful precision, and sang boldly during worship, never shy, even if she joked she was no American Idol.

She is survived by her sons, Kevin D. Ezell, Hon. Bobby J. Hopewell, and Frank (Toby) S. Hopewell (Vickie); her grandchildren Ray Ezell, Sydney Ezell, Chanell Ezell, Destine Ezell, Teresa Ezell, Micheal Ezell, Kamren Ezell, Della Ezell, Brandi Johnson, Traci Johnson, and Christopher Jordan Ezell; and her beloved great-grandchildren.

Maya Angelou once wrote, "To describe my mother would be to write about a hurricane in its perfect power." That was Maggie. And as E. M. Forster said, "If the mothers of various nations could meet, there would be no more wars." If more mothers were like Magnolia Bodley, he would have been right.

Her legacy of love, service, and generosity will live on in all who knew her.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be directed to Pretty Lake Camp or Lending Hands in honor of Maggie.

Details regarding services will be shared by the family in the coming days.