



## Bruce Leon Holland

November 27, 1933 - October 21, 2023

Bruce Leon Holland, 89, of Highfill, AR died Saturday October 21, 2023 at his home surrounded by his family. He was born November 1933, in Highfill, to Elisha & Opal (Gailey) Holland on his family's farm.

He grew up in the Highfill & Logan communities. He attended grades 1-3 at the Logan school & 4-8th grade at Highfill. He graduated in 1952 from Gentry High School. He attended John Brown University for 3 years & then completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Arkansas in 1956. He had many continuing education opportunities throughout his career.

When Bruce was 18, he accepted Christ as his Savior & the call God placed on his life as a minister of The Gospel of Jesus Christ. In 1954 Bruce was ordained at Gum Springs Baptist Church in Siloam Springs, AR where he was pastoring. In May 1955 he married Mary Ellen Epperson at Gum Springs. In 1956 he & Mary Ellen along with their first daughter moved to SE Missouri where Bruce taught high school English, Speech & Drama. He taught in the towns of Winona, Van Buren & Ellsinore MO. During their time in Missouri, they added 2 daughters & a son to their family. Bruce served as a bi-vocational pastor in many small churches across SE Missouri & NW Arkansas.

In 1970 they returned home to Highfill where they purchased a small piece of land that came with a small general store, which they operated for a few

years. Bruce served as principal at Pea Ridge for the spring semester of 1971 & then that fall moved to Gentry High School where he taught until 1979. He also continued to serve as a bi-vocational pastor. He was serving again at Gum Springs Baptist Church when he made the transition from teaching career to full time ministry in 1979. He served at Gum Springs 17 years & Highfill Baptist Church for the next eight years. In January 1997 Bruce started a Bible study in his home with 10 people that would grow into Osage Mills Baptist Fellowship. Bruce had the privilege of leading two congregations to organize as churches. The first in Poplar Bluff, MO & Osage Mills being the second and he remained active there until his death. Bruce also enjoyed serving within the NW Baptist Association & Arkansas Baptist State Convention during his ministry career.

Bruce led a Godly life of example to family as well as the many people he has ministered to over the last 89 years. He served the Lord with faithfulness & impacted many lives. He performed countless wedding ceremonies, including all of his children & grandchildren, counseled people in need & cared for hundreds of families in their time of loss. He is enjoying Heaven today as his faith has become sight.

Bruce loved to fish. As a boy he fished Osage creek & many other streams around Highfill & Logan. Later he enjoyed fishing the streams of SE Missouri & lakes in Canada & Mexico. Bruce was also a sports fan. As a boy he began listening to the St Louis Cardinals on his radio & he remained a lifelong fan as well as an avid Razorback fan.

Bruce was preceded in death by his parents, brother Merle Holland, grandson Will Blankenship & great-granddaughter Reese Shaw.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Mary Ellen of the home. Children, Cece Collier & husband Dennis of Siloam Springs, Dianne Burrus & husband Jim of Gentry, Bryan Holland & wife Beth of Centerton & Denise Etris & husband Tim

of Decatur. Grandchildren Mark & Sally Blankenship, Lacey & Richie Shaw, Rachel & Richard Long, Eli & Hannah Holland, Katie & Ryan Payne, Matthew & Kristina Holland, Joshua & Laura Holland & Emily & Colten Hutcheson. Sixteen great-grandchildren, a great, great-grandson & many other family & close friends.

A Visitation will be from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Thursday, October 26, 2023, at Wasson Funeral Home, 441 Highway 412 W., Siloam Springs, AR. 72761. The Funeral will be at 10:00 a.m., Friday, October 27, 2023, at First Baptist Church, Highfill, AR., with burial to follow at Springtown Cemetery, Springtown, AR.

Memorials may be made to Osage Mills Baptist Fellowship 10632 Mill Dam Rd, Bentonville, AR 72713 or The Gideons International. To sign the online guestbook, please visit: [www.wassonfuneralhome.com](http://www.wassonfuneralhome.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Springtown Cemetery

Springtown, AR  
Springtown, AR 72734

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **26**. 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Wasson Funeral Home  
441 U.S. 412  
Siloam Springs, AR 72761  
(479) 524-5131  
wasson@wassonfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.wassonfuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

OCT **27**. 10:00 AM (CT)

First Baptist Church  
11912 S Main St.  
Highfill, AR 72734

## Burial

OCT 27. 11:00 AM (CT)

Springtown Cemetery  
Springtown, AR  
Springtown, AR 72734

# Tribute Wall

SH

“ *Mr. Holland was a great man and teacher. It was in his 8th grade English classroom where he informed us that President Kennedy had been shot. I'll never forget it and many other incidents. It was great to see him and Mary at our Class of 1968's 50th Reunion in Ellsinore, MO in 2018. Sending thanks and blessings to Mary and all the family. Sheryl Bridgforth Patterson*

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**Sher** - October 27, 2023 at 02:57 PM

LC

“ *Bruce Holland was a kind and godly man. I am blessed to have known him. He is my Aunt's father.*  
*Lauri Blankenship Cawthon*

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**Lauri Cawthon** - October 27, 2023 at 12:57 PM

GC

“ *I know that this is late but living as far as I do sometimes I don't get this information. Just want to say to the BRO. HOLLAND family that I'm so sorry to read about his death. He was my pastor for along while at Gum Springs Baptist. Couldn't ask for a better man of God and his family!*  
*Love and prayers--Gayle Clifton, NC*

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**Gayle Clifton** - October 27, 2023 at 10:38 AM

GC

“ *Sending our condolences to Mrs. Holland and family members. Mr. Holland visited Ellsinore Mo a couple times in recent years for our 1967 class reunions. Everyone was glad to see him. My Dad worked and fished with him during the years he was at Ellsinore.*  
*Gary Copeland Ellsinore Mo.*

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**Gary Copeland** - October 27, 2023 at 07:07 AM



“ *Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Lavender and White was purchased for the family of Bruce Leon Holland.*



October 26, 2023 at 10:43 PM



“ *So sorry for your loss. My prayers are with your family.*

**Tammy** - October 26, 2023 at 06:09 PM



“ *White Sympathy Baskets was purchased for the family of Bruce Leon Holland.*



October 26, 2023 at 12:04 PM



“ *Jackie Goforth lit a candle in memory of Bruce Holland*



**Jackie Goforth** - October 25, 2023 at 09:00 AM

KK

“ Kevin, Regina, and Kids purchased the Peace, Prayers & Blessings - Blue and White for the family of Bruce Leon Holland.



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**Kevin, Regina, and Kids** - October 25, 2023 at 07:11 AM

ST

“ Steven T. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Bruce Leon Holland.

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**Steven T.** - October 24, 2023 at 11:16 PM

DM

“ Mrs. Holland and family,  
A few years, several actually, have passed since I was in your Kindergarten class in the basement of 1st Baptist Church in Bentonville. You spoke fondly and often of Mr. Holland and your children. I remember your demeanor as sweet and caring and Christian values were many. I don't recall meeting your husband but have no doubt his character was much like yours and the words in his obituary describe him well. I was blessed to have you as a teacher, you set the bar high for those that followed. Ms. Stringfield was my teacher the following year. What a great solid start that every child should have! Take care and may sweet and happy memories flood your mind and heart of your Bruce.

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**Dee Ann McDaniel** - October 24, 2023 at 03:37 PM

KR

*This is such a sweet gesture, I love hearing of my husband's grandmother and that her faithfulness and servitude shined and made a difference in your life. Thank you!*

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**Kristina** - October 26, 2023 at 09:04 PM



“ *White Standing Spray was purchased for the family of Bruce Leon Holland.*



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October 24, 2023 at 11:06 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Bruce Leon Holland.

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October 24, 2023 at 07:56 AM



“ *European Sympathy Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Bruce Leon Holland.*



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October 24, 2023 at 07:56 AM

SS

“ Bruce is truly one of the best. He loved my kids like they were his own grandkids. Bruce was a huge part of my children’s relationship with Jesus and he founded the small baptist church our family attended until we moved to Missouri. We started attending Bible study in his garage before the church became a reality. At the time our family wasn’t attending church, we believed in God and lived a “good” life but we didn’t have a relationship with him. We didn’t put him first. That is where Bruce stepped in and invited us to a Bible study at his home. That was a new beginning for our family. Our boys we’re probably 5 and 3 and Ty was a dream. There wasn’t a time we visited Osage Mills that Bruce didn’t ask about my kids. He truly loved his people. When Scott’s brother, Lonnie was sick Bruce was right there with our families throughout it all. At the end of Lonnie’s journey Bruce along with Bro Greg sat up with us all night while we kept Lonnie company, talking, laughing and praying. At times when we needed strength he was ALWAYS there. I have never met someone who didn’t love Bruce if they knew him. He will forever be a huge part of our hearts.

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**Scott and Shannon Self** - October 23, 2023 at 11:11 PM



“ Blue & White Sympathy Floor Basket was purchased for the family of Bruce Leon Holland.



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October 23, 2023 at 11:05 PM



“ *Peace, Prayers & Blessings - Blue and White was purchased for the family of Bruce Leon Holland.*



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October 23, 2023 at 09:26 PM



“ *Lynne Glass lit a candle in memory of Bruce Leon Holland*



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**Lynne Glass** - October 23, 2023 at 06:49 PM