



Onita Joyce Copeland

December 21, 1927 - April 27, 2022

Onita J. Copeland was born December 21, 1927 in a log cabin in the Fairmount Community near Gentry, Arkansas to parents Howard and Elsie (Butler) Chastain.

She was married May 5, 1949, to Thurl L. Copeland.

Three sons were born of this Union: Timothy, born December 1952, Mark, born January 1955 and Frank, born August 1957. Grandchildren Addam Copeland and Grant Copeland.

Onita's second marriage was to Vance Elder in 2009.

Onita taught English at Fayetteville High School for twenty-five years as well as one year at Deer, Arkansas and one year at Center Point, Oklahoma. She earned a bachelor's degree at Ouachita Baptist College and a master's degree in English at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

She was a long-time member of the First Baptist Church in Fayetteville, Arkansas serving in a number of different capacities over the years.

She is survived by three sons Tim Copeland, Mark Copeland and wife Lori, Frank Copeland and wife Danita; two grandsons, Addam and wife Stephanie, and Grant; three sisters Lila, Mazelle, Kay; and one brother, J.D. Chastain.

She is preceded by her husbands, Thurl Copeland and Vance Elder, and her parents.

Private services will be held at a later date.

Tribute Wall



“ Onita was an incredible inspiration and friend. She helped me become a better English teacher especially by demonstrating patience, willingness to always learn new ideas, and by quietly practicing her faith.

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