



# Mary Ella Frances Jernigan Thomas

FEB 20, 1924 - FEB 16, 2018



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FUNERAL HOMES  
OF LONGVIEW AND HENDERSON

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# Mary Ella Frances Jernigan Thomas

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**M**ary Ella Francis Jernigan Thomas was born February 20, 1924, to Willis Jernigan and Nancy Frances Griggers. Mary passed away peacefully on February 16, 2018. She was preceded in death by her husband of 60 years, Wiley L. Thomas, Jr., mother and father, grandmother, Mary Ann Yarborough Griggers. Her grandmother raised her as her mother passed away when she was three months old. Her grandmother took her from the hospital when she was six weeks old.

They lived in Monrovia, California, until she was age five when she and her grandmother moved to Long Beach, California. Mary was a lifelong member of the Church of Christ, having been baptized into her Lord at the age of 12.

In 1942, Mary graduated from Polytechnic High School, Long Beach, California. After the death of her grandmother, she moved to Mineola, Texas to live with her father and his wife, Corrine.

She attended Abilene Christian University for a year and a half and transferred to East Texas State University at Commerce when her father accepted the minister's position in Commerce. Mary graduated with a B.S. Degree in 1945 and began her teaching career in DeKalb, Texas, in the fall of 1945. The following year, Mary accepted a teaching position in Gladewater, Texas. She taught in Gladewater until moving to Longview where she accepted a position with White Oak ISD. Mary received her Master of Science Degree from East Texas State University in 1951. Mary taught at White Oak I.S.D for 35 years as a teacher of primary children. After retirement, she served as a volunteer for 15 years.

Mary met her husband Wiley L. Thomas, Jr. while attending her first Sunday service at the Quitman and Center Street Church of Christ. They were married March 17, 1947. In 1956, their marriage was blessed with a son, Wiley Thomas, III. He was truly the answer to many prayers.

Mary was an active member of Delta Kappa Gamma Society International,



## Obituary

### Mary Ella Frances Jernigan Thomas

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Community Club of White Oak, PTA and Band Boosters. Mary had a long life of service to her church. She taught people of all ages, wrote and published teaching programs, and assisted with wedding planning and music. Above all, she was loyal to her Lord and active in many areas of the church. She and her husband were partners in their service to the Lord and others, especially their family and church.

Mary is survived by her son, Wiley L. Thomas, III, and wife, Judy. Grandchildren and great grandchildren are Lance Allen Thomas and his wife and son, Lara and Elliot; Aaron Scott Thomas and his wife and children, Jessica, Aaden and Rylan; Lindsay Renee Parker and her husband and children, Greg, Ethan and Ella; Kelly Whittemore and her husband and daughter, Dusty and Libby; Trey Braswell and his wife and children Amy, Taylor and Carter; brother, Willis Jernigan IV; brother and sister-in-laws, Dale and Pat Thomas, Jimmy and Annise Thomas, Jerry and Carolyn Robinson. Many thanks to Betty Heim for her years of kindness and service, her small group at Pine Tree Church of Christ and her Rummikub friends.

A memorial service is planned at Pine Tree Church of Christ May 19, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorials be made to: Caring & Sharing (a ministry of Pine Tree Church of Christ) at 3221 Dundee Rd, Longview, Texas 75604 or White Oak Education Foundation at P.O. Box 797, White Oak, Texas 75693.





## Events

**Mary Ella Frances Jernigan Thomas**

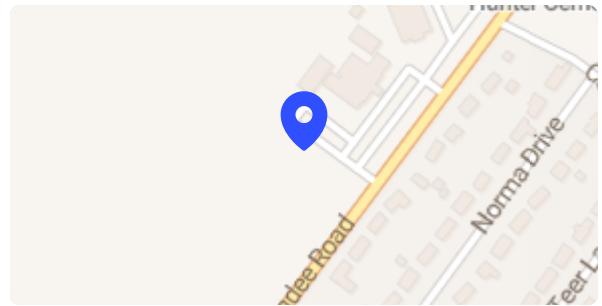
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### Memorial Service

 **Saturday**, May 19, 2018


 2:00 PM CT

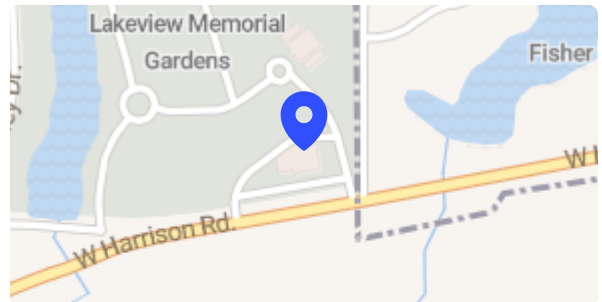
 **Pine Tree Church of Christ**  
3221 Dundee Road, Longview TX



### Cemetery Details

 **Lakeview Memorial Gardens**  
5000 W Harrison Rd, Longview TX 75604-5230

 **(903) 759-9493**





## Tribute Wall

**Mary Ella Frances Jernigan Thomas**

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BH

**Betty Heim** posted:

Mary was a strong woman and even stronger in her faith and service to her church and others. Her legacy lives on in the many lives of the children that she taught and mentored. Those children are now parents and grandparents passing on the life lessons that Mary taught them. We hardly missed seeing one or more of her former students each week when we went to the grocery store, café or beauty shop. Each person was so pleased to see her, as she was them. It was a privilege to help Mary through some of the challenges she faced during these past five years. She faced each one with a spirit of determination and faith. She loved her family so and cherished each photograph of all their happy times together. You have so many sweet memories of Mary. Cherish them all as you face the days ahead. Prayers for all the family, Betty Heim

February 19 at 7:40 AM

VB

**Virginia Boswell** posted:

Mary was such a wonderful woman who had a powerful, long-reaching influence in the lives of others. Her good deeds, wise words, encouraging written words, and joy for life spoke volumes to all who knew her. We are so glad to have known her and to have seen her faith in action! Her quiet and loving spirit will surely be missed here on earth, but no doubt she received a joyous welcome from her heavenly father. Love and prayers to all of the family as you savor special memories of her. Larry and Virginia Boswell

February 18 at 10:11 AM



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Mary Ella by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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