



## ETHYL MAE WATKINS

November 25, 1919 - January 14, 2011

Ethyl Mae Watkins, 91, of Kankakee, IL, died Friday, January 14, 2011 at Provena Our Lady of Victory, Bourbonnais, IL. A Memorial Service will be held on Friday, January 21, 2011 at 1:00 P.M. at Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church. Cremation rites will be accorded. Arrangements are by Lax Mortuary, Kankakee, IL.

Ethyl Mae Watkins (affectionately called Mae) was born November 25, 1919 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama to Nina and James Hamilton. She was the fourth of eight children. She was a member of Beth Eden Baptist Church in Chicago, IL for many years.

Ethyl Mae came to Chicago at an early age. She attended Schoop Elementary School and Morgan Park High School in Chicago, IL. It was in 1985 that she relocated to Kankakee, IL.

Ethyl Mae was united in Holy Matrimony on July 25, 1944 to Virgil Henry Watkins of the Morgan Park community. To this union nine children were born.

Ethyl Mae was a child care provider, her passion was caring for "little kids." After raising her nine children, she cared for numerous other children: grandchildren, family members' children and children of the community. She was the child care provider for the "Teen

Mother's Program in Kankakee, IL, allowing many teen mothers to complete high school. She also worked for the Millie Proegler Elementary School through the "Senior Program." She worked in the office and attended to the children's minor cuts, scrapes and bruised egos. She retired from that position to care for her great-grandson, Darius, in 1975. She was Gran Gran to many children other than her own.

Ethyl Mae was a very independent and strong woman. She did things her way without assistance from others; she would politely refuse offers of help. She also was a very good baker; her German Chocolate Cake and Sweet Potato Pie was the "bomb."

Ethyl Mae leaves to cherish her memory, four children, Lorna Andrews (Arthur) of Chicago, IL, Lolitta Etheridge and Leland Watkins, both of Minneapolis, MN and Murretta (Bruce) Ray of Kankakee, IL; one sister, Vera Washington of Pembroke Township, IL; three sisters-in-law, Imogene Montgomery of Robbins, IL, Mildred Hamilton of Chicago, IL and Rosa Lee Hamilton of Calumet Park, IL; twenty-six grandchildren; thirty-one great-grandchildren, and one special great-niece, JaNiah Derden.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Virgil; five children, Terrence, Everette, Marilyn, Kerwin and Rexcell. The death of her children weighed very, very heavy on her heart.