



## Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell

September 28, 1932 - October 11, 2025

Thelma Christine Purnell, known as “Christine,” 93, departed this life on October 11, 2025, at 3:27 a.m. Thelma was born September 28, 1932, in Arkadelphia, AR, to parents Elijah Summerville and Millie Bridgefort Summerville.

Christine attended Peake High School until the eleventh grade. She worked in housekeeping at OSF Saint Francis Medical Center. Christine was one of the owners of “The Kitchen in the Blue Shadow”, alongside her husband, located in downtown Peoria.

Christine excepted Christ at an early age. She served faithfully on the board at Saint Luke Baptist Church and was a dedicated Sunday School teacher. Everyone who knew her knew - it had to be yellow! You could always count on Aunt Christine to be there for her family. She was one of the favorite aunts, and to her family, she passed down the spirit of giving, love, compassion, kindness, and wisdom. Christine was the beckon of unconditional guidance and strength. She never met a stranger.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by two sons, Terry Ware and Ceasear Purnell Jr.; one daughter, Patricia Purnell Evans; and her first grandson, Derek Hill.

Christine leaves behind precious memories with her two sons: Leonard Browning and Earl Purnell; three daughters: Wilhermina (Dallas) Terry of Peoria, Lue Purnell, and Christine (Malcolm) Kennedy; grandchildren: Deondra, Nikisha, Jermaine, Markeyda, Marneda, Quincy, Ebony, Stephon, Malcolm III, Cam, De'Shon, Kellen, and Malyque; two sisters: Earlene Lemon and Virginia Johnson of Dallas, TX; a host of great-grandchildren, great-great-grandchildren, nephews, nieces, cousins, and friends.

Known lovingly as Aunt Christine, the “High Five Lady,” and “Granny” to many — but to us, she was Mom. Granny’s legacy will live on through her famous words: “SAY WHAT!”

# Cemetery Details

**Private**

## Previous Events

### Visitation

NOV 3. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (CT)

T W Parks Colonial Chapel  
201 N. Macarthur Hwy.  
Peoria, IL 61605  
(309) 674-6323  
<http://www.twparkscolonialchapel.com>

### Celebration of Life

NOV 3. 10:30 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

T W Parks Colonial Chapel  
201 N. Macarthur Hwy.  
Peoria, IL 61605  
(309) 674-6323  
<http://www.twparkscolonialchapel.com>

# Tribute Wall

TP

“ Tina Purnell lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell



Tina Purnell - December 20, 2025 at 09:08 AM

VF

“ Virginia Johnson & Family purchased the Treasu red Lilies Spray for the family of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell.



Virginia Johnson & Family - October 31, 2025 at 12:02 PM

VF

“ Virginia Johnson & Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell.

Virginia Johnson & Family - October 31, 2025 at 12:02 PM

TG

“ Tamerla Glenn purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell.



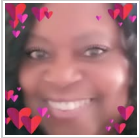
Tamerla Glenn - October 27, 2025 at 11:20 PM

JS

“ *My auntie was a very vibrant person loving everyone she know. I love my aunt. My God bless her home going.* ”



**Jacqueline Stevenson** - October 21, 2025 at 02:04 PM



“ *Darlene Horton lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell* ”



**Darlene Horton** - October 21, 2025 at 03:39 AM



“ *Sis. Purnell was always a joy to be around. My mom, Sadie, and Sis. Purnell were good friends.* ”

**Clara Hooks** - October 20, 2025 at 09:21 AM

EC

“ *Eddie & Mechell Coleman lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell* ”



**Eddie & Mechell Coleman** - October 20, 2025 at 06:09 AM

SM

“ I remember so vividly when Aunt Christine would visit her sister, my mother in Arkadelphia (her hometown). She always made it her business to spend quality time with my siblings and I.

Even though I always had to scratch her long thick gorgeous hair. Aunt Christine will always hold a special place in my heart! RIP Auntie ❤️



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**Sandy "Granny" Mitchell** - October 18, 2025 at 05:13 PM

TF

“ The Williamson Family purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell.



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**The Williamson Family** - October 18, 2025 at 02:24 PM

TF

“ The Williamson Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell.

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**The Williamson Family** - October 18, 2025 at 02:24 PM

DT

“ Dallas Terry lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell



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**Dallas Terry** - October 18, 2025 at 08:25 AM



“ *Chantay Gray lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Thelma C. Purnell*



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**Chantay Gray** - October 17, 2025 at 09:00 PM