



Ruth Ortique

June 21, 2022

Ruth Elder Severan Ortique was born February 10, 1928 in New Orleans, Louisiana to parents Johnny Severan and Viola Tropez Severan. She attended Tommy Lafon, John W. Hoffman and McDonogh #35 High School. She graduated from Dillard University of New Orleans in 1949 with a major in Music Education.

In July 1952 she married the late Calvin Justin Ortique, Sr. To this union were born Calvin Justin, Jr., Theda Elaine, Cheryl Ann, and Thomas Oliver, Sr. Ruth spent the first years of her marriage nurturing her four babies until the unexpected death of her husband, Calvin, in August 1961. She then began working as a substitute teacher in the Orleans Parish elementary schools before becoming a full-time elementary school teacher.

As a parent, she served in leadership roles of the Parent Teacher Association at Paul Lawrence Dunbar elementary school where three of her children attended. Her first full-time position was at James Lewis elementary school. With integration, she was moved to a suburban Orleans Parish elementary school in Algiers, LA and finally to Daneel #2 elementary school where she eventually retired having taught over twenty years. She was president of the Parent Teacher Association Band club at McDonogh #35 H.S. where much of her extra time was spent fund raising. Realizing the importance of education as a single parent she motivated her children and grandchildren to study hard

and pursue high goals.

Raised in a Christian family and being a member of Pleasant Zion Missionary Baptist Church and later a member of Metropolitan AME Zion Church her goal was to instill in her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren her great love and devotion to God. At Pleasant Zion, Ruth served as a deaconess, Director of the Children's Church and Youth Choir, Director of Vacation Bible School, Sunday school teacher, and an active member of the Women's Missionary Union. At Metropolitan she served as a deaconess, attended Sunday school and Bible Study until her health prevented her from doing so.

After hurricane Katrina in August 2005, Ruth and her two daughters, Theda and Cheryl, moved to Windsor and Hartford, CT. where sons, Calvin and Thomas, had migrated in the 1980s for job opportunities.

We all enjoyed spending the holidays, birthdays, and Mother's Days together. She and Cheryl moved to Immanuel House apartments in 2011. When no longer able to safely live there, she moved to Hebrew Center where she was able to get needed medical care. While there she served on the Patient's Care Council as vice-chairwoman offering many ideas that led to better patient care.

After the unexpected death of her daughter, Cheryl Ann, in October 2021, she grieved and seemed to lose the enthusiasm and zest for life that she had always been known for.

Ruth was an inspiration to all the family members--her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews, great, great nieces and nephews, and cousins. Everyone on the Severan side of the family referred to her as Nanny and on the Ortique side she was known as Auntie Ruth. Her many cousins from the Jones and Tropez families of Donaldsonville

and Belle Alliance, LA all loved Ruth.

She was preceded in death by parents, Johnny Severan and Viola Tropez Severan, her husband, Calvin Ortique, Sr., daughter, Cheryl Ann Ortique, brothers Leon and Mack Severan, and sisters Matile S. Keller and Eunice S. Pellerin. Ruth is survived by her brother Leo Severan(Marie), sister-in-law, Verna Severan, her two sons, Calvin Jr.(Barbara) and Thomas Sr.(Marilyn), daughter, Theda, grandsons, Anthony(Sheena), Justin(Zani), Calvin Jonathan(Nicole Alex), Charles, Thomas, Jr., granddaughter, Darcie, great-grandchildren Jayden, Anthony Maxime, Amyra, Nyema, Angela, Camery, Andrea, godchildren, Beverly Barquet and Augusta Truxillo, a host of nieces and nephews and many, many cousins and friends.

Relatives and friends are invited to a Funeral Service at Pleasant Zion Baptist Church, 3317 Toledano St, New Orleans, LA 70125 on Thursday, July 7, 2022, at 10:00 AM. Visitation will begin at 9:00 AM. For the health and safety of all, everyone in attendance is asked to wear a mask and practice social distancing. Interment: Providence Memorial Park Cemetery, 8200 Airline Dr, Metairie, LA 7003. Arrangements by D. W. Rhodes Funeral Home, 3933 Washington Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70125. Please visit www.rhodesfuneral.com to sign the guestbook.

Cemetery Details

Providence Park Cemetery

8200 Airline Dr.
Metairie, LA 70003

Previous Events

Visitation

JUL 7. 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM (CT)

Pleasant Zion Baptist Church
3317 Toledano St.
New Orleans, LA 70125

Funeral

JUL 7. 10:00 AM (CT)

Pleasant Zion Baptist Church
3317 Toledano St.
New Orleans, LA 70125