



## Lena Mae Smith Ross

July 20, 1931 - September 4, 2024

Lena Mae Smith Ross, 93, of Salisbury peacefully went home to be with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on September 4, 2024 surrounded by the love of family and friends. She had been in declining health but seriously ill for only 2 weeks. Lena was born on July 20, 1931, in Iredell County, North Carolina and was the daughter of the late Manuel Smith and Verlie Lou Shaw Smith. In addition to her parents, she was predeceased by her husband, Richard Arlin Ross in 1989; sisters Audrey Estelle Smith and Betty Lou Smith; brothers Webster Manuel Smith and wife Margaret Swisher Smith, Herbert Shaw (HS) Smith and Robert Newton Smith.

Lena was a 1949 graduate of Harmony High School. She left the family farm at 18 years old and entered Nursing School at Davis Hospital School of Nursing in Statesville, NC. That began a Nursing Career as an RN that would span 60 years. Lena entered nursing in a different age and technology. She loved sharing stories of how nursing practice was when she began and how it has evolved. She had so many intriguing insights and words of wisdom. She loved people and sharing stories. Especially Nursing Stories about doing what is right for her patients. In 2005, at 74 years old, she was still practicing nursing and received the prestigious Nursing Great 100 Award which recognizes nurses who exemplify excellence in nursing practice, leadership, and service across the state. She was selected from a panel of nursing peers and was proud but humbled at such a recognition.

Lena's career took her in through many different nursing roles working in

North Carolina, New Jersey and New Mexico. She retired from the Hefner VA Medical Center with 25 years of service and traveled for 10 years with her husband Richard. After his passing she decided to return to work but was required to take a RN refresher course. Instead, she elected to retake State Boards for Registered Nurses; and passed easily the National Board Exam returning to the career she loved. She spent 10 years in New Mexico to be near her grandson Chris and practiced nursing in that region. Upon returning to North Carolina, she continued to work and spent the last 10 years she worked at Novant Health Rowan Medical Center until she was 78 years old; retiring in 2009 to help take care of her aging brothers.

Lena has been a lifelong Christian. She is a member of Franklin Presbyterian Church in Salisbury. Her earliest memories were growing up at her home church Rock Spring Baptist Church in Harmony where she was baptized and began her strong walk of faith. As a young woman she was a member of Enon Baptist Church, Salisbury.

Lena spent many years volunteering and working with Al-Anon programs both locally and nationally. She especially enjoyed her work with youth programs. As a young mother she ran a teenage club for youth in the Woodleaf area. Always a mother figure with support, love, and guidance for the young people with whom she interacted.

Lena loved flowers and had an amazing ability to make things grow and nourish. Her flowers took center stage and were priority every day. Her yard and porch and anywhere she could find a place were adorned with flowers. First and foremost, Lena was a Mother, Nana and Friend. She will always be remembered for how much she cared about people; and that she loved to care for people. She gave of herself unselfishly. She had a beautiful smile that lit up the room when she entered. She liked celebrations so she could share with her many friends whether that was at church, home or individually. Her energy and enthusiasm was catching. She was an amazing Mom and Nana who gave her all for family and friends. She was a role model and leader. Lena loved the Lord dearly as well as her family, friends, and neighbors. To all

those who knew her, her legacy will live on through life lessons and insights she shared.

She is survived by daughters Cynthia Williams Grant and husband Joe Robert Grant (whom she called her son) of Salisbury; Carolyn Lea Williams of Santa Fe, New Mexico; grandsons Christopher James Soveranez (Oksana) and Samuel Soveranez of Santa Fe, New Mexico; and granddaughters Wendy Grant Kavalir (Charles III) of Miami, Florida, and Sandra Grant Beattie (Mike) of Salisbury; greatgrandchildren Charles Kavalir IV, Grant Alexander Kavalir, and Mackenzie Kay Kavalir of Miami, Florida. She is also survived by numerous cousins and a host of special friends.

Visitation: The family will receive friends from 12:00 – 1:00pm Monday, September 9, 2024 at Franklin Presbyterian Church prior to the service.

Service: Funeral services celebrating Lena's life will be held 1:00pm on Monday, September 9, 2024 at Franklin Presbyterian Church, 280 Franklin Church Drive with the Reverend Dr. Larry Summey and Reverend Keith Reid officiating.

A graveside service and interment will be held at Rock Spring Baptist Church, 509 Rock Springs Road, Harmony at 3:00pm September 9, 2024 following the service. At other times, the family will be at the home of Joe and Cindy Grant on Sassafras Lane.

Memorials: Memorial contributions may be made to Franklin Presbyterian Church, 280 Franklin Church Drive, Salisbury, NC 28147, or Rock Spring Baptist Church, 509 Rock Springs Road, Harmony 28634.

The family would like to extend a special thank you to Anna, Venita, Michelle, Amanda, Tracy, Sarah Grace and Patrice, the caregivers that so lovingly cared for her in her home. A very special thank you to our church family and all our friends and neighbors and for all the special calls, visits, prayers, and messages sent throughout her time at home and recent illness.

Summersett Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Ross Family. Online condolences may be made at [www.summesettfuneralhome.com](http://www.summesettfuneralhome.com).



# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 9. 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM (ET)

Franklin Presbyterian Church  
280 Franklin Church Dr.  
Salisbury, NC 28147

## Funeral Service

SEP 9. 1:00 PM (ET)

Franklin Presbyterian Church  
280 Franklin Church Dr.  
Salisbury, NC 28147

## Graveside Service

SEP 9. 3:00 PM (ET)

Rock Spring Baptist Church Cemetery  
509 Rock Springs Road  
Harmony, NC 28634

# Tribute Wall



“ *Summersett Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Lena Mae Smith Ross*



Summersett Funeral Home and Cremation Center - September 08, 2024 at 02:58 PM

KR

“ *Cindy, Our deepest sympathies to you and your family. I know that you will miss her terribly but have many wonderful memories of her life. What a remarkable woman she was and a force to be reckoned with! Heaven has gained a “nurse angel”.*  
*Rick & Kathleen*



Kathleen Ridenhour - September 08, 2024 at 07:08 PM

BG

“ *Bonnie Goodson lit a candle in memory of Lena Mae Ross*



Bonnie Goodson - September 05, 2024 at 05:13 PM