

# Esther Shelby Tidwell

*Oct. 18, 1949*

Esther Shelby Tidwell, of Indian Springs, Alabama, passed away unexpectedly Sunday February 11, 2018 due to a tragic automobile accident. She was on her way home from visiting relatives in Mobile and attending her favorite Mardi Gras parades a few days earlier.

Esther was a devoted wife, mother, and grandmother (Nini) who will be missed beyond measure. She was sweet, kind, caring, and loving. She loved spending time with family. Esther and Lonnie especially enjoyed spending time at their



beach condominium in Destin, Florida with family and friends. She was born in Mobile, Alabama but moved to Birmingham with her family at a young age. She attended John Carroll Catholic High School and then Jacksonville State University where she was a Math Major. She was a respected member of the Alabama Chapter of The Appraisal Institute and held the Senior Residential Appraiser designation. She was a longtime member of Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church, where she served on the Bereavement Ministry.

Esther is survived by her loving husband of 48 years Lonnie Tidwell, and the cherished mother of Alan Tidwell (Beth) and Jay Tidwell (Kelley). Esther is also survived by her beloved grandchildren Madelyne, Bennett, Sarah, Emily, Anna, Julia, and Claire who she absolutely adored, and they loved their Nini so much and will miss her dearly. Esther is also survived by her brothers Greg Shelby (Kathleen), and Richard Shelby (Pat), plus numerous nieces, nephews, aunts, cousins, and many very close friends.

She was predeceased by her parents Sam and Blanche Shelby, in-laws Alvina Pharo Tidwell-Vines and Owen L. Tidwell, Sr.

Funeral services will be at Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church, 5514 Double Oak Ln., Birmingham, Alabama 35242 on Friday, February 16, 2018 with Rosary at 10 am; Visitation 10:30; and Funeral Mass at 11:30. Reception at the church hall to follow. In lieu of flowers, a contribution in Esther's name to the American Cancer Society would be appreciated.

October 18, 1949 – February 11, 2018

### Eulogy

We are gathered here today in the memory of Esther so that together we may acknowledge and share both our joy in the gift that her life was to us, and the pain that her passing brings. In sharing the joy and the pain together today, may we lessen the pain and remember more clearly the joy.

Esther was only 68 years old when she passed away tragically in an automobile accident on Sunday, February 11th in Spanish Fort, Alabama. She was visiting family in Mobile for Mardi Gras, which was one of her favorite things to do. It's hard to say goodbye. We wish we had more time, and perhaps that during the time we had, we had spent more of it together. While we know that she is at peace, there is pain and sadness. But even though she is gone, she has left the legacy of her love and perseverance. The ways she touched our lives will remain.

Esther was a strong Godly woman, and a devote Catholic. She regularly attended Mass right here at Our Lady of The Valley and served on the Bereavement Ministry. She often talked about her faith and shared stories from her Christian book and prayer group. She was an incredible wife, mom, grandmother ("Nini"), aunt, sister, friend, and person. She created a home that was loving and supportive. She would help you get through the toughest of times and would be right there to celebrate with you on all your accomplishments. Yes, during difficult or joyful times she stuck by her family and friends and was the person we needed at that moment.

She was sweet, kind, caring, and loving. She cared more for others than she did for herself. She loved her family and friends and cherished every moment she was able to spend with them. She loved continuing traditions and creating new ones especially with her seven beloved grandchildren. She made everything special for them, from Camp Farm at Nini and Poppy's house, making gingerbread houses at Christmas, beach trips to Destin, cooking with them in the Kitchen, snuggles under the blanket, to bedtime prayers and stories. Because of her, the family has so many wonderful memories especially at Esther and Lonnie's house in Indian Springs and at their beach condominium in Destin, Florida.

From Greg Shelby (Esther's Brother):

Esther and I shared a love for Auburn football. I will always cherish the times we spent together tailgating in Auburn before and after the games, but what I loved the most was the hours we would spend on the phone talking about family, friends, and of course, Auburn football. I will always remember those phone calls and will dearly miss them.

From Dick Shelby (Esther's Brother):

When Esther was young, she always wanted to fit in with the boys and didn't understand why we didn't accept her, she wanted to as an adult also. When I was building my parents retirement house on Mobile Bay, she and Greg would come down on weekends with their families and help when they could. I had advanced to the stage of installing the exterior trim but it was difficult measuring, climbing down from the scaffolding, cutting and climbing back up to install the piece so Esther volunteered to cut for me. A couple of pieces were not the right size after the cut and she always told me she cut where I had the pencil mark and showed me the pencil mark. Years later when we were talking about the house she mentioned the cuts and said she cut them wrong but added her own pencil mark to cover the mistake. How could I have been upset with something so clever.

From Jay:

Mom you have always been there for me, and I have so many wonderful memories with you. But the memories I will cherish the most are the conversation we had. Whether in person or on the phone, you always knew when to listen, when to talk, and when to offer advice. You were the glue that held our family together. You sacrificed and gave so much to me, and the love you had for your grandchildren was undeniable. I will always remember Nini's first rule for all her grandchildren: huge Nini when you first see her before you do anything else. You were an amazing mom and woman. I know you will be with me always and I love you.

From Alan:

As a kid, I thought my mom could do anything, she was quite an incredible person. I always knew that she was my biggest fan and she would be there to receive me with unconditional love. As an adult, we shared a special bond built by our faith in

God and fostered by our enduring love for each other. When we moved to Tuscaloosa from Columbus, Georgia we so wanted her to be a big part of our girls lives. They adore their Nini, and she loves them unconditionally because that is the only way she knows how to love. Even though we miss her, we know that she is with us in our hearts and her love remains always.

From Lonnie:

Esther was the love of my life and we had so many wonderful memories. We loved and cherished our time spent at our condo in Destin whether we were alone, with family, or with friends. Although we did not travel often, we enjoyed taking trips together. I will always remember our trip to Italy. We visited Rome, Florence, and Venice. During our trip, the weather was amazing, and we had such a great time. We visited the Vatican and numerous museums. It was such a special trip and I was lucky enough to have my wonderful wife to share it with. In fact, we had talked many times about going back. Unfortunately, time ran out.

Esther lived her life full of love and with a heart for service. We find comfort in knowing that she was a strong beautiful Christian woman. We know she will always be with us in our hearts and she will be watching over us. We love you always and will miss you dearly. In closing, we would like to share a prayer that she said often and had displayed above her desk:

The title of the prayer is: I Said a Prayer For You Today

"I said a prayer for you today

And know God must have heard

I felt the answer in my heart

Although He spoke no word!

I didn't ask for wealth or fame

(I knew you wouldn't mind)

I asked him to send treasures

Of a more lasting kind!

I asked that He'd be near you

At the start of each new day

To grant you health and blessings

And friends to share your way!

I asked for happiness for you

In all things great and small

But it was for His loving care

I prayed the most of all!"