



Mrs. Melba T. Thompson

May 7, 1927 - January 4, 2026

Mrs. Melba T. Thompson, age 98, departed this life at her home on Sunday, January 4, 2026.

“I hope you have the best day ever!” That was the familiar closing given by Melba Selene Tuck Thompson to those who were lucky enough to speak with her and share in her loving spirit.

Melba was, and will continue to be model for other women - a loving mother, wife, teacher, and woman after God’s own heart and His purpose for her life.

Melba was born in 1927 in Robeson County, NC, to Clarence Tuck (1895-1977) and Hattie McCallum Tuck. She had two brothers: John Thomas Tuck (1929-1992) and Bennie Clarence Lee Tuck (1931-2009). Melba’s mother passed away when Melba was six, and in 1935, her father remarried to Lee Annie McMillan (1919-1973). Afterwards, five sisters were born: Barbara Tuck (1948-1999), Linda Fullwood (1950), Deborah Tuck (1954 - 2025), Dr. Kathy Tuck (1956), and Chanda Garfield (1969) (Dean). Though “Miss Annie” was Melba’s stepmother, their relationship grew into one of best friends.

Melba attended Pembroke Elementary School and later, Hilly Branch High School. She graduated as the valedictorian of the class of 1944. Continuing her education, she graduated with high scholarship honors and a Bachelor of

Science degree in education from Fayetteville State College, now Fayetteville State University. She began her professional career in Louisville, GA, teaching primary grades. Then later, she worked as a first-grade educator in Rowland, NC, for six years - before she was swept off her feet.

She married Raphael N. Thompson Sr. (1926-2018) in 1952. They moved to Fort Valley, GA, and were blessed with 3 children: Roslyn Thompson (1955), Raphael (Ralph) Thompson, Jr. (1956), and Dr. Roderick Thompson (1960-2021). Melba's family moved to Durham, NC, when her husband started work at North Carolina College, now North Carolina Central University. Melba began working at Graham Elementary School in Graham, NC, and later worked for the following Durham Public Schools: Fayetteville Street Elementary School, Whitted Junior High School, and Holton Junior High School. She retired after a 25-year stellar teaching career. Melba spent most of her retirement years helping to raise her granddaughter, Gina Bullington (1996) (Nathan). Gina graduated from NCCU and Michigan State and now works in federal and state public policy, advocating for a comprehensive safety net across the Deep South that helps people and families when they need it most. Melba's grandson-in-law, Nate, received his degrees in Jazz Studies from NCCU and Michigan State.

Melba is also survived by her son's partner, Tim Walther (1944), and her foster grandson, Curtis Roberson (1990), who works as an EMT for the NYC Fire Department and is in IT for the US Navy.

Additionally, her memory will be treasured by a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

Melba enjoyed trips to the shopping mall and would spend hours browsing the racks to pick a new trend-setting outfit. Melba had quite the sweet tooth and enjoyed cake, Twix candy bars, and a can of crisp Pepsi fresh out of the refrigerator. She cooked for her loved ones regularly. Her siblings, nieces,

nephews, cousins, students, and friends alike raved about the food that she prepared and served over the years. Many warm memories sprang from the Sunday dinners spent in her home by those fortunate enough to receive her hospitality.

She also had a green thumb and enjoyed nature. She loved storytelling and had an unsurpassed memory for what had been said during the many moments of hilarity throughout the years. Over time, this kept her connections strong with the people from various stages of her life, right up until the end.

When she was asked, “What would you tell your younger self?” Melba earnestly replied: Just treat others the way you want to be treated.” Consistently, she demonstrated this belief by caring for numerous family members and friends, and coming to the aid of those in need— all without expecting fanfare or credit.

May the Lord continue to shower His blessings on Melba Thompson as - Surely goodness and mercy shall continue to follow her all the days...

Funeral services to celebrate the life of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson are scheduled for Saturday, January 17, 2026, at 10:30 a.m., visitation will be half an hour prior to the service, at Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church, 403 Cook Road, Durham, North Carolina 27713.

Interment will take place in Tuck Family Cemetery, Pembroke, North Carolina.

Floral deliveries will be received on Saturday, January 17th, at Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church at 9:30 a.m.

Cemetery Details

Tuck Cemetery

Pembroke, NC

Previous Events

Delivery of floral arrangements to the church

JAN 17. 9:30 AM (ET)

Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church
403 Cook Rd
Durham, NC 27713
<http://www.beaconlightchurch.org/>

Visitation

JAN 17. 10:00 AM - 10:30 AM (ET)

Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church
403 Cook Rd
Durham, NC 27713
<http://www.beaconlightchurch.org/>

Celebration of Life

JAN 17. 10:30 AM (ET)

Beacon Light Missionary Baptist Church
403 Cook Rd
Durham, NC 27713
<http://www.beaconlightchurch.org/>

Tribute Wall

MM

“ *Mable Miller lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson*



Mable Miller - January 17 at 01:18 AM

TH

“ *3 files added to the tribute wall*



Thompson - January 16 at 06:41 PM



“ *Fiery Lily and Rose was purchased for the family of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson.*



January 16 at 03:08 PM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson.*



January 16 at 02:38 PM

LC

“ Love, The Rice's and Carroll's planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson.

Love, The Rice's and Carroll's - January 16 at 02:38 PM

LS

“ Love Ramona, Victor, Kristin, and Sam purchased the Heavenly Grace Spray for the family of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson.



Love Ramona, Victor, Kristin, and Sam - January 15 at 05:09 PM

LS

“ Love Ramona, Victor, Kristin, and Sam planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson.

Love Ramona, Victor, Kristin, and Sam - January 15 at 05:09 PM



“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson.



January 14 at 12:30 PM

JG

“ *Jacque, Larry, Richard and Greg purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson.*



Jacque, Larry, Richard and Greg - January 12 at 11:06 AM

TD

“ *Thaddeus L Daniels lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Melba T. Thompson*



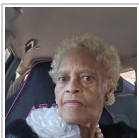
Thaddeus L Daniels - January 08 at 10:35 AM

TC

“ *The Emorywoods Community*



The Emorywoods Community - January 08 at 10:19 AM



“ *I have known Mrs. Thompson for year. She followed me and family around the world since we were active military. While living next door on Plum Street as a teenager I was the baby sitter for the three now adults kids... later years she has been known mother Thompson to me. Prayers for all the family during their loss at this time.*

Evelyn Hightower - January 08 at 09:57 AM

CM

“ I was saddened to receive the news about our dear cousin Melba but I am thankful she lived a long beautiful life on earth and we shared a few special memories together. My condolences to the family and friends.
Cathy Humphrey McKoy and family



Cathy McKoy - January 07 at 10:47 PM

KE

“ Aunt Melba was my favorite aunt of all time. I can remember while I was a student at NCCU. My uncle would pick me up every Sunday for church from my dorm. Aunt Melba would cook the best dinner each Sunday and if I had to go to church for a meal it was worth it. You are truly going to be missed. Love you 🥹.

Kenneth - January 07 at 09:19 PM