



Services will be Thursday, January 8, 2015 at the New Bethel Baptist Church for Mrs. Bessie L. Johnson, 84, of Youngstown, who was called home to be with the Lord on Saturday, January 3, 2015 at St. Elizabeth Health Center-Boardman.

Mrs. Johnson was born August 18, 1930 in Youngstown, a daughter of Godfrey and Exie Reid Gurley. She was a 1948 graduate of The Rayen School and received her Associate Degree from Youngstown State University. She retired in 1986 from Youngstown City Schools. Following her retirement with the school system, Bessie's energy lead her to work with WRTA in it's Sub Shop, again retiring in 1994. She was a member of New Bethel Baptist Church, its Sunday School and Vacation Bible School. She enjoyed traveling, social games, talking to family and friends on the telephone and spending precious moments with her family. Bessie's favorite pastime was Bingo.

She leaves to cherish her beloved memory, five sons, Vernon (Linda) Gurley, Dennis Gurley, Kenneth (Eleanor) Johnson, Jr. and Derrick (Rachel) Johnson all of Youngstown, and Roosevelt (Cheryl) Moore, Jr. of Houston, TX; three daughters, Sherrel Gurley, Belinda (Brian) Moore Ellis and Yvette Johnson all of Youngstown; two sisters, Barbara Jean (James) Milton and Myrtle Grier of Youngstown; 30 grandchildren; 38 great grandchildren; 2 great great-grandchildren; a goddaughter, Elizabeth Brown; best friends who were like sisters to her, Sarah Dyson and Sass Levy; and a host of family and friends.

Besides her parents and husband, Kenneth Johnson, Sr., whom she married December 14, 1967 and who passed away August 6, 1998; Bessie was preceded in death by three sisters, Helen R. Bryant, Robbie Luckey, and Mae Graham; a daughter-in-law, Jennifer Gurley; grandchildren, Devonte Kelly and Yvette Sherrel Johnson; and great granddaughter, Vaniesia Vanay Gurley.

Visitation hours will be Thursday from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. at the church. Arrangements entrusted to the L. E. Black, Phillips & Holden Funeral Home.