



## Marianna Rowlett Harris

October 14, 1932 - September 19, 2015

Marianna Rowlett Harris passed away on September 19, 2015, in Charlotte, North Carolina, after an extended illness.

As a child in Tazewell, Virginia, Marianna developed a life-long love for the beauty of the Appalachian Mountains and for the United Methodist Church, where she spent many years of loving service.

A graduate of Emory & Henry College in Emory, VA, and of the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta, GA, Marianna worked as a Christian educator, and as the Executive Director of the United Methodist Neighborhood Centers in Chattanooga, TN. She served tirelessly and fearlessly to improve the lives of children and their families who struggled to overcome poverty, and her Christian faith led her to work for justice, compassion, equality and peace, even in times of great social unrest. Always preferring to serve behind the scenes, she could not escape notice for her work, and the Chattanooga Times featured her in an article titled "Thoroughly Methodist Marianna" in 1967. After a lifelong spiritual and professional affiliation with the United Methodist Church, Marianna retired from State Street United Methodist Church in Bristol, VA after serving there as the Diaconal Minister of Programs. At all times, her church home was the rock upon which she stood, as she gladly accepted the challenges that life brought her way, striving always to do her best, to reflect God's presence in any situation, and to seek and obey God's will.

She is remembered as a loyal friend, a lover of nature and of beautiful music, an adventurous traveler, a woman of quiet strength, determination and unwavering faith, and a source of deep compassion for those she served in times of suffering. Most of all, she is remembered for her life of sacrificial service to her family and community. On her happiest days, she explored winding mountain back roads, scrambling over fences with her metal pail in search of wild blackberries, finding her strength and deep joy in the beauty of it all. She treasured these words from Psalm 121, "I lift up my eyes to the mountains-where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." Preceded in death by her husband, Rev. James Bibb Harris, Jr. in 1962, Marianna is survived by twin daughters, Anne Rowlett Harris of Greensboro, NC, and Martha Harris Brown of Charlotte NC, and devoted son-in-law Addison Brown. She is also survived by

grandchildren Baylor Brown and wife Maegan, Harrison Brown, and Marianna “Meg” Brown. Also surviving her are her sister, Martha Graybeal Rowlett of Asheville NC, and brother Peyton Lee “Pete” Rowlett and his wife Virginia “Ginny” Bates Rowlett of Knoxville TN, and many loved nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends Thursday, September 24, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Blevins Funeral Home, 417 Lee Street, Bristol VA. A Celebration of Life will be held at the Chapel on the campus of Emory & Henry College on Friday, September 25, at 11:00 a.m.

The family expresses gratitude to the caring staff at the Asbury Center in Charlotte NC, the staff of Seniors Helping Seniors, and to Hospice and Palliative Care of Charlotte.

In honor of her life, and in lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to The Nature Conservancy, Attn: Treasury, 4245 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 100, Arlington, VA 22203, or to the Legacy Fund of the United Methodist Women, Attn: Martha Knight, Treasurer, 475 Riverside Dr., Room 1503, New York, NY 10115.

# Events

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**SEP** **Visitation** 06:00PM - 08:00PM

**24**

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Blevins Funeral & Cremation Services  
417 Lee Street, Bristol, VA, US, 24201

**SEP** **Funeral** 11:00AM

**25**

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Emory & Henry Chapel  
Emory, VA, US

**SEP** **Committal Service & Interment**

**25**

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Holston Conference Cemetery  
Emory, VA, US

# Comments

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“ A tribute video has been added.



**Blevins Funeral & Cremation Services** - September 24, 2015 at 09:59 AM

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“ Dear Rowlett-Harris family, each and all: I'm grieved to learn of dear Marianna's death. To me, she was a noble soul, pure and good...a courageous advocate of the worth and dignity of all persons. And, since I'm half Ashe County Graybeal, of course I confess to a little prejudice. Dr. M.S. Kincheloe used to say of our dear departed loved ones, "More homelike seems the vast unknown since they have entered there," to which, here past mid-point of my own eighth decade, I can only add "Heaven increasingly holds wondrous attraction!" I hold each of you in my thoughts, in my prayers, and in my heart--ever--with love. John Duvall, retired WNC Conference, 313 Mt. Zion Rd. Elk Creek, VA 24326 [jduvall@wnccumc.net](mailto:jduvall@wnccumc.net)

**Rev. John A. Duvall** - October 22, 2015 at 09:56 AM



“ What a wonderful testimony to Marianna! And thank you for the quote from Uncle Marvin.

**Martha Rowlett** - November 17, 2015 at 01:31 PM

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“ Duke Energy, Digital Media / ABCD Team Corp Comm purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Marianna Rowlett Harris.



**Duke Energy, Digital Media / ABCD Team Corp Comm** - September 24, 2015 at 10:14 AM

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“ 36 files added to the album LifeTributes



**Blevins Funeral & Cremation Services** - September 24, 2015 at 08:46 AM

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“ Martha and Anne my sympathy to you both. Your mother was such a wonderful lady. Such an asset to the Chattanooga community and Brainerd UMC.

**Julie Kinser** - September 22, 2015 at 08:23 PM

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“ Martha and Anne, I have been on vacation and just got home this afternoon and found out about your mom's death. Marianna was a very good friend to me for many years. I did enjoy working with her at the Community Centers in Chattanooga as well as through Brainerd UMC. I will be giving a memorial gift to UMCOR through my local church here in Eaton Rapids, MI, and wanted you to know that.

Prayers and blessings to you both and to all the rest of the family as well.

Joyce Showerman

**Joyce Showerman** - September 22, 2015 at 04:01 PM

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“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Marianna Rowlett Harris.



September 22, 2015 at 12:54 PM

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“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Martha Brown - September 22, 2015 at 11:13 AM

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“ 1 file added to the album New Album Name



Martha Brown - September 22, 2015 at 11:12 AM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Marianna Rowlett Harris.



September 22, 2015 at 11:11 AM

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“ I am deeply grateful for the work Marianna did among us. God grant her peace as she opens new eyes on grater beauty than she has ever known before.

RuthAnne Henley - September 22, 2015 at 06:57 AM