



Ernest Lynden Matthews

May 10, 1934 - February 10, 2023

Ernest Lynden Matthews peacefully entered heaven on Friday, February 10, 2023, because of his faith in Jesus Christ.

He was born on May 10, 1934, to Arthur Madison Matthews and Nancy Mildred (Compton) Matthews in Decatur, AL, and spent his entire life as a Decatur resident. For Ernest, the summer of 1952 was momentous. On June 29, one month after graduating from Decatur High School and receiving his very first paycheck, he spotted his future bride “at five minutes to eleven o’clock on the steps of Grace Baptist Church.” On August 23, 1955, inside that same church, Ernest and Annie Ruth Ulm were married.

Ernest was a machinist all his life, working for his father at Matthews Machine Shop while still in high school. In the early 1970’s he began work on a special project to manufacture a machine for packaging sugar pouches. With the assistance of his younger brother, Ralph, he developed the Ropak packaging machine that produced sugar packs at 2,400 packs per minute, triple the speed of its nearest competitor. In 1985 the two brothers formed a separate company, Ropak Manufacturing, to further develop the packaging machine. Years later, in 2011, Ernest became the sole owner of the company, but he always stated his occupation simply as “an inventor.” His positive outlook, honesty, work ethic, and fair treatment of all affected many people in local and national industry.

Ernest was truly a man of many interests and talents. His extensive antique car collection brought him much enjoyment through the years as he exhibited

them at various car shows. Every summer he cultivated his garden and produced some amazing vegetables, but he was especially proud of his tomatoes. Exceeding these interests, however, was Ernest's love of and commitment to Christian education. As a charter member of Cornerstone Baptist Church, he invested his time and resources in Cornerstone Christian School, supporting many faculty, staff, and students in their Christian education experience. Only God knows the extent of his influence in countless lives.

Ernest was preceded in death by his parents and his three brothers. He is survived by Annie Ruth Ulm Matthews, his wife of 67½ years, and their children: Richard Matthews (Lori) of Decatur, Alabama; Lynette Matthews Sculley (Donald) of Corinth, Mississippi; Philip Matthews (Melanie) of Decatur, Alabama; and Christine Matthews Polley (Kevin) of Greenville, South Carolina. Eleven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren continue his legacy.

Visitation will be on Wednesday, February 15, 2023, from 5-8pm at Shelton Funeral Home, 2105 Beltline Road, SW, Decatur, AL 35601. The memorial service will be held on Thursday, February 16, at 1:00pm in the funeral home chapel with interment following at Roselawn Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, you may honor Ernest's memory with a gift to Cornerstone Christian School, Decatur, AL; or to the ministry of your choice.

Cemetery Details

Roselawn Cemetery

Memorial Drive
Decatur, AL 35601

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **15**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Shelton Funeral Home
2105 Beltline Road SW
Decatur, AL 35601
(256) 353-1620
<https://www.sheltonfuneralhome.net/>

Tribute Wall

LK

“ *Annie Ruth, I'm sending condolences to you and your family. I remember the wonderful times we shared together in Hawaii. I also appreciate the time you put in helping with starting up the new library there at Grace Baptist Schools. I pray you are doing well. Your long lost friend. Lucy Porter, Kidd.*

Lucy Porter Kidd - August 25, 2024 at 08:20 PM

CM

“ *I always enjoyed my time with Ernest and James in the Bass section of Grace Baptist Church Choir. I had great respect and admiration for him. May God comfort the family during this time. Charles McKee*

Charles McKee - February 16, 2023 at 10:49 AM

KW

“ *While doing contract work for Earnest, he once told me that he could tell how good a worker was by the speed of his stride! I always remembered that statement and saw how true it was over the years with employees of my own. A very kind and extremely generous man...I and my family were Blessed to know him!*

Keith Wheatley - February 15, 2023 at 11:59 AM

BH

“ *Bethel Baptist Church, Hartselle purchased the beautiful in Blue for the family of Ernest Lynden Matthews.*



Bethel Baptist Church, Hartselle - February 15, 2023 at 11:52 AM

DR

“ *It was always easy to see the fullness of Uncle Ernest's heart by the sparkling gleam in his eyes. My sincerest condolences to y'all. He lived a life worthy of many honors and great respect.*

Drew - February 15, 2023 at 10:20 AM



“ *Large Basket Garden was purchased for the family of Ernest Lynden Matthews.*



February 14, 2023 at 03:38 PM

HC

“ *Howard and Gale Charnell purchased the Crystal Cross Bouquet for the family of Ernest Lynden Matthews.*



Howard and Gale Charnell - February 14, 2023 at 11:00 AM



“ *The Endless Sky Spray was purchased for the family of Ernest Lynden Matthews.*



February 14, 2023 at 09:48 AM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Ernest Lynden Matthews.*



February 13, 2023 at 06:08 PM



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Ernest Lynden Matthews.*



February 13, 2023 at 02:25 PM