



## Mrs. Helen Warnke Ray

January 6, 1944 - August 16, 2025

It is with deep sorrow that the Ray family announces the death of their beloved mother, Mrs. Helen Warnke Ray, 81.

Mrs. Ray, the widow of James W. "Woody" Ray, Jr., entered into rest on Saturday, August 16, 2025. The Directors of Hancock-Elmore-Hill Funeral Home are caring for the family.

A funeral service to honor her life will be held at 2 o'clock on Wednesday, August 20, 2025, in Faith Baptist Church Cemetery, with The Rev. Kenneth Jones officiating. Guests are invited to pay their respects and view Mrs. Ray in the church one hour prior to the service. The family will receive friends immediately following the service, and other times at the residence, 5142 Jamestown Road, Camden, SC.

Memorials may be made in her honor to the Shriners Hospital for Children, c/o Office of Philanthropy, 2900 N. Rocky Point Drive, Tampa, FL 33607.

Mrs. Ray was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. She was one of ten children born to the late Emil and Alamlnta Warnke. As a small child, Mrs. Ray, like the rest of her siblings, was tossed from home to home, through foster care. At the age of eight, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Zeiner brought Mrs. Ray into their home and fostered and raised her as their very own.

At the age of seventeen, Mrs. Ray met and married her late husband of 59 years, Woody Ray. At that time, she moved to South Carolina with him and soon made their home on Jamestown Road in the Ionia section of Lee County, raising three girls. Mrs. Ray, despite being separated as a child from her siblings, was able to keep in touch with one sister, Betty Warnke, brother, Christian Warnke, and step-brother, Earl Zeiner.

Mrs. Ray was an avid dog lover who found peace in caring for and loving her little ones (Poodles). She retired in 2009 as a housekeeper in the daycare of Littleton Street United Methodist Church in Camden, SC, where she had worked for many years.

Mrs. Ray is survived by her daughters, Darlene (Steve) Hawkins of Bishopville, SC, Lynn (Lavern) Grantham of Camden, SC, Mary Smith of Camden, SC, Helena (Jason) Watkins of Bishopville, SC; grandchildren, Erica (Richard) Call of Chapin, SC, Trey (Janene) Grantham of Franklin, NC, Daniel (Mandy) Glenn of Rock Hill, SC, Tori (Kyle) Honeycutt of Lamar, SC; and six great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents, foster parents, and siblings, she was preceded in death by her husband, James W. "Woody" Ray, Jr.

Serving as pallbearers will be Charles Knight, Ronnie Knight, James Heyward Howell, and Pete Ray.

The Family would like to give a special thanks to the VIA Hospice team for the love, care, and compassion for the past eight months, to Dr. Christa Boss for her loving and caring heart in treating our mother and to Phillip Hudson and the entire staff at Pinedale Residential Center for making our mother feel as a part of a big loving family.



# Tribute Wall



“ *Brown - Pennington - Atkins Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Mrs. Helen Warnke Ray*



**Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home** - August 20, 2025 at 06:44 AM



“ *Matt And Betsy Bramlett lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Helen Warnke Ray*



**Matt and Betsy Bramlett** - August 20, 2025 at 08:16 AM



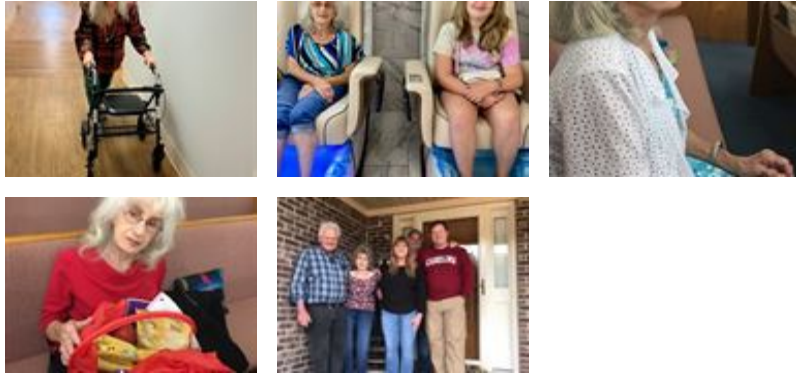
“ *3 files added to the album LifeTributes*



**Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home** - August 20, 2025 at 07:43 AM



“ 50 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



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**Brown-Pennington-Atkins Funeral Home** - August 19, 2025 at 12:49 PM

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*My thought and prayers are with you all.*

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**Dawn Grantham** - August 19, 2025 at 03:35 PM