

Betty Jean Lawson, affectionately known as “BJ”, was born in Americus, Sumter County, Georgia on November 7, 1946, to the parentage of the late Mr. Jessie Roe Ferguson and Mrs. Geraldine Knighton Ferguson. She received her education in the public schools of Sumter County and was a graduate of the Sumter County High School’s Class of 1965. At an early age, she joined the Union Tabernacle Baptist Church under the late Rev. Ulysses Brown, where she served on the Board of Ushers and sang in the choir. She remained faithful under the leadership of Pastor Larry B. Sims, Sr.

Betty Jean Lawson was a person of great joy to be around. She had a heart of laughter and love that she freely shared with everyone she met. She had the honor of being the 1st Black supervisor over the Laundry Department at Manhattan Shirt Factory in Americus. She was later employed at the local Wal-Mart Super Center as a Department Manager where she remained until her health failed.

Betty Jean Lawson is preceded in death by her son, Eugene Lawson Jr.; her sisters, Ruby Jean Smith and Shirley Ferguson; and her brother, Homer Ferguson.

Betty Jean Lawson’s legacy and cherished memories will live on through her husband, Eugene Lawson, Sr., Americus, GA; her devoted daughter, Rhonda (Herman) Stephens, Americus, GA; her sisters: Helen Tullis and Geraldine Ferguson, Americus, GA and Irene Holland, Melville, NJ; her brother, Jessie (Ella Ruth) Ferguson, Jr., Americus, GA; her devoted grandson, Micah Stephens, Americus, GA; a host of nieces and nephews to include: Demeika Brown, Kiandrea Minter, Kaelyn King, Ronneisha Tullis, Latrina Patrick, and Dr. R. Craig Ferguson; her god-children: Reverend Roderick and Mrs. Sharon Haugabook; her devoted friends: Mr. Willie and Mrs. Nell Perry of Rhode Island; Mrs. Marilyn Jackson, Mrs. Bobbi Sims, Mrs. Luneda Brown, Mother Johnnie Vaughn, and Ms. Shirley Green, all of Americus, GA; Pastor Larry B. Sims, Sr. and First Lady Virginia C. Sims, and the UTBC Family.