

Margaret Hamilton's Story

From farm girl to fashion lady, from Mom to “Gamma”, Margaret Hamilton has done it all and continues to enjoy life at it fullest! “Laughter is good medicine”, she says! “Life has its challenges, but we have to make the most of it. The race is set before us and running the race well pleases the Lord! At 85 years old, I'm still learning, still making friends, and most of all still LIVING! Yea!”

Born on a Rockdale farm in Baltimore in 1923, Margaret was the third child of a tenant farmer. Her Mom died of a heart ailment when she was only 5 years old. Her Dad married the orphan lady who babysat for Margaret and her siblings in those early years. Her step mom, Dorothy became her best friend growing up. A stepbrother was born and still shares fun, laughter, and family connections with her today. Margaret's farm life and early Christian upbringing grew deep roots. They taught her an appreciation for life and the land. They taught her to work hard and to rely on the Lord for all things, even in the time of trials. Margaret has lived through the Great Depression. She has lived through the death of her Mom as a child, the emotional pain of siblings pulling away from the family, and the separation WW II brought for five years from the man she loved. She experienced the sadness of miscarriage, the sorrow of a son going to the front lines of war, and within just nine days of each other the deaths of her beloved husband and her closest friend...her stepmother.

Margaret is the type of person who brings life to a party. If there's no party, she'll make one as out of her come the wittiest comments. She listens well, holds deep in her heart the concerns for others, and looks to encourage those around her with humor and honesty. Margaret lived many fond summers on a boat docked in St. Michaels before it became so “touristy.” She is a devoted Orioles fan and can tell you anything about the games and its players.



Margaret of all Seasons

As a child, Margaret's toys were the animals on the farm and items she could use to create her childlike fantasy world. She has fond memories of riding her pig around the barnyard while talking her dad into not butchering him for dinner. She dressed her cats up in doll clothes made from rags. She spent winters skating on the frozen pond and riding in the family sleigh listening to the bells echo across the fields. Sometimes her Dad would hitch up the horses and pull the neighbor children behind the sleigh like a long train around the fields of snow. Times were hard, but there were always memories to be made. In the springtime, Margaret collected rocks on long

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walks through the woods and would dig up wildflowers to make beautiful gardens next to the farmhouse. She pulled yellow tops from the corn fields and cared for the many farm animals. She grew to hate mice and snakes because the farmhands and her Dad would always surprise her with them at the barn. They thought it was funny, but to this day she still remembers their teasing!

As Margaret grew older she worked at many jobs. She babysat, cleaned houses, worked for the B & O Railroad, and served in the Coast Guard. Later she home schooled severely handicapped children, ran a realty business with her husband, worked in retailing, designed jewelry, and was a Judge at the election polls in Baltimore and later Montgomery Counties. She was always the neighborhood "Mom" and the one who pulled many a tooth out with the old string and the old doorknob trick! She remained active in the community and was liked by many.

Margaret grew up in the Methodist Church. She was sponsored to go to the Western Maryland's Westminster College Methodist Conference to enrich her life and study the Bible. That is where she met her husband, Burgess. She was a member of Mt. Olive Methodist Church as a child, Beechfield Methodist as a young married adult, and Arbutus Methodist in her later married years. Since 1988, Margaret has been coming to Covenant Life Church to visit and to care for her grandchildren (Tom and Cindy Ryan's kids). She has attended Celebrations, participated in church picnics, and was even part of the Covenant Life promotional video filmed at the old 4th of July picnics at Smokey Glen Farm in Darnestown. In 2002, Margaret attended Covenant Life's 25th Anniversary Celebration. While boldly responding to C.J.'s request to sing "Amazing Grace," Margaret suffered her first stroke. She was taken by ambulance from church, and her life changed drastically; however, God had bigger plans for Margaret.

Margaret moved in with her family, Tom and Cindy Ryan and the kids. She became a member of Covenant Life by going through what were then called "Journey" classes. She participated in Alpha and then went on to Beta. She studied what was new church language for her—big words like justification, sanctification, and glorification. She told stories of how she was baptized by Billy Graham and laughed as she said she did that before he was popular! Margaret made many friends in the new Covenant Life Senior Saints Ministry. She suffered several more minor strokes, and then had a big one that left her in three different facilities over a period of 72 days. She was on oxygen and on a feeding tube, but the Lord had more for Margaret! She submitted to therapy and worked hard. Friends from church and the neighborhood supported her recovery.

Today, Margaret is still full of character, bringing life and laughter to many. She is off the feeding tube, walks with a walker, and at times uses a wheelchair. She attends church regularly and hosts Care Group friends weekly in her home. She loves and supports her family and grandchildren.

Margaret Hamilton is an example of God's Grace. You can't be with her long before you notice that there's something special going on with Margaret. She knows how to love others, to love life, and to rely on God in all seasons. Margaret is a true "Senior Saint."

