



# Melissa Marie Smith

FEB 2, 1984 - FEB 22, 2025



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# Melissa Marie Smith

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**W**ith a heart full of love and resilience, Melissa Smith left this world on Saturday, February 22, 2025, at Gilchrist Hospice Care, surrounded by those who cherished her most. At just 41 years old, she faced life's greatest challenges with unwavering strength, battling Hodgkin's lymphoma twice before the age of 30 and living with the effects of transverse myelitis, which left her paralyzed from the chest down. Yet, despite the hardships she endured, Melissa was a radiant light, a beacon of hope and warmth to everyone who had the privilege of knowing her.

A proud graduate of Kent Island High School, Class of 2002, Melissa had dreams of becoming a nurse—a testament to her nurturing and selfless spirit. Before her illness, she worked tirelessly, balancing her time between working at Whiskey in Annapolis and caring for children as a dedicated nanny, putting herself through college. Her compassionate nature extended beyond her career aspirations; she lived to lift others up, even when she was in pain herself.

Melissa's love for her family knew no bounds. She leaves behind her devoted mother, Tina Willis, and her loving father, Russell "Rusty" Smith III (Paige Smith), grandparents, Chester Emrick, Russel R. Smith, JR. (Nancy Smith), as well as her siblings: Stephanie, Jennifer, and Colton Smith. Her heart belonged to her beloved 8 nieces and nephews—Brayden, whom she lovingly raised for 13 years, along with Andrew, Kane, and Willow, Khloe, Preston, Gianna and Calia—who were her greatest source of joy and strength. She also leaves behind countless aunts, uncles, cousins, friends and thousands of supporters who have followed her journey for the last 13 years. Melissa was preceded in death by her grandparents Donna and Roger Ball, and Diane Emrick.

Melissa found beauty in the simplest of joys—sunshine on her skin, the laughter of her nieces and nephews, the unconditional love of her dogs, and the sound of the ocean waves. When she was able, she thrived in CrossFit Adaptive, embracing the challenge with determination and grace. Even in her most difficult moments, she fought for those she loved, never allowing her circumstances to dim her spirit. One of the most cherished moments of her later years was



## Obituary

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feeling the ocean's embrace in Florida—her first time in the water in 13 years since her paralysis. It was a moment of peace, of freedom, of love—a reflection of the way she lived her life.

Melissa's time on earth was far too short, but her impact was immeasurable. She taught us all what it means to persevere, to love deeply, and to find light even in the darkest of times. Though she has left this world, her spirit will forever remain in the hearts of those who loved her.

Rest now, sweet Melissa. Your fight is over, but your love will live on.




# Events

**Melissa Marie Smith**

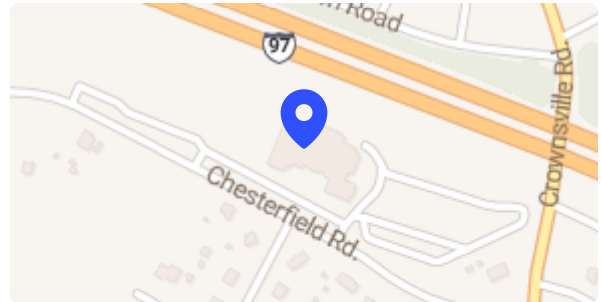
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## Visitation

 **Saturday**, March 1, 2025


 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM ET

 **Bay Area Community Church**  
884 Chesterfield Rd, Annapolis MD 21401

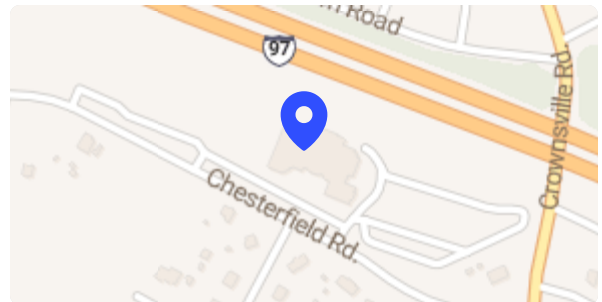


## Celebration of Life

 **Saturday**, March 1, 2025

 2:00 PM ET

 **Bay Area Community Church**  
884 Chesterfield Rd, Annapolis MD 21401





# Tribute Wall

**Melissa Marie Smith**

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AB

**Aunt Terri Britton** posted:

Miss you biss!!❤️❤️

March 13 at 11:14 PM

MD

**Mark Van Doren** sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Smith family.



March 1 at 9:53 AM

CL

**Christina Wilharm & Brian Lewandowski** sent a Florist Choice Bouquet to the Smith family.



February 28 at 10:00 AM

PC

**Paige & Candie Catlin** sent an Enchanted Cottage to the Smith family.



February 28 at 5:01 AM

LC

**Love, Kelly L, Linda R, & Cindy C** sent a Medium Dish Garden to the Smith family.



February 28 at 4:31 AM

GS

**Granny And Pop Smith** sent a Forever Our Angel Bouquet to the Smith family.



February 27 at 4:20 PM



## Tribute Wall

**Melissa Marie Smith**

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**Anonymous** sent a Country Basket Blooms to the Smith family.

February 27 at 3:16 PM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 27 at 3:16 PM



**The Camacho Family** sent an Arrive in Style to the Smith family.

February 27 at 1:17 PM



**Alisha S.** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 27 at 12:13 PM



**Stephen And Cori Woodworth** sent a Beautiful Heart Bouquet to the Smith family.

February 27 at 11:04 AM



**Stephen And Cori Woodworth** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 27 at 11:04 AM





# Tribute Wall

**Melissa Marie Smith**

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**Anonymous** sent a Your Light Shines to the Smith family.

February 27 at 10:10 AM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 27 at 10:10 AM



**Jason, Chrissy, Carson And Mckenna Clow** sent a Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet to the Smith family.

February 27 at 5:17 AM



**Jason, Chrissy, Carson And Mckenna Clow** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 27 at 5:17 AM



**The Shopf Family** sent a Gracious Lavender Basket to the Smith family.

February 27 at 4:45 AM



**The Shopf Family** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 27 at 4:45 AM





# Tribute Wall

**Melissa Marie Smith**

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**Carol** posted:

Rusty- How sad to read this news about your beautiful daughter-I am very sorry.Carol Prendergast~~

February 26 at 6:04 PM



**Anonymous** sent an Arrive in Style to the Smith family.



February 26 at 3:55 PM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.



February 26 at 3:55 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Peaceful White Lilies Basket to the Smith family.



February 26 at 8:24 AM



**Love From Mike And Trish** sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Smith family.



February 26 at 7:17 AM



**Stephanie Fila** sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Smith family.



February 26 at 5:34 AM



# Tribute Wall

**Melissa Marie Smith**

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SF

**Stephanie Fila** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 26 at 5:34 AM



DC

**Debra, Ben, & Nicholas Clark** sent a Florist Choice Bouquet to the Smith family.

February 26 at 2:27 AM



DC

**Debra, Ben, & Nicholas Clark** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 26 at 2:27 AM



JC

**Jeff Clapes** sent a Lavender Reflections Spray to the Smith family.

February 25 at 8:39 PM



JC

**Jeff Clapes** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 25 at 8:39 PM



MS

**Mike And Terri Schless** sent a Pink Potpourri Bouquet to the Smith family.

February 25 at 4:17 PM





# Tribute Wall

**Melissa Marie Smith**

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**Anonymous** sent a Treasured Lilies Spray to the Smith family.

February 25 at 3:38 PM



**Sad Chiver** sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Smith family.

February 25 at 3:30 PM



**Sad Chiver** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 25 at 3:30 PM



**The Thompson's** sent a Your Light Shines to the Smith family.

February 25 at 2:19 PM



**Anonymous** sent a Beautiful Heart Bouquet to the Smith family.

February 25 at 12:12 PM



**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 25 at 12:12 PM





## Tribute Wall

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**William Kessel** sent a Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet to the Smith family.

February 25 at 11:51 AM



**William Kessel** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 25 at 11:51 AM



**Anonymous** sent an Arrive in Style to the Smith family.

February 25 at 11:40 AM



**J** posted:

Can't thank you enough for all your help and support when I joined the wheelchair club myself. Loved our lunches or even running into each other at Target.

February 25 at 11:31 AM



**Aunt Kelly & Scott Cameron** sent an Enchanted Cottage to the Smith family.

February 25 at 11:11 AM



**Anonymous** sent a Your Light Shines to the Smith family.

February 25 at 10:45 AM





## Tribute Wall

**Melissa Marie Smith**

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**Anonymous** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 25 at 10:45 AM



**Sean & Erica Shannon** sent a Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum to the Smith family.

February 25 at 10:06 AM



**Sean & Erica Shannon** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 25 at 10:06 AM



**With Love, Gallagher/Leon Family** sent a Beautiful Heart Bouquet to the Smith family.

February 25 at 7:08 AM



**With Love, Gallagher/Leon Family** planted a Memorial Tree in honor of Melissa.

February 25 at 7:08 AM





# Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Melissa by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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