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Major General William Percy Bland, Jr USAF(Retired) passed away at home surrounded by his family on Wednesday March 18, 2020 after a short illness. General Bland was born in Statesboro, Georgia on November 26, 1936. He is a 1954 graduate of Statesboro High School and a 1959 graduate of Georgia Tech. He is the former Adjutant General for the State of Georgia and a beloved husband, father and friend.

General Bland enlisted in the Georgia Air National Guard in 1958. In 1961, he was selected for Air Force Pilot training and received his pilot's wings in August 1962 at Moody Air Force Base, GA. General Bland was assigned to the 165th Tactical Airlift Group GA. Ang. Savannah, Ga. in 1962. He served in a variety of assignments that took him all over the world and he was a command pilot with more than 8,000 hours flying time in 9 different types of aircraft. In 1987 he became the Commander of the 165th and served in that capacity until May 1987. He was

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selected to be the Deputy Commander of the Air National Guard Readiness Unit, Andrews Air Force Base, Maryland. He held this position until he returned to Georgia in 1990 to serve as Assistant Adjutant General of Air. In 1991, Governor Zell Miller appointed General Bland the Adjutant General of Georgia. As Adjutant General of Georgia, he commanded more than 13,000 National Guard forces providing security for the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games in Atlanta, Georgia. He served in the position of Adjutant General until his retirement in 1999 after more than 40 years of service in the US Air Force and Air National Guard.

Jesus Christ was the Lord and savior of Bill's life. He used the gifts the Lord gave him to lead and serve others for the glory of God. He was an active member of Wesley Monumental United Methodist Church where he served on the board of trustees for 17 years. He was on a team that developed and implemented the church master plan and chaired the church's construction project for 10 years. He served his community well as a superb handyman who was quick to volunteer for hurricane damage relief in states across the south. He was happiest with a hammer in his hands as he worked alongside his friends working with Habitat for Humanity and projects with the Methodist Mission Team.

Bill Bland's hobbies were quail hunting and in- shore fishing. He was a member of the Sons of the Revolution (past president), Rotary Club-Savannah West (past President), United Methodist Men (Past President), Sigma Chi Fraternity (Georgia Tech), Gray Eagle Society, Welsh Society, Mighty 8th Air Force Museum (Past Chairman of Board of Directors), Air Force Association, Military Order of World Wars and Men's Club of Wesley Monumental. He loved developing young leaders through Youth Challenge, Star Base and the Boy Scouts. In 1950 at the age of 13 he became an Eagle Scout and he dearly loved the Boy Scouts of America organization.

General Bland is survived by his loving wife of 57 years, Harriet Hays of Colquitt, Georgia. His two daughters, Beverly Sligh (Gordon) Athens, GA, Bonnie Spacek (Bill) Columbia, SC and four granddaughters, Hays Sligh, Greenville, SC, Larkin Spacek Dalpiaz (Nick) Greenville, SC, Nan Spacek, Clemson University and Maggie Sligh, University of Mississippi. Other surviving family members are his mother-in-law, Wattie Grimes Hays, Colquitt, GA and his brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Walter and Laura Hays of Colquitt, GA and nieces and nephew Ansley Jones, Melanie Hays and Walt Hays. He is predeceased by his parents, William Percy Bland, Sr and Nan Rushing Bland.

Special thanks to the many health care professionals, the ER Step Down Unit at Memorial Health, and Hospice Savannah for their care and kindness over the last few months and extra special thanks to his loving caregivers Betty White, Alissa Smalls and Mary Saunders who loved and cared for him. We also wish to thank Rev. Ben Martin and all the members of Wesley Monumental UMC who have loved the Bland family well through the years.

A private family burial is planned with a Celebration of Life at a later date.