



Willa M. Varner

January 31, 2026

After a period of declining health, Willa M. Varner passed away peacefully on Saturday, January 31, 2026, surrounded by loved ones. Willa was born on February 11, 1940 in Nashville, Tennessee to the late John Grimes and Willie Bea Sublett (Dunn). Although born in Nashville, she was raised in Springfield, Tennessee by the late Robert and Hattie Frye.

Willa graduated from Bradford High School and was accepted into Indiana University in Bloomington on scholarship as an Art Major but instead fell in love with a soldier boy named Harvey Varner, Sr. They were united in marriage on August 11, 1956. From that 68-year union, they had 4 precious children: Harvey, Jr., Kenneth, Cathy and Carol. Willa was a loving wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

On May 12, 1974, Willa dedicated her life alongside her late husband, to her loving God, Jehovah. At the time of her passing, Willa was a faithful servant in the Central Englewood Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. She set a fine example in the field ministry, teaching others about her loving God, Jehovah, until her health prohibited her from being present in the congregation, but she was present on Zoom, listening and praying to Jehovah. She enjoyed sharing her Godly wisdom and guidance with her children and grandchildren, many times writing letters of encouragement including one of her favorite scriptures: Proverbs 3:5 which states, "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding."

Willa was also known for her artistry, sketching photos that were displayed in

her home, and writing poems and short stories. In her poems, she liked to describe what future paradise would be like. She also loved fashion! This was evident by the amount of clothing in her closet.

Left to cherish her memories are her sons and daughters: Harvey, Jr., Kenneth (wife Myrna), Cathy Brown (husband Dana) and Carol Favor (late husband Curtis); granddaughters: Latasha Varner, Candice Stokes-Moore (Will), Charlene Stokes, Mariah Gbate (Selom) and Naomi Varner (Corry); grandson: Stefan Favor; 10 great grandchildren; siblings Jennifer Grimes, Caroline Strous (Bill), Sinceria Dumes (late husband Willie) and Kathy Peterson (Pierre), along with a host of nieces, nephews, in-laws, friends and spiritual brother and sisters. Willa was preceded in death by her parents, Hattie and Robert Frye, her beloved husband, Harvey, Sr., siblings Harold Scott, James Goodwin, Minus Sublett, Jr., Jeffrey Sublett, Carmelita Rice, Deborah Washington, Joyce Grimes and her beloved aunts Mary Grimes, Amy Gardner and Lillian Gaines.

Cemetery Details

George Washington Memorial Park

234 Paramus Road
Paramus, NJ 07652

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB 7. 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM (ET)

Volk Leber Funeral Home - Teaneck
789 Teaneck Rd
Teaneck, NJ 07666-4296
(201) 836-0202

Chapel Service

FEB 7. 12:00 PM - 12:30 PM (ET)

Volk Leber Funeral Home
789 Teaneck Road
Teaneck, NJ 07666
info@volkleber.com
<http://www.volkleber.com>

Tribute Wall



“ Volk Leber Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Willa M. Varner



Volk Leber Funeral Home - February 06 at 03:26 PM



I offer my heartfelt condolences to my family. Cathy, Carol, Harvey and Kenneth (Keke). With love Karen Terry, Springfield Tn.

Karen Terry - February 07 at 10:11 AM

AN

My deepest condolences! I only was blessed to meet and speak with her once, but she truly made me feel welcome and loved. May she rest in heavenly peace. Anthony P. Foreman

Anthony - February 07 at 10:11 AM



“ Volk Leber Funeral Home created a Webcast in memory of Willa M. Varner



Volk Leber Funeral Home - February 06 at 02:59 PM

KP

Rest in Heaven my dear sweet loving kind big sister. Love always, your little sister Kathy Peterson of Indianapolis, IN.

Kathy Peterson - February 07 at 01:00 PM

KI

Praying for our NJ family as you celebrate the life of dear Aunt Willa Mae. We love you and are grateful for the gift that was he life.

Kia - February 07 at 05:20 PM

KI

“*To our forever cherished Aunt Willa Mae, we love you. We wish that we could have had more time together throughout the years but we're grateful for the opportunities we did have with you, Uncle Harvey, and our NJ family. Family, we're with you in spirit as you celebrate the life of your beautiful mom, grandmother, great-grandmother, friend, woman of faith, and our aunt and sister. May we lean into God's comfort, strength, kindness, and peace. - Kia (Sublett & Dunn Family - Indiana & Tennessee)*

"We have this Hope as an Anchor for the soul, firm and secure." - Hebrews 6:19



Kia - February 07 at 11:36 AM

JS

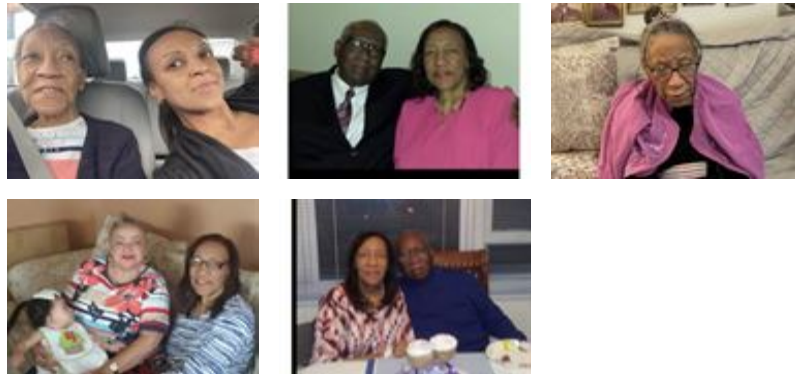
“ At the Varner’s Anniversary Party!



jerrold Sameth - February 06 at 04:05 PM



“ 113 files added to the album Life Tributes



Volk Leber Funeral Home - February 06 at 10:14 AM

TF

Willa would always soothe our souls by her good cooking, comic relief and love for God’s word. Her mildness and listening ear made us always feel safe and understood. Love, The Calderon Family.

The Calderon Family - February 06 at 06:53 PM

MP

You will be missed my big sister! But never forgotten! Forever in my heart. I love you but God loved you best. 🙏❤️🙏. Your little sister, Kathy Peterson of Indianapolis, in. 😞

Mrs. Kathy Peterson - February 07 at 10:36 AM

CB

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



cathy brown - February 06 at 09:22 AM

CM

“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



Candice Moore - February 05 at 10:41 PM

CB

“ 5 files added to the tribute wall



cathy brown - February 05 at 09:46 PM

AS

“ Years ago the Varner family became our new neighbors in Teaneck, NJ. We became close to their family very quickly. Years later, after moving out of state, I still talked with brother and sister Varner from time to time. I will always remember how Willa encouraged me and reminded me my father was only sleeping and how wonderful it was going to be to welcome him back. I will always appreciate the love and concern and the memory of our conversation will always stay with me reminding me of her faith and of the loving person she was....

Adrienne Scott - February 05 at 02:17 PM

CM

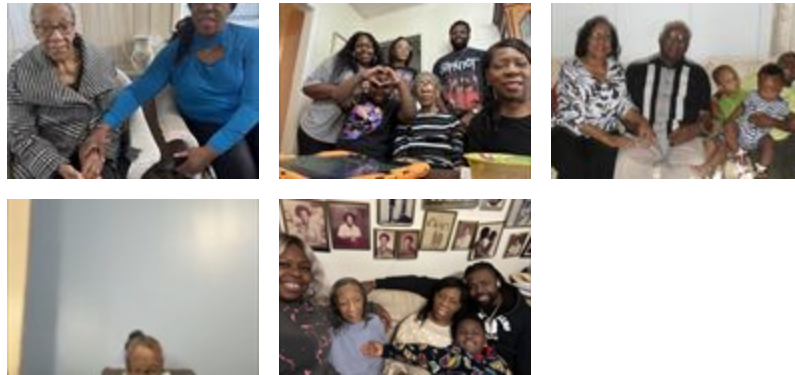
“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Candice Moore - February 05 at 12:08 PM

CM

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Candice Moore - February 05 at 12:02 PM

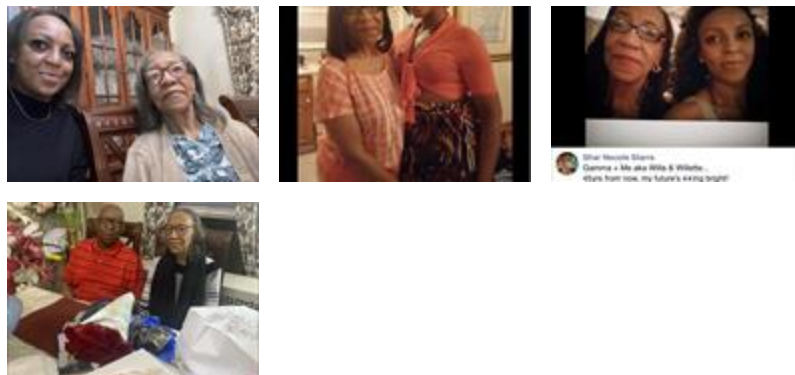
CS

“ Moments. That's all I had with her. But in those moments she filled my heart with love for her. My condolences to all my nieces, nephews and all that are left behind. Your aunt Carylou Strouse.

Carylou Strouse - February 05 at 10:48 AM

CS

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Charlene Stokes - February 05 at 10:07 AM

CS

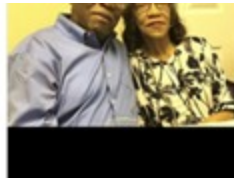
“ 14 files added to the tribute wall



Charlene Stokes - February 05 at 10:02 AM

CS

“ 12 files added to the tribute wall



Charlene Stokes - February 05 at 09:59 AM

CS

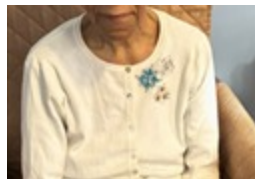
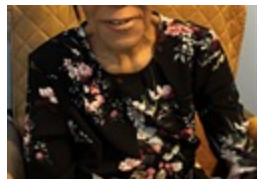
“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



Charlene Stokes - February 05 at 09:56 AM

CS

“ 6 files added to the tribute wall



Charlene Stokes - February 05 at 09:53 AM

CS

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Charlene Stokes - February 05 at 09:49 AM

MV

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Myrna Varner - February 05 at 09:48 AM

KP

Our Dear Mother along with a host of our family members has welcome her first born daughter Willa Mae to her Heavenly home. Forever loved, your little sister Kathy Peterson. Harvey Jr, Kenny, Cathy, and Carol, you all had the best parents ever. God bless you all, Auntie Kathy.

Kathy Peterson - February 07 at 01:10 PM

CS

“ 3 files added to the tribute wall



Charlene Stokes - February 05 at 09:45 AM

MV

“ 9 files added to the tribute wall



Myrna Varner - February 05 at 09:43 AM

MV

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Myrna Varner - February 05 at 09:42 AM

MV

“ 4 files added to the tribute wall



Myrna Varner - February 05 at 09:24 AM

MV

“ 8 files added to the tribute wall



Myrna Varner - February 05 at 09:16 AM

MV

“ 2 files added to the tribute wall



Myrna Varner - February 05 at 09:10 AM

MV

“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Myrna Varner - February 05 at 08:10 AM

MV

“ 18 files added to the tribute wall



Myrna M Varner - February 04 at 09:16 PM