



Shirley Mae Edwards Whitley

JAN 28, 1945 - FEB 3, 2023



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Shirley Mae Edwards Whitley went home to be with her Lord and Savior early in the morning on February 3, 2023. She was at home with her family by her side. She had just turned 78 years old a week earlier.

Shirley was born January 28, 1945 to the late Daisy Viola Baucom Edwards and Haywood Eustice Edwards. She grew up working with her family on their dairy farm in Union County, North Carolina. Even as a little girl she pulled her wagon to the road each day loaded with fresh milk ready to be picked up. As she got older she raised pigs and sold them to other farmers in the community. She learned at an early age the value of hard work. In 1963, she graduated from Piedmont High School. She loved school, especially some teachers who took her under their wing. She often spoke fondly of her high school English teacher. While she may not have realized it at the time those positive influences molded her future career.

After graduating from high school, Shirley worked alongside many other young adults in manufacturing and textiles at Allison Manufacturing Company in Stanfield. Later in life, Shirley obtained an Associates Degree in Education and began working as a Teacher's Assistant at Millingport Elementary School with the Exceptional Children's Program. She then moved to Stanfield Elementary School where she spent many years as an assistant for the 3rd grade classes with Alicia Clouse Hathcock. She recently said those years with the 3rd graders were some of the best in her career. Towards the end of her working years Shirley moved to Running Creek Elementary where she worked primarily with Kindergarteners. Her family repeatedly encouraged and she finally retired in 2008 after giving many years to Stanly County Schools.

Shirley loved volunteering in the community especially with the youth. She and her husband spent many hours helping with local youth athletics in what was once called the Goodfellows Club in Stanfield. She and her cousin, Paulette Greene, also organized the annual Stanfield School Arts and Crafts Show that raised money for the Stanfield School PTO. Even when she had given up her charge for the arts and crafts show she continued to visit yearly until 2019. She loved seeing some of the same vendors who continued to participate many years after she had left.



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Shirley loved visiting the beaches of North Carolina with her family every chance she could. She enjoyed sewing, crafting, gardening, tending to her house plants, watching the Atlanta Braves with her husband, and anything on HGTV. Shirley absolutely loved the show “Yellowstone” but wasn’t fond of the language used in it. She often referred to it as her “Cussing Show.”

Shirley enjoyed being around the people she loved. She was thrilled when her family would share meals with her, especially if it meant a trip to Wayside in Stanfield or Rocky River Springs. Creating memories was important to her.

Shirley is survived by her husband of 54 years, Tony Clayton Whitley. She is also survived by her daughters, Kimberly Whitley Page, her husband, Darryl Page of Stanfield, and Michele Whitley Smith and her husband, Tracy Smith, of Stanfield. She was the proud “Nana” to her four grandchildren, Mackenzie Page Davis (Carson), Maclayne Page, Jordan Smith, and Aiden Smith. She loved spending every free moment she had watching her grandchildren on the soccer field, at dance competitions and recitals, and playing their musical instruments. Her grandchildren were her world.

Shirley is also survived by two of the sweetest grandpups, Brody and Sadie. She loved their weekly visits especially when Brody rode with her in her wheelchair and on the lift. It was definitely something that made her smile.

Shirley was preceded in death by her siblings Edsel Edwards, Ruth Little, and most recently, Rebecca Hill who passed away in December 2022. She was the last living relative in her family.

Shirley loved her family and all things mentioned, but she loved Jesus the most. When her body no longer allowed her to attend church she still watched it online. Her church family was important to her.

Our family would like to thank Hospice of Union and the staff that served her so faithfully - Brooke, Laura, and Lani. A very special “Thank you” goes out to Ms. Kaye with Hospice. Ms. Kaye was so much more than a nurse’s assistant. She became a close friend that will never be forgotten. We are so grateful for you, Ms. Kaye.

While Shirley’s family took care of her many needs, she also had a special caregiver that helped the family several times each week. She became a third daughter, helper, and friend. We so



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appreciate Ms. Denise Digiantomaso. God put her in our lives at just the right time. The kindness she shared with our family is rare.

The family will receive friends from 1:30 PM until 2:45 PM on Friday, February 10, 2023 at Love's Grove Methodist Church located at 4360 Polk Ford Road, Stanfield, NC 28163 with the Celebration of Life service immediately following. Pastor James White will officiate the service. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

Shirley loved all things pink. The family requests that everyone in attendance on Friday wears something pink in her memory.

Memorials may be sent to Hospice of Union or to Love's Grove Methodist Church.

Stanly Funeral and Cremation Care of Locust is serving the family.






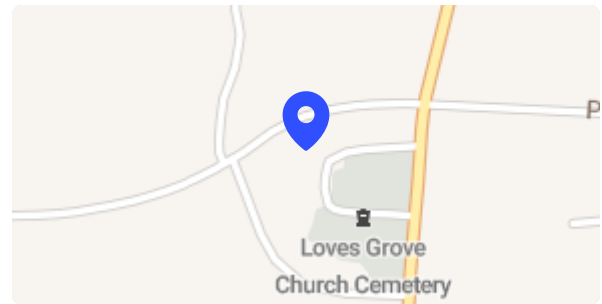
Events

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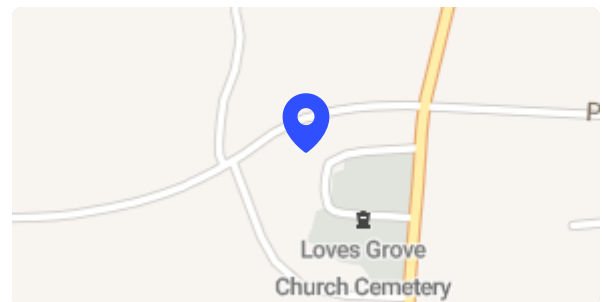
Visitation

-  **Friday**, February 10, 2023
-  1:30 PM - 2:45 PM ET
-  **Love's Grove United Methodist Church**
4360 Polk Ford Rd, , Stanfield NC 28163






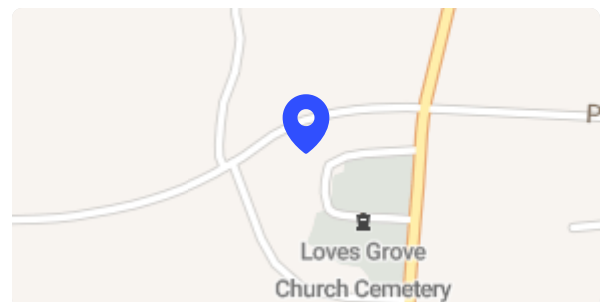
Celebration of Life

-  **Friday**, February 10, 2023
-  3:00 PM ET
-  **Love's Grove United Methodist Church**
4360 Polk Ford Rd, , Stanfield NC 28163



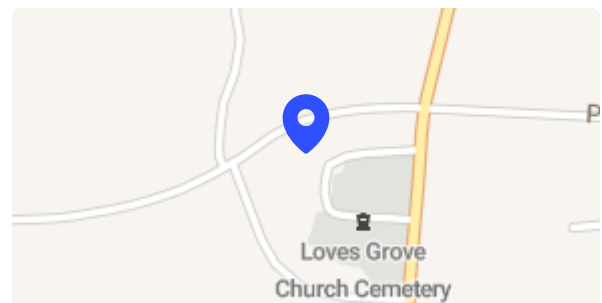
Burial

-  **Friday**, February 10, 2023
-  3:45 PM ET
-  **Love's Grove United Methodist Church Cemetery**
4360 Polk Ford Rd, , Stanfield NC 28163



Cemetery Details

-  **Love's Grove United Methodist Church Cemetery**
4360 Polk Ford Rd, , Stanfield NC 28163





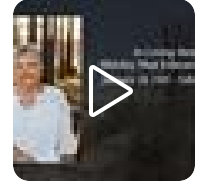
Tribute Wall

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Stanly Funeral Home shared a **Video**.



August 30 at 1:37 PM



Monica Kiker posted:

Always remember Mrs. Shirley at Stanfield Elementary growing up. Kim I am so sorry to just now hear of your mom passing. Many prayers for your entire family. Monica Turner Kiker

August 19 at 5:33 PM



Alicia C. Hathcock posted:

I have so many thoughts and memories rolling around in my head of the years Shirley and I spent working together. It's hard to choose just one...I think the clearest memory is of laughter. Shirley and I laughed together every day over classroom events, sweet comments from the kids, my habit of talking to myself as I planned the next day. She was my partner in all things and she handled every situation with such grace, love and yes, humor. Teaching is not an easy job because there are so many little details to take care of, but I always knew Shirley was there, looking out for whatever had escaped my attention. The other most important memory was love. Shirley brought love to my classroom, for the children we worked with every day and for myself. She was passionate about the learning and would drop anything if a child asked for help. I loved that about her! A bulletin board could always be delayed, but helping a child solve a problem was the reason we were there. My heart is so full of emotions for the Whitley family, sorrow for their loss certainly, but joy, too. We were all so blessed to have known and loved Shirley. My wish is that we can find comfort in the love and memories we share. Rest in peace, dear friend. You were/are loved so much.

February 9 at 4:24 AM



Gary And Alicia Hathcock sent a Pink Potpourri Bouquet to the Whitley family.



February 9 at 4:02 AM



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Amber Hall posted:

Sweet Mrs Shirley! I helped take care of her at the doctors office for many years! She was definitely one of my favorites! She always had a smile no matter what! She will be missed!

February 8 at 5:17 PM



Staff At Stanly Early College sent an Emerald Garden Basket to the Whitley family.



February 8 at 3:59 AM



David Fisher lit a candle in honor of Shirley.



February 7 at 4:40 PM



Anonymous sent an Arrive in Style to the Whitley family.



February 7 at 6:31 AM



Anonymous sent a Pink Tribute Spray to the Whitley family.



February 7 at 6:24 AM



Anonymous sent a Country Basket Blooms to the Whitley family.



February 7 at 5:33 AM



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Heather Whitley posted:

Aunt Shirley- humanly and selfishly we wanted to keep you however, we are so grateful God has healed you and made you whole again. We are so happy knowing you are United with Jesus and all of your family that left earth side. You were such a comforting soul to be around and always kept a smile on that beautiful youthful face. Thank you for loving myself and my children as you did. We sure do love you and know you await for all of us. To Uncle Tony and Kim and Michelle, she lives on in all that you are and do. I love you all.

February 7 at 1:38 AM



Media

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Stanly Funeral Home shared a Video.

August 30 at 1:37 PM





Memories only last if you share them

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



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