



*Frances Coffey
Whisnant*

Feb. 2, 1938 - Nov. 14, 2025

Frances Coffey Whisnant, lovingly known as “Maw Maw” or “Ed,” passed away on November 14, 2025, at the age of 87. She was born on February 2, 1938—Groundhog Day—in Morganton, North Carolina, to Nanny Mooney Coffey and Roy Vester Coffey. Frances was the oldest of seven children and is survived by her sister, Brenda Polson (Buster); and brother-in-law, Bill.

She graduated from Morganton High School in 1956 and married the love of her life, Worth Sherrill Whisnant Jr., on December 22 of that same year. They shared 53 beautiful years of marriage until his passing in 2009.

Frances was the devoted mother of three daughters—Debbie, Dianne (Tim), and Sandy (David)—and the proud grandmother of five grandchildren: four granddaughters, Angie (Zeb), Kelly (Matt), Megan, and Lauren (Brandon), and one grandson, Alex. She was also blessed with seven great-grandchildren whom she cherished deeply: Cason, Garrett, Wyatt, Adelia, Kaeson, Harlow, and Axl.

Throughout her career, Frances worked in several roles, including at Freedom High School and Henredon Furniture, where she dedicated 22 years before retiring in 2000. In recent years, she worked at Debbie’s Embroidery doing alterations, becoming well-loved for her craftsmanship, kindness, and loyal customer relationships.

Frances joyfully served her faith community at Oak Hill United Methodist Church. She volunteered in the nursery, where she rocked and soothed generations of babies, and she was an active member of the Knitwits ministry. Her hands created more than 300 prayer shawls and lap robes, along with countless hats, scarves, and baby items that brought warmth to those in need. Even while she was battling and ultimately beating cancer, she continued to serve others—most memorably knitting a prayer shawl for the doctor who cared for her throughout her treatment.

Her hobbies included knitting, crocheting, sewing, reading, gardening—growing the best tomatoes and pickling the most delicious okra—traveling, and cherishing time with her family. Whether in the mountains, around her oval dining room table, or gathered under her carport, she filled every space with her constant steadfastness and her warm, steady, and kind presence.

Frances was the matriarch and the glue of her family. Her absence will be deeply felt, but her legacy of love, strength, and faith will carry forward as her family continues raising the next generations.

The family will receive friends from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m., Monday, November 17, 2025 at Oak Hill United Methodist Church. The funeral will follow at noon in the church with Rev. Adam Love and Rev. April Abernethy officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery. In honor of Frances' lifelong ministry of knitting and crocheting, the family invites anyone who has received a prayer shawl, lap blanket, baby blanket, or any handmade item she created over the years to bring it to the service. These items will be lovingly displayed on the back of the pews as a visual celebration of her hands, her craftsmanship, and the countless lives she comforted and touched through her gifts.

Sossoman Funeral Home and Crematory Center is assisting the family with the arrangements.

Tribute Wall

It has been a while since I have had any contact with Francis but she was always a special friend and I was so envious that she could travel and knit. She could almost finish a sweater while going to the beach. Worth and Bob worked together for so long and our families had many good times camping at the lake. Many precious memories. Sorry to hear of your loss but Heavens gain.

–Louise Byyd

I just saw that Frances passed and wanted to let the family know that I'm very sad to hear that news. I worked with Frances at Henredon Furniture and we became friends and crochet partners. We shared crochet patterns and helped each other learn a new afghan. Frances was always pleasant to be with and always very encouraging and her smile was a delight! We enjoyed lunch time bringing our new or finish product for one another to see. I'm sure you have lost a jewel in your family circle because she was just that. A jewel. You have my condolences.

–Belinda Thomas Vinson

Dearest Diane and family, Jeff and I are so sorry to hear about your mother's passing. She was such a beautiful person inside and out. I'll never forget her from Oak Hill United Methodist Church; she was always so friendly and so welcoming. And her Prayer Shawl's Ministry is such a beautiful legacy.

–Becky Smith

So sorry to hear of Frances passing she was a really good friend and co worker I never heard her speak ill of anyone she will be greatly missed Judy Johnson

–Judy Johnson

To the family. I just learned about Frances death. I am so sorry to hear this. She was such a sweet person. I met her at the Senior Center!

–Dawn ropery



Prayers for your family. She was one of the finest Christian ladies I know!

–Tammy and Scotty Chapman

Francis and that big, beautiful smile. Always greeted me with that smile. She mended my daughter's special blanket that her Yah-Yah made when she was born. When we picked the blanket up Francis showed us how she did a special stitch for extra support. I love that her hands are part of that blanket Beautiful and kind women. Sending our love and prayers to all of you

–Angie Benfield Chase



Francis taught me how to crochet a few new things and I enjoy spending time with her. I remember she made little slippers for babies.

–Delores Curfman



Frances was a wonderful lady, always thoughtful and kind. Your whole family are in our prayers and thoughts. Sending



lots of love from down the road.

–Karen, Kasey, Jesse, and little Dean

Debbie and all of the family: I am so very sorry for your loss. I just saw her at Mt Grove so I'm so surprised because she looked so good. I'm glad I got the chance to speak with her. You will all be in my thoughts and prayers.

–Deborah Robinson



Dear family of Frances. I am no longer in Morganton but please know my heart is with you. I grew up in Hopewell Baptist Church and knew Frances basically all of my life. I also work with her many years at Henredon. I always had a special love for her. She was a great lady. I know you were truly miss her. Sending my love, Sandra Hipps Childs.

–Sandy Childs

Mrs Whisnant was a Friend to me !! lived on Avery Rd we walked to School some days when it was very cold she would stop and give me a Ride in her Red Station Wagon Sending Condolences to the Family may God Strengthen you in Your Time of loss

–Wanda Avery Davis



My heartfelt condolences to Frances's family. She was a very special lady to all who crossed paths with her especially me

–Terry Smith

My sincere sympathies to Frances's family. I always enjoyed talking to her at the

beauty shop each week. She was a lovely person that I know will be missed by her family and friends. My prayers are with you all!

–Janet Kirby



Dianne, Debbie & Sandy, I'm so sorry to hear about the passing of your Mother. I remember her from Freedom High School, she always had a smile on her face. Prayers for each of you and your family in the coming days.

–Patsy Simpson