



Kimberlee "Kim" Watts

Aug. 15, 1954 - Jan. 19, 2026

Kimberlee "Kim" Watts, 71, of Morganton, NC, passed away Monday, January 19, 2026.

Born in California on August 15, 1954, she was the daughter of the late Joe Bowen and Zena Belle Bowen.

Kim was an active member of North Morganton United Methodist Church. She graduated from Salem High School and worked at Broughton Hospital for many years as an x-ray tech. After Broughton, she began the first sonography program in North Carolina at Caldwell Community College, from which she retired. Kim was an avid football fan and enjoyed all sports.

She was a wonderful friend to many and was known for her kindness and compassion. Her favorite thing in the world was being a Mimi.

Those left to cherish her memory include her daughter, Dr. Natalie Whitaker (Keith); grandchildren, Chase Whitaker, Ava Whitaker, Lance Watts, and Justin Watts; daughter-in-law, Amie Watts.

In addition to her parents, Kim was preceded in death by her son, Neil Watts.

The graveside service will be held at 12 p.m. Saturday, January 24, 2026 at Burke

The graveside service will be held at 12 p.m., Saturday, January 24, 2026 at Burke Memorial Park with Rev. David Rorie officiating. A celebration of Kim's life will be held at 1 p.m., Saturday, February 7, 2026 at Kim's home.

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

Tribute Wall

I will always remember Kim's kindness shown to me while in the cardiovascular ultrasound program at CCC&TI. She knew her stuff for sure. Rest in the arms of Jesus Kim. Lisa Bryant

—Lisa Bryant



—Brittney Ruddy

Dr. Whitaker, you and your family will be in my prayers. Im so sorry

—Tammy O Beane

To say Kim was amazing is an understatement. She poured her heart into every student in the sonography program at CCC&TI. I was lucky enough to be one of those students. Kim molded so many of the practicing sonographers in this state into who they are today. She was kind, patient and had the absolute best laugh/smile that would brighten your day. She left so many great memories with every student she had over the years . I am so sorry for your loss and will be praying for comfort.

—Heather Clontz

At the graveside today I wanted to say something as everyone there had thoughts and desire to verbally express them. If they had we would have been there until dark. Kim Watts was the epitome of LOVE. Take all the adjectives to describe LOVE and you would have Kim as she served her Lord!

—John Suttle

Natalie, I'm so sorry to hear of your mother's passing. I was a student of hers and thought the world of her and your family.

—Tammy Temple



Natalie and family I am so very sorry for your loss of your wonderful mother and grandmother. She was such a precious person as my sonography instructor and my friend. I haven't seen her in years but have never forgotten her sweet soul and the impact she had on my life and career. Love and prayers to you and your family

—Erica Greene



—Marsha Crump

Natalie you know how much your mother loved. You. Was so supportive of your high school academic and Basketball years. You were blessed to have a wonderful mom. She supported your college career and what a great dental practice.

—Marsha Crump

Dear Natalie, I am so very, very sorry for your terrible loss in the passing of your mother. Sending many prayers to you and your family@ Lynne Hallyburton

—Lynne B. Hallyburton



Kim was such a influence in my life for the good. She encouraged me as a student and always gave good advice. Kim also pushed me to apply for the ultrasound director when she was retiring and encouraged me and offered assistance when I began the job. We remained friends and it is a friendship I valued. She will be greatly missed. Praying for all of you.

—Robin Nichols

Kim was the best. She touched so many lives and built a foundation of impressive sonographers, now walking in her footsteps. Her accomplishments were great, but her heart was greater. She never gave up on people, just urged them to keep trying. I absolutely loved her and I am proud to say she had a vital impact on my life and career. I am so sorry for your loss and no words can ease the pain, but stand strong in faith .

—Dara Punch

I met Kim 46 years ago in lamaze class. I fondly remember her beautiful smile and kindness to each person in the class. We became friends and shared wonderful conversations over meals, as young mothers. Even though we lost touch over the years, I was always so happy to read of her accomplishments as a teacher at Caldwell Community College and most importantly as a Christian mother, grandmother, and friend! Please accept my sincere condolences.

—Susan Pollpeter



Kim was such a lovely, gracious person. She was patient and so very kind. As one of her sonography students, I also saw how brilliant she was as a teacher. She went above and beyond to help her students and her intelligence was amazing! She will be missed by so many...

—Christy Day



Kim was my teacher in the Ultrasound program in the early nineties. She was a great mentor and teacher. She left her mark on everyone she taught. Prayers to the family.

—Cindy Trivett



Deeply saddened by the loss of Kim. She was an extraordinary educator who shaped so many lives with her wisdom and kindness. Kim's legacy lives on in the students she inspired. My heart goes out to her family and friends during this difficult time."

—Sierra Moore



Kim was one of the two greatest sonography instructors ever. I called her and Jane Wilson the dynamic duo. They wouldn't allow you to give up. They pushed you to persevere and succeed. Kim was one of the most intelligent people I know. Her compassion and kindness made you love her. And I do love her very much. We met in 1999 as student and instructor (professor) and the relationship grew into a friendship that lasted decades for which I am forever grateful for. I will cherish the lunches, the conversations and being in her presence. I'm glad she doesn't have to suffer any longer. Rest in peace my .

—Michelle Logan Williamson



First I just wanted to say I'm sorry for your loss. I didn't get to meet her but I heard a lot about Mimi. She seemed like such an amazing person and I wish I could've at least introduced myself. Y'all are a strong family, Y'all got this!! I love you Ava. Like I always say...Keep going!!

—Amore Connelly



—Cary Zimmerman



Dear Natalie. I'm so sorry to hear about the passing of your mother. My condolences to you and your family. Sending love and peaceful thoughts

—Tamala Lane



Natalie and Family, We are so sorry to hear of your mother's passing. Please know that all of you are in our prayers. May God continue you in the coming days.

—Erica Mathies



My heart breaks for the family I am truly sorry for your loss. . Kim was the best most caring teacher at Caldwell community College. She taught Physics. I was an older student and scared and wanted to give up but Kim



student and scared and wanted to give up but Kim encouraged me to never give up. I graduated and worked until my retirement two years ago. I will never forget Kim.

—Claudia Forte



Sorry to hear about the loss of our Salem School class mate 1972. Heaven has gained a sweet and kind Angel. Prayers for Family and friends. From Rachel Causby Morgan.

—Rachel Causby Morgan



I'm so sorry for your loss Natalie! You are in my thoughts and prayers!

—Regina Ledford

Dr. Natalie, I am SO very sorry to read this. You & yours are in my heart & prayers, for sure. Love, Lucy Goodwin

—Lucy Goodwin



—LAURA McCOY

We had attended church with Kim previously. She always had the sweetest smile

and gentle spirit. Heaven has gained an angel and Kim will be missed by all who knew her. Tim and Phyllis Wilson

—Phyllis wilson



Natalie & Family, Our hearts are so sad and broken for the loss of your mom. She was the dearest friend in this world to me and I'm not sure how to navigate life without her. You are strong just like she was but I know the loss is devastating. I am comforted knowing she is in her new heavenly home and we will see her and celebrate with her again. Please know we are here for you.

—Gina& Marshall Ruppard