



## Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN)

January 10, 1956 - August 25, 2025

Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater, 69, passed away Monday, August 25, 2025.

Loretta was a member of Community Temple Free Methodist Church and a graduate of Louisville Male High School Class of 1974. She also graduated from Eastern Kentucky University Class of 1978. Loretta retired from Travelers Insurance Company in 2021. She was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Eta Omega Chapter, and several line dancing groups.

She is survived by her mother, Lucille Cunningham; siblings, Virenda Cunningham-Lester, Tyrone E. Cunningham and Geraldine Baxter-Crittenden (Robert); nephews, Michael O. Baxter II and Terrence E. Lester; nieces, Makayla L. Baxter and Zoe' L. Baxter; great nephews, Michael O. Baxter III and Malik Solis, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Visitation: 5pm-8pm Friday, September 12, 2025 at Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church, 4033 Vermont Ave. Funeral: 11am Saturday, September 13, 2025 at the church. Burial: 12pm Monday, September 15, 2025 in Cave Hill Cemetery.

# Cemetery Details

## Cave Hill Cemetery

Louisville, KY 40206

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 12. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church  
4033 Vermont Ave.  
Louisville, KY 40211

## Service

SEP 13. 11:00 AM (ET)

Oak Grove Missionary Baptist Church  
4033 Vermont Ave.  
Louisville, KY 40211

# Tribute Wall

F'

“ From your Sands, your Alpha Brothers '06 purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).



---

**From your Sands, your Alpha Brothers '06** - September 12, 2025 at 06:52 PM

EW

“ Esther W. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).

---

**Esther W.** - September 11, 2025 at 09:03 PM

JC

“ My heart is saddened. Loretta is one of my very first friends. We met at Shawnee Jr. High. Our journey through life went from Shawnee, to Male High and then Eastern Kentucky University. We shared some of the same classes, enjoyed serving together in organizations, drill team, honor societies and pledging Alpha Kappa Alpha Inc. as line sisters. That's over 50 years. Rest in peace my friend, my sister. May God grant comfort and peace for your family. And, may we all cherish your memory always.

---

**Joyce Cunningham-Bibb** - September 10, 2025 at 12:38 PM

GI

“ TO : FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND SORORS:  
*I am Gloria Jean Irvin one of Loretta oldest, dearest friend and Soror. Loretta and I started our everlasting relationship at Eastern Ky. University majoring in the same academic program ( Social Work ). We both pledge Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc the same year ( Zeta Nu Chapter) . After graduation at ECU we maintain our friendship . I was one of her attendee in her wedding party. We started my love and her love in line dancing. I was so excited of her line dancing skills and abilities she taught classes at my church , First Gethsemane Life Center for many years. We stood together at sorority convention , April 2025 receiving our Golden Award (50 years of service of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc I will miss you Loretta , Save a Dance for me.*

GLORIA J IRVIN - September 10, 2025 at 11:11 AM

TS

“ *Tim Blakey, Mychal Donaldson Sr planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).*

Tim Blakey, Mychal Donaldson Sr - September 10, 2025 at 10:53 AM

TS

“ *Tim Blakey, Mychal Donaldson Sr purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).*



Tim Blakey, Mychal Donaldson Sr - September 10, 2025 at 10:53 AM

KB

“ Loretta was my 2nd best friend in high school. Other than her lovely smile and beautiful personality, what I remember most is when she drove us in my boyfriend's car to a football game. Loretta bumped another Car while parking. We laughed and was nervous about the accident. We never crossed paths since then, yes, a long time. To the family, cherish the memories which will help you process this difficult time. Geraldine, take care and trust God.

Karen Whaley Brown - September 08, 2025 at 09:19 PM



“ Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).



September 08, 2025 at 02:15 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).

September 08, 2025 at 02:15 PM



“ Serene Retreat was purchased for the family of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).



September 07, 2025 at 08:14 PM

DC

“ Duanne H Cooper planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).

Duanne H Cooper - September 05, 2025 at 04:24 PM

DC

“ Duanne H Cooper purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Loretta Jean Cunningham-Gillenwater (DOWNTOWN).



Duanne H Cooper - September 05, 2025 at 04:24 PM

RL

“ 1 file added to the album AKA



Ruth Lynch - September 02, 2025 at 05:45 PM

CB

“ I am saddened to hear of the passing of a classmate. It is my deepest hope that her family and loved ones are comforted by the knowledge that she has been remembered by so many for a life well lived

Clarence Bland - August 27, 2025 at 11:44 PM

GE

*I'm sorry to learn of Loretta's passing. Praying strength for her family and loved ones.*

---

**Genetra** - August 29, 2025 at 01:23 PM

DE

*I am saddened to hear of the death of a bright, intelligent student I was honored to teach at Louisville Male High School. Loretta was an intellectual light and I was privileged to be a small part of her education. Sincere condolences to the entire Cunningham-Gillenwater Family.*

*Dr. John W. Roberts, Ed.D.  
Cedar Falls, Iowa*

---

**Dr. John W. Roberts, Ed.D.** - September 02, 2025 at 09:33 AM

RL

*A link in our sisterhood line is broken, yet our love remains unbroken. Loretta will always be remembered for her kindness, her gentleness and the beautiful spirit she shared with us all. May her legacy continue to inspire and uplift us, "The Dynamite Eight." Sending prayers and condolences to the family, sorority sisters, and the many lives she touched.*

---

**Ruth Lynch** - September 02, 2025 at 05:50 PM

HG

*Praying for family, friends and sorority sisters. She was a bright light. She is in Heaven teaching line dancing.*

---

**Henri Etta Gray** - September 03, 2025 at 08:52 AM

MT

*My daughter Mariam and I were in Sonny Baker's dance fitness classes with Loretta for several years. She often assisted Sonny with teaching the steps and routines. Like Sonny, Loretta was a great mentor when it came to dancing. Mariam and I extend our condolences to her family.*

*Meryl Thornton and Mariam Williams*

---

**Meryl Thornton** - September 07, 2025 at 06:37 PM

CA

*my firend*

---

**carlos** - September 09, 2025 at 10:14 AM

EW

*Her beautiful smile will be missed. She loved others with her whole heart. This is especially true for her little nephew who was the love of her life. I send heartfelt condolences to my AKA line sister Virenda and the entire family. May God grant you comfort during this difficult time*

*Esther Whittlesey*

---

**Esther Whittlesey** - September 11, 2025 at 08:58 PM