



Deborah Hayden Cooke

February 18, 1953 - January 12, 2026

Deborah Hayden Cooke, age 72, passed away peacefully on January 12, 2026. She was born on February 18, 1953, and lived a life marked by devotion to family, service to others, and quiet strength.

Deborah attended Jessamine County High School and went on to further her education at Eastern Kentucky University. During her college years, she became a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., an organization that reflected her commitment to sisterhood, service, and leadership.

Following her education, Deborah served as a Home Economics teacher at Jessamine County Middle School, where she shared practical life skills and discipline with her students.

On October 16, 1976, Deborah married the love of her life, Ralph Cooke, who preceded her in death. Together they shared a deep bond and later welcomed into their home, their son, Justin Cooke, who also preceded her in death. Despite profound loss, Deborah carried herself with grace and resilience.

Deborah lived for many years in suburban Atlanta, Georgia, where she worked as a caterer and a real estate agent. She was known for her warmth, attention to detail, and ability to bring people together through food and fellowship. In 1995, she returned to Lexington, Kentucky, to lovingly care for her mother, a role she embraced with dedication and compassion.

She was a proud grandmother to Ja'Nyha Gates and Treasure Justine Cooke,

Deborah was preceded in death by her parents, Mexico and Bernice Hayden; her husband, Ralph Cooke; her son, Justin Cooke; and her brother, Ronnie Hayden.

She is survived by her brothers: Mexico Hayden (married to the late Gwen Hayden), Bruce Hayden (married to Gail Hayden), and Darrell Hayden (married to Jacqueline Hayden), Aunts Nellie Cooke Shobe, (Tommy) Rosetta Cooke Johnson, Dollie Cooke Brents, (along with her granddaughters Ja'Nyha Gates and Treasure Justine Cooke, host of extended family members and friends who will cherish her memory.

Deborah will be remembered for her kindness, loyalty to family, and the quiet but lasting impact she made on everyone who knew her. Her legacy lives on in the lives she touched and the love she gave so freely.

Previous Events

Funeral Service

JAN 17. 1:00 PM (ET)

East Maple Street Christian
223 East Maple Street
Nicholasville, , KY

Visitation is 11:00 AM

Tribute Wall

YK

“ I am so sorry to learn of Deborah’s transition. She was such a beautiful woman of God. My deepest condolences to her family. 🙏



Yolonda Kelsor - January 18 at 06:31 PM

MF

“ Sorry to hear about the passing of Deborah. She was a Beautiful Women of God. We grew up together. She was always a sweet and kind person. Praying for the family at this time.

Maxine Franklin - January 18 at 08:02 AM

JB

“ My condolences to Buster, Daryl and Bruce and family ☐

Jo Mae Bradshaw - January 16 at 05:36 PM

RG

“ What a beautiful woman inside and out. She was a true example of Christian love. She's home now, and I celebrate her life.

Rev. Debra Gray - January 16 at 03:41 PM