



Karen Coons

August 4, 1943 - June 11, 2026

Karen VanAernam Coons of Tallahassee, Florida was greeted by her Heavenly Father on June 11, 2026.

Karen was born in Dexter, Iowa on August 4, 1943 as the youngest, and only daughter, of Frankie and Viola VanAernam. At four years old, her family moved from Iowa and made a home in Old Town, Florida. She graduated from Dixie County High School and moved to Orlando, Florida to attend Jones Business College. After graduation, she worked in Dr. Cole's office as a medical receptionist. She met her husband, Eugene "Gene" Coons in Orlando and in 1964 they married.

They had two daughters, Kerri Lynn Coons and Kristen Lee Coons. In 1978, they moved to Newberry, Florida where Gene was pastor at Oak Dale Baptist Church. Karen was the consummate first lady of the church and a homemaker. She continued this support when Gene entered into evangelism and often traveled with him. In 1994, the Lord called them to serve at Hope Baptist Church, in Theresa, Florida. They served there for over 14 years. Throughout their ministry, they developed strong friendships that held steadfast throughout the years.

In 2008, they retired and moved to Cross City, Florida. After Gene passed away in 2018, Karen eventually moved to Tallahassee, Florida and built a tiny

home built onto her daughter's home. While she maintained her life-long friends, she developed strong friendships in the Tallahassee neighborhood. She spent lots of time with her grand-dogs and spoiled them rotten (cutting up carrots for their lunch and making birthday dog treats)!

First and foremost, Karen loved the Lord. She also enjoyed spending time with her family, church family, friends, sewing and gardening. Karen always had a kind word and smile for everyone. In the biblical sense, she was a "Martha" in this world – always preferred to be behind the scenes serving others, helping and making sure everyone was taken care of in a proper manner. This was her way of serving the Lord.

She was quiet at first, but if you were lucky, she would dazzle you with her sense of humor – you might miss it if you weren't paying attention – she was quick-witted but in a quiet manner. Karen loved to talk to people and get to know them – if she found out you had a need for something, she would try to solve that problem for you.

Karen is survived by her daughter Kristen Lee Coons of Tallahassee, Florida; nephews Frankie VanAernam (Tammie), Wayne-o VanAernam (Karen), Kimbo VanAernam (Katrina) all of Cross City, Florida ; nieces Tina VanAernam (Wendell) of Cross City, Florida; Mary Beth Klemish (Donnie) and Susan Klemish (Dale) both of Runnells, Iowa; bonus granddaughter Alexis McRae Tripp (Jessica) of Eastman, Georgia; and two generations of great-nieces and nephews and numerous friends who became family. Karen was pre-deceased in death by her husband of 54 years, Eugene "Gene" Virgil Coons, her daughter Kerri Lynn Coons, her parents Frankie William and Viola VanAernam, her eldest brother Jack VanAernam and her middle brother Eugene "Gene" VanAernam (affectionally called "Johnson" by Karen) and her 'recently reconnected with' cousin Mary Kaye Klemish of Adair, Iowa after approximately 40 years of losing touch.

Funeral services for Karen will be held 11:00 am, Saturday June 20, 2026 at New Prospect Baptist Church, with Brother Joey Hay officiating. Interment will follow at New Prospect Cemetery with Brother Frankie VanAernam officiating.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to your church, favorite charity or pay it forward to someone in need (be the hands and feet of Jesus). Or consider donating to Gary Bowlin Evangelistic Association, Inc., P.O. Box 869, Summit, MS 39666 – his family is involved in evangelic ministry and serves as missionaries in Romania.

Arrangements have been placed under the care of Rick Gooding Funeral Home Cross City Chapel, with locations in Cross City 352-498-5400 and Chiefland 352-493-0050. Please sign the online guest book at rickgoodingfuneralhomes.com

Cemetery Details

Summerville / New Prospect Cemetery

220 SE 571 Street
Old Town, FL 32680

Upcoming Events

Service

JUN 20. 11:00 AM (ET)

New Prospect Baptist Church
220 New Prospect Rd
old town, FL 32608