



## John Willis Cochran

June 16, 1939 - March 9, 2023

Reverend John Willis Cochran, 83, of Blairsville, GA went to meet his Savior on Thursday, March 9, 2023 after an extended illness.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Ouida Thornton Cochran, three children, Sheila Loy (Frank), Michael Cochran (Lisa), and Mitchell Cochran (Marcia), eight grandchildren, Joshua Cochran (Vickie), Amy Markham, (Lance), Kaitie Sprengle (Lake), Corbin McDavitt, Andrew Cochran (Celeste), Evan Cochran (Jaden), Anna Bryce Cochran, and Seth Cochran. He and his wife are also blessed with 7 great-grandchildren, and a host of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his mother, May Bell Hayes Cochran, father, Ulvie Cochran and five sisters.

Reverend Cochran loved Laurel, moving here when he was 6 years old. He graduated from George S. Gardener High School in 1957. He then worked as a butcher in Laurel until he received the call to ministry in 1964. He then went on to William Carey College where he graduated with a degree in English while serving as a pastor in Ellisville, Stringer, and Ovet. After completing his Bachelor's degree, he went to seminary at the Candler School of Theology at Emory University where he received a Master's of Divinity degree. He was ordained a full elder in the United Methodist Church in 1979. He returned to Mississippi where he served churches all over the state until his retirement in 2014. He continued to fill pulpits as needed for several years. Reverend

Cochran served as a minister in the United Methodist Church for over 50 years. He also served his Lord in the community as a baseball coach, high school English teacher, and counselor to many young people.

He loved old movies, Andy Griffith, and watching Mary Poppins with his grand and great-grandchildren, who will tell you he was “practically perfect in every way”. He loved to ride around Laurel and reminisce about the town where he grew up. He loved and cared for his wife and his family. But most of all he loved the Lord, and shared that with everyone he met. He will be missed by his family, his friends and his former parishioners everywhere.

Visitation will be at Memory Chapel Funeral Home on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 from 5 until 7 p.m. The funeral service will be held at West Laurel United Methodist Church on Thursday, March 16th at 2:00 p.m. with interment to follow at Antioch United Methodist Church Cemetery. Rev. Richard Williams will officiate.

To sign the online guest book, visit [www.memorychapellaurel.com](http://www.memorychapellaurel.com).

“No life can surpass that of a man who quietly continues to serve God in the place where providence has placed him.” C.H. Spurgeon

# Cemetery Details

## Antioch United Methodist Church Cemetery

845 Lower Myrick Road  
Laurel, MS 39443

# Previous Events

## Visitation

MAR **15**. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Memory Chapel Funeral Home  
3100 Audubon Drive  
P. O. Box 674  
Laurel, MS 39440  
(601) 428-5235  
memorychapel@comcast.net  
<https://www.memorychapel-laurel.com/>

## Funeral Service

MAR **16**. 2:00 PM (CT)

West Laurel United Methodist Church  
523 N 14th Ave  
Laurel, MS 39440

# Tribute Wall

SC

“ To the family of Rev. Cochran, We are like another couple that posted a sweet message concerning Rev.Cochran...he also married my husband & myself over 50 years ago & we are still together too...so very sorry & saddened to have read of his passing...a very sweet & kind man. Someone we will always remember. Keeping you in thought & prayer.

Love,  
Shelton & Rhonda Cooley

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Shelton & Rhonda Cooley - March 17, 2023 at 07:09 PM

JE

“ A kind, caring and Godly man. We worshipped together at Parkview Baptist Church in Laurel, Ms. early on.



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Jan Ellzey - March 15, 2023 at 06:48 PM



“ Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.



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March 15, 2023 at 02:25 PM



“ *Dreams From the Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.*



March 15, 2023 at 01:44 PM



“ *Charity Steel Corporation purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of John Willis Cochran.*



**Charity Steel Corporation** - March 15, 2023 at 11:27 AM



“ *Florist Choice Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.*



March 15, 2023 at 07:40 AM



“ *Ms. Ouida, sure hate to hear that Willis has gone on to his forever home. Sure did love this great man, a true friend. Call me sometime, would love to hear from you. Sheila Shepherd passed the same day. She worked with us as well at Ramada. May God bless you and keep you. Phone is 662-841-0481 and 662-321-8583. Love to you and your family. ❤️*

**Doris Simmons-Cimon** - March 15, 2023 at 07:32 AM

CM

“ When Willis was mobile, Frank would bring Willis to the men's Bible study at First UMC of Union County, Blairsville, Georgia. I would lead the study and Willis would add wonderful words about the love of Jesus. He frequently added very thoughtful and meaningful words to conclude the day's study. I really valued his loving comments.

*Rev. Chuck Morgan*

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**Chuck Morgan** - March 15, 2023 at 07:22 AM

FR

*Pastor Chuck, Sheila and I as well as Ouida are so thankful for all your prayers and visitation to Willis during his illness. He cherished all his friends and had a special place in his heart for those that gave their life helping to win others to Christ.*

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**Frank** - March 22, 2023 at 07:10 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.



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March 14, 2023 at 10:17 PM

RW

“ Our prayers are with you, Ouida, and all your family. We pray the Lord will comfort you and sustain you in His strength in the loss of Bro. Willis now and in the days ahead as only He can do. Bro. Willis was a treasured friend, as are you, and we will miss him too so much. He was a faithful servant of the Lord who was an example to all who knew him. We love you.

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**Rev. and Mrs. Richard Williams** - March 14, 2023 at 08:45 PM

MB

“ We’ve enjoyed Mitch’s “about my Dad” sermon filler stories & know that Rev. John Willis’ beautiful legacy will carry on....  
With love to all, Jimmy & Marsha Barber

Marsha & Jimmy Barber - March 14, 2023 at 08:09 PM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.



March 14, 2023 at 08:03 PM



“ Crystal Cross Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.



March 14, 2023 at 06:43 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.



March 14, 2023 at 05:56 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.*



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March 13, 2023 at 10:00 PM



“ *Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of John Willis Cochran.*



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March 13, 2023 at 06:18 PM



“ *Bro Cochran will always be close to my heart.. He married Gerald and I over 50 years ago and we are still together... I came to know Jesus as my Savior while he served Fairfield UMC because of his love and guidance.... Love yall.... Linda & Gerald*

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**Linda Griffin** - March 13, 2023 at 01:56 PM



“ *Rev. Cochran had such a dramatic impact upon my life. I was saved when he served Fairfield United Methodist Church. His interaction with such young people as the Buckhaults, the Everets, the James, the Shoemakes, as well as others left such an impression. I followed in his footsteps as i entered the ministry for approximately nine years. He was truly one of a kind minister. Love, Prayers from Frank Fall*

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**frank fall** - March 12, 2023 at 11:43 AM