



Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson

September 30, 1938 - June 21, 2025

Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson was born September 30, 1938, in Maben, MS, to Anderson and Josie Heard.

She passed away quietly at home on June 21, 2025, at the age of 86. Mary Helen was baptized and attended Grove Chapel MB Church in Maben, MS. Later, after moving to Starkville, MS, she joined the Second Baptist Church and remained a member until her death.

Mary Helen graduated from Oktibbeha-Webster County High School on April 22, 1955. She was both athletically and academically talented. While in high school, she lettered in basketball during the 1953-54 season and earned the "Most Valuable Player" award during the 1954-55 season. Mary Helen continued her education by attending Mississippi State University, Golden Triangle Community College, and Mississippi Valley State University.

On August 7, 1955, Mary Helen married Elmer E. Cooper and to that union three children were born: Beverly Faye Cooper Gaspard of Charlotte, NC; Ronald Gene Cooper of Starkville, MS; and Kimberly Michele Cooper of Starkville, MS. Later she married James Monroe Johnson and welcomed 2 Stepsons: Tantrance Johnson and Marcus Lane.

While living in Maben, Mary Helen worked at the Oktibbeha-Webster Hospital.

After moving to Starkville, she worked at Prairie Opportunity, Mississippi Head Start, and the Health Department from where she retired.

After joining Second Baptist Church, she participated in and enjoyed many activities. Some of these include the Gospel and Senior choirs and the Missionary Society. She also served as a teacher for the Sunday School and Vacation Bible School

Mary Helen was also very active in the community. She was a member of the NAACP and became an honorary lifetime member.

Mary Helen was preceded in death by her husband, James Monroe Johnson, her brothers: AJ Heard, Joe Louis Heard, and Robert Heard; sisters: Lucille Heard, Catherine Cooper, and Josephine Kincade.

She will be lovingly remembered by her three children: Beverly Faye Cooper Gaspard, Ronald Gene Cooper, and Kimberly Michelle Cooper. One sister: Ola Mae Boudry, and five brothers: Jimmy Dale Heard, John Anderson Heard, Eddie Rufus Heard, Willie Heard, and Tommie Lee Heard.

Seven grandchildren: Kena, Joseph, Joshua, Shawna, Jordan, Jaleel, Jasmine; 14 great-grandchildren; one sister-in-law: Catherine Hill, and nieces, nephews, cousins, and many friends.

Previous Events

Public Viewing

JUL 11. 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM (CT)

Hairston & Hairston Funeral Homes - Starkville
112 Earnest H Jones Jr Dr
Starkville, MS 39759
(662) 323-5854

Funeral Service

JUL 12. 11:00 AM (CT)

Second Baptist Church
314 Yeates Street
Starkville, MS 39759

Rev. Dr. Willie H. Johnson, officiating

Repast

JUL 12 (CT)

Council of Community Organization of Oktibbeha County, INC.
13608 MS-182 East
C.O.C.O. Center P.O. Box 152
Starkville, MS 39759

Also known as the COCO CENTER.

Tribute Wall

ED

“ *Earnestine Davis sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



Earnestine Davis - July 12, 2025 at 09:13 PM

FW

“ *Our thoughts, prayers and condolences are sent to you the family. May God comfort and keep each of you in his care. Charles & Frances Wilson*



Frances Wilson - July 12, 2025 at 07:51 PM

HG

“ *Helen Glenn lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



Helen Glenn - July 11, 2025 at 07:23 PM

LO

“ *LENETRA Outlaw lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



LENETRA Outlaw - July 11, 2025 at 06:27 PM

RQ

“ Absent from the body; present with the Lord.
I'll always remember her sweet & soft spoken
spirit.
-Rowena Quinn



Rowena Quinn - July 11, 2025 at 06:25 PM

AN

“ Annie Norman sent a virtual gift in memory of
Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Annie Norman - July 11, 2025 at 04:50 PM

DS

“ Dr. Willie Earl & Carrie Thomas, Sr. lit a candle
in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper
Johnson



Dr. Willie Earl & Carrie Thomas, Sr. - July 11, 2025 at 03:53 PM

DE

“ Dorothy M Ellis sent a virtual gift in memory of
Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Dorothy M Ellis - July 11, 2025 at 10:47 AM



“ 77 files added to the album *Life Tributes*



Hairston & Hairston Funeral Homes - July 11, 2025 at 01:30 AM



“ *Veronica Riles lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



Veronica Riles - July 10, 2025 at 07:52 PM



“ *Clara Dancer lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



Clara Dancer - July 10, 2025 at 04:56 PM

MW

“ My condolences to all who knew and loved my Aunt Mae (That is what I called her). I will always remember my auntie for her beautiful smile, generous caring spirit, as well as her elegant sense of style. She was a compassionate and dedicated professional who kindly offered help to those in need. More importantly, I remember attending church services with her on our visits from Michigan. Aunt Mae will be forever etched in my heart.

Mrs. Mary Cooper Washington, Saginaw. Michigan

Mary Washington - July 10, 2025 at 02:34 PM

DJ

“ SENDING OUR SINCERE CONDOLENCES, LOVE AND PRAYERS. TO THE FAMILY OF MRS. MARY HELEN HEARD COOPER JOHNSON. MAY GOD CONTINUE TO COMFORT AND STRENGTHEN EACH OF YOU.

REV. DR. WILLIE & DR. LETHA JOHNSON

DR. LETHA JOHNSON - July 10, 2025 at 01:08 AM



HG

“ Helen Glenn lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Helen Glenn - July 10, 2025 at 12:12 AM

PW

“ *A very sweet and kind person. Always smiling and pleasant. My prayers go out to the family. God bless.*



Patricia Wynn - July 09, 2025 at 06:36 PM

BR

“ *Barbara Roberson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



Barbara Roberson - July 09, 2025 at 11:43 AM

BF

“ *Bessie Ferguson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



Bessie Ferguson - July 08, 2025 at 11:36 PM

BH

“ *BARBARA WILLIAMS HILL sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



BARBARA WILLIAMS HILL - July 08, 2025 at 11:36 PM

KG

“ Karen Gandy sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Karen Gandy - July 08, 2025 at 02:22 PM

SW

“ Susie Wynn lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Susie Wynn - July 08, 2025 at 12:27 PM

AN

“ Annie Norman sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Annie Norman - July 08, 2025 at 12:07 PM

EM

“ Emma Mays lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Emma Mays - July 08, 2025 at 09:56 AM

WE

“ Willene Edwards sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Willene Edwards - July 08, 2025 at 08:37 AM

GR

“ Glenda Roberts sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Glenda roberts - July 08, 2025 at 07:38 AM

AB

“ Sending my heartfelt condolences to the entire family during these trying times, praying for strength and comfort 🙏🙏🙏



Ann Bishop-Harris - July 08, 2025 at 07:38 AM

RJ

“ Rita Jones sent a virtual gift in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson



Rita Jones - July 08, 2025 at 06:22 AM

CR

“ *Cynthia Robinson lit a candle in memory of Mrs. Mary Helen Heard Cooper Johnson*



Cynthia Robinson - July 07, 2025 at 10:37 PM