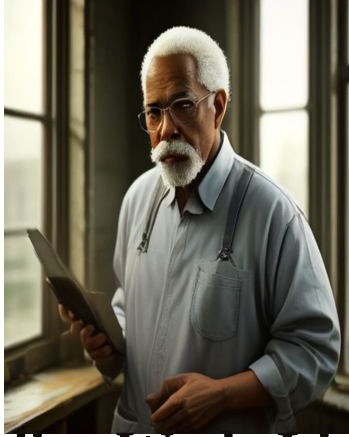




Cornelius Wade Lightfoot

October 26, 1950 - September 11, 2026

Dayton, Ohio

Cornelius Wade Lightfoot died in Dayton on September 11, 2026. He was seventy-five. He was born there on October 26, 1950, in a house that sat close enough to a plant that children learned a horn before they learned a hymn. His father walked a crib. Cornelius learned that a tool is a kind of sentence: it holds, or the whole story comes apart in the dark.

For thirty-four years he kept a crib that other men only blamed. He arrived early. He did not advertise. Foremen called him because he would write up a cracked die even when the shift was already called. He charged a fair hour and a smaller one when a church van needed a lift more than a sermon. He kept a notebook of machines, not clients. The notebook had grease on the edges.

He married Corinne Lightfoot in 1972. They raised a son and a daughter in a bungalow that needed a new roof more often than the paycheck admitted. After Corinne died in 2016 he kept her saucer on the drainboard for a season, then gave it to a granddaughter. He sang bass in a choir that rehearsed whether anyone new showed up or not.

People on his block remember a man who froze extra gumbo in coffee cans and left them after a funeral, who wiped his hands before he shook yours, and who owned one good suit. He liked the river early, before the heat made a speech of itself. He died in Dayton, in humidity he had always said was honest. The crib still opens.

Services

A gathering at his church hall in Dayton. Friends may bring a covered dish. A gift to a plant-workers' assistance fund is welcome.

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