



## Iva Jewel Combs

*November 15, 1948 - September 7, 2026*

Bowling Green, Kentucky

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Iva Jewel Combs died in Bowling Green on September 7, 2026. She was seventy-seven. Born there on November 15, 1948, she grew up in a house that smelled of starch and coffee, and she learned a needle before she learned a highway. A hem, she said, did not talk back, and it paid when the factory season was thin.

She made uniforms, hems, and funeral clothes in a front room that smelled of starch. People came with a plastic bag of someone else's measurements and left with a garment that fit the living body, not the hanger. She cooked for her church without putting her name on a committee list. When a family could not pay for alterations, she found a reason the job had been easy.

She married Alphonse Combs in 1969. They raised three children in a shotgun that grew a porch and then a second porch because the first one filled with cousins. Alphonse drove a truck and died in 2002. Iva kept the house, the garden of peppers, and the habit of sending a plate next door when she cooked too much, which was most evenings. She watched the same Saturday dance hall from a chair long after she stopped dancing.

Grandchildren remember a woman who corrected their manners more than their homework, who kept a cigar box of buttons as if it were a bank, and who did not waste a scrap of cloth or a kind word. She died in Bowling Green, in the heat she had always said she preferred to a clean cold. The church kitchen will be louder without her and less sure of the salt.

### Services

A funeral in Bowling Green. The family welcomes a favorite hymn and a dish for the hall afterward.

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