



Lillian Joy Pruitt

January 9, 1953 - August 30, 2026

Charleston, South Carolina

Lillian Joy Pruitt died in Charleston on August 30, 2026. She was seventy-three. Born there on January 9, 1953, she grew up in a house that kept the shades half down against the heat and the Bible open on a table that also held bills. She learned a ward chart before she learned a tourist map. A name spelled right, she said, is the first medicine.

She spent twenty-seven years as a hospital ward clerk, first answering a phone that never rested, later keeping the board that told nurses which room had become a story overnight. She did not shout. She repeated a date of birth until the person on the other end had it, then she wrote the time in a log she treated as a kind of prayer. Families trusted her because she would tell them when she did not know, which is rarer than kindness.

She married Calvin Pruitt in 1975. They raised a daughter and a son in a shotgun that grew a garden of tomatoes against the lane. Calvin worked the port. Lillian packed lunches that could survive humidity and a double shift. After he died in 2016 she kept the walk to the battery and the habit of bringing extra fans to the church in August.

Neighbors remember a woman who remembered your mother's middle name, who brought a plate without announcing a tradition, and who could sit through a hurricane warning without making it a personality. She loved a library sale, a good cup of coffee that was never quite hot enough, and the late light on the harbor. She died in Charleston, in the salt air she had always said you could live with if you buttoned your patience. The board is someone else's now. The care she practiced there is harder to replace than a schedule.

Services

A funeral in Charleston with one familiar hymn. A gift to a hospital auxiliary or a church pantry is welcome.

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