

Joy Deanne Reep Sankowich!

LINCOLNTON, N.C.—After fighting a brave and courageous battle with cancer, Joy Deanne Reep Sankowich, age 62, of Lincolnton, passed away on Saturday, February 7, 2026.

Her funeral service will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 12, 2026, at Covenant Church, in Lincolnton, with Rev. Nathan Grooms officiating. The family will receive friends from 12:00 until 1:00 p.m. prior to the service. Burial will follow in the Crowell Memorial Methodist Church Cemetery in Lincolnton.

Joy was born June 11, 1963, in Goldsboro, North Carolina, to the late Donald Ray Reep and Judy Carolyn Brown Reep. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a brother, Timothy Allen Reep; and sister, Lynn Matheny. She was a homemaker.

When Joy walked into a room, she brought light, laughter, and love. Her warm, kind, and generous spirit defined her in ways that the name Joy was indeed the appropriate name that had been given to her.

Joy loved life and she loved sharing it with family, friends, and the acquaintances she met along the way. She never met a stranger.

Her greatest joys were loving her husband, children, grandchildren, friends, and step-children.

Preparing for holidays were epic moments. She loved to decorate, cook, and dress for the occasion. Her gift wrapping was meticulous and something to be admired.

Joy loved to sit for hours catfishing at night, sitting by the shoreline at the beach sifting for shells, shopping, always up for anything adventurous, and never afraid of a challenge.

Even when she could no longer walk, her heart danced. She loved making others feel extra special and celebrated. Joy was gifted at going the extra mile and was a reflection of God's heart in the way she loved to give of herself.

Joy is survived by her husband, Alexander "Al" Sankowich Jr. of the home; son, Tony Ray Keever (Joy) of Minnesota; daughter, Kathy A. Bianchi (David) of Carey, Ohio; brothers, Edwin Reep and Donald Ray Reep Jr., both of Lincolnton; five grandchildren; and brother-in-law, Ed Matheny.

Joy loved flowers and her favorite color was purple. Therefore, attendees are invited to wear purple to express their love to her.

Warlick Funeral Home of Lincolnton, N.C. is serving the Sankowich family.