



## Kathleen Merklinger

May 29, 1956 - January 3, 2026

Wantage - Kathleen (Sipley) Merklinger, age 69, passed away on Saturday, January 3, 2026 at Newton Medical Center after a lengthy illness. Born in Sussex to the late Jacob and Ellen (Compton) Sipley, Kathy has lived in Sussex County for most of her life. Growing up, Kathy attended the First Presbyterian Church of Sussex with her family. Before she retired, she had been employed as a waitress at Elias Cole Restaurant in the Colesville section of Wantage. Besides her parents, Kathy was predeceased by her sister, Elizabeth "Betty" Pluymers. She is survived by her sons, William Bihn of Branchville and Aaron Merklinger of Texas; her daughters, Rena Merklinger of California and Heidi Merklinger of Victoria, Texas; her brother, Donald Sipley of Canada; eight grandchildren, Brandy, Kimberly, Shawn, Caden, Lexi, Hannah, Shelby, and Travis; and three great grandchildren, Ava, Mack, and Cameron; and her significant other, Steven Outer of Wantage. Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, January 9, 2026 at the Pinkel Funeral Home, 31 Bank Street (Route 23), Sussex. Interment will immediately follow at Clove Cemetery. Friends may pay their respects to the family prior to the service on Friday from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the funeral home. Online condolences may be offered to the family on [www.pinkelfuneralhome.com](http://www.pinkelfuneralhome.com)

# Cemetery Details

## Clove Cemetery

Route 23  
Sussex, NJ 07461

# Previous Events

## Visitation

**JAN 9.** 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (ET)

Pinkel Funeral Home, Inc.  
31 Bank Street (Route 23)  
Sussex, NJ 07461  
(973) 875-3272  
alexis@pinkelfuneralhome.com  
<https://www.pinkelfuneralhome.com/>

## Service

**JAN 9.** 11:00 AM (ET)

Pinkel Funeral Home, Inc.  
31 Bank Street (Route 23)  
Sussex, NJ 07461  
(973) 875-3272  
alexis@pinkelfuneralhome.com  
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# Tribute Wall

JH

“ *Jan, Anita en Martijn van Hunen purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Kathleen Merklinger.*



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**Jan, Anita en Martijn van Hunen** - January 08 at 07:43 AM

WB

“ *6 files added to the tribute wall*



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**Will Bihn** - January 07 at 03:07 PM

BY

“ *I'm very sorry to hear of Kathleen's passing. My deepest condolences to you. First Presbyterian Church in Sussex keeps her and all the family in prayer. May the Lord hold you in His arms always, and help you remember her with love. In Christ, Rev. Barry Young*

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**Barry G Young** - January 07 at 12:45 PM

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“ *Family Of Al Compton. Scott Sam & Rondi purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Kathleen Merklinger.*



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**Family Of Al Compton. Scott Sam & Rondi** - January 05 at  
01:24 PM