



William "Bill" Thomas Burkett

October 9, 1945 - January 2, 2022

William "Bill" Thomas Burkett, age 76, was born October 9, 1945 in Gravel Switch, Kentucky and passed away January 2, 2022 in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Since 1980 Bill made his home in Muskogee, Oklahoma after moving from his home state of Kentucky.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents, Walter Burkett and Lettie Roller Burkett; his two older brothers, Ashby and Henry; his sister, Virginia, who died in childhood; Godmother, Naomi Hourigan; and his twin granddaughters, Hope Naomi and Faith Jean Burkett Dearhamer.

Bill graduated from Berea College and continued to Florida State University earning a Master of Social Work. As a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Bill served as Inspector General for the Commonwealth of Kentucky and was awarded the title of Kentucky Colonel by the Governor for his service. Bill originally came to Oklahoma as a consultant to develop the community mental health system which led to a career of more than 30 years for the state of Oklahoma. In addition to being the Director of several Community Mental Health Centers and the Superintendent of Griffin Memorial, Bill was the Superintendent and CEO of the Oklahoma Forensic Center in Vinita, Oklahoma. During his tenure at Vinita, Bill oversaw the process of obtaining funding, approval and building a new hospital facility which radically improved the care of residential patients.

As a life-long member of the United Methodist Church, Bill's personal and professional life demonstrated the core teachings of Jesus. As an active member of Muskogee First United Methodist Church since November 25, 1984, Bill was a servant leader as a delegate to the Oklahoma Annual Conference, the Board of Ordained Ministry, a variety of committees and boards, and the Horizons Sunday School Class, where lifelong bonds of friendship began. Bill's service was rooted in hospitality. Many people will have memories of Bill wearing an apron in the church kitchen orchestrating the plating of the meal he oversaw to raise money for camp scholarships, mission trips, and more.

Bill was a family man dedicated to his daughters and their families. Bill always referred to his daughters as Princess Number One, Princess Number Two, and Princess Number Three. As a father, Bill gave his daughters a spiritual foundation and the support to discover and succeed. Bill was always there. From softball games to college graduations to the most challenging times, Bill was there for his family. Although he has not been able to be present at all the activities of his eight grandchildren, he wanted to be and was proud of all their accomplishments in music, sports, academics, and more. Bill encouraged them all.

Bill is survived by the mother of his children and caregiver, Phyllis Burkett of Muskogee; his daughter Elizabeth "Beth" Burkett Dearhamer, her husband Timothy, and their children Grace and Mercy of Broken Arrow; his daughter Jan Rosson, her husband Ryan, and their children Max and Charlie of Muskogee; Maria Roberson, her husband BJ, and their children Arianna, Xavier, Ava, and Audrey of Cushing; his younger brother Ray and his wife Patty, of Lebanon, Kentucky.

Funeral service will be held 1:00 P.M., Thursday, January 6, 2022 at First

United Methodist Church in Muskogee, OK with Pastor Brian Matthews and Chaplain Cindy Culver officiating. Interment will follow at Floral Haven Cemetery in Broken Arrow, OK. Pallbearers will be BJ Roberson, Xavier Wilson, Ryan Rosson, Max Rosson, Charlie Rosson and Timothy Burkett Dearhamer.

Cemetery Details

Floral Haven

6500 S. 129th E. Ave
Broken Arrow, OK 74012

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 5. 9:00 AM - 8:00 PM (CT)

Cornerstone Funeral Home & Crematory
1830 North York Street
Muskogee, OK 74403
(918) 682-1500

Service

JAN 6. 1:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church
600 E. Okmulgee Street
Muskogee, OK 74403

Tribute Wall



“ *William "Bill" Thomas Burkett*

October 23, 2023 at 09:38 AM



“ *Billy and I went to Lebanon high school and Berea college together and shared many life experiences. I will miss his intelligence as well as his great, calm and often humorous conversation. My heart feels like I have lost a wonderful connection to the past. His family was mentioned often in our conversations and I am sure that he will be greatly missed. My heart goes out to all of you.*

Lula Reynolds

Lula Reynolds - January 20, 2022 at 11:19 AM



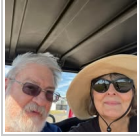
“ *In HighSchool we called him Billy. He was a very kind and mannered young man, he also was very smart. I emailed once and ask him how he wound up in Oklahoma and he emailed me back. Thinking back on our class of 1963, I would say he was one of a couple that made it really big in life. So sorry to you his daughter, I know you will miss him, may he Rest In Peace.*

Phyllis Mattingly - January 18, 2022 at 01:56 PM



“ *So sorry to hear of Billy's passing. We went to school together for twelve years. He was always brilliant. Knew he would do good in this world. Many memories of him..So sorry for your loss.*

Carolton Garrett Newton - January 18, 2022 at 11:40 AM



“ So very sorry to hear of Bill’s passing. He was such a kind and remarkable man who helped many people.

Ted and Kimberly Williams

Kimberly Mumford Williams - January 06, 2022 at 11:13 AM