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For immediate release

Betty Lou Elrod remembered for life of devotion to Ouachita and family

September 13, 2018

For more information, contact OBU's news bureau at newsbureau@obu.edu or 870-245-5208

SHERWOOD, Ark.—Betty Lou Elrod, age 87, passed away on September 12, 2018. She was the beloved wife of the recently deceased former president and longtime chancellor of Ouachita Baptist University, Dr. Ben M. Elrod.

Mrs. Elrod is remembered for her lifelong devotion to her husband throughout his lasting legacy of leadership and service at Ouachita and during his decade as president and beyond. She worked tirelessly alongside him with joy and encouragement throughout his numerous leadership accomplishments.

“With the passing of Betty Elrod so soon after Ben Elrod, the Ouachita family extends our deepest condolences to their family during these days,” said Ouachita President Ben Sells. “Mrs. Elrod was appreciated for her gracious and warm hospitality that made people feel welcomed and valued, whether it was in their home or on the Ouachita campus. Together they served and loved this university community that continues to impact generations of alumni. We’ll be forever grateful for their service.”



The Board of Trustees named Ouachita’s Ben M. Elrod Center for Family and Community in Dr. Elrod’s honor upon his retirement as president. The new Elrod Center was dedicated in 2015 as a further recognition of their life of commitment to servant leadership, volunteerism and community service.

“Mrs. Elrod was totally supportive of her husband in his leadership role,” reflected Ian Cosh, vice president for community and international engagement and director of the Elrod Center. “Each time I visited them in retirement she was interested in and encouraging of the center’s mission to equip a new generation of students to serve.”

Mrs. Elrod was born in Smackover, Ark., to the late Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Warren. As a 1952 graduate of Ouachita, she was awarded the distinguished alumna award in 1998 in recognition of her service to the university and her devotion to the institution.

Dr. and Mrs. Elrod were honored by the university community in 2009 with the dedication of Ben and Betty Elrod Boulevard, which was designed as the main entrance to campus from Highway 7.

Mrs. Elrod also served alongside Dr. Elrod, an ordained minister, when he pastored churches in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma as well as president of Oakland City College in Indiana, Georgetown College in Kentucky and Arkansas’ Independent Colleges and Universities. She was remembered to be

vivacious, witty and impeccably dressed and famous for her delectable chocolate cake. She had an insatiable love of all things sweet – especially chocolate!

Mrs. Elrod is survived by her daughter, Cindy Elrod Stroud; son, Bill Elrod; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; brother, Earl Warren; and sister-in-law, Patt. She was predeceased by her husband, Ben Elrod; her parents, Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Warren; and her brother, Bill Warren.

A celebration of her life will be held on Saturday, Sept. 15, 2018, at 11 a.m. at First Baptist Church of Arkadelphia, Ark. Visitation will take place following the conclusion of the service in the Fellowship Hall. Donations in honor of her life may be made to the Elrod Center for Family and Community at Ouachita Baptist University, OBU Box 3790, Arkadelphia, AR 71998.

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PHOTO AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD AT <https://obu.edu/news/2018/09/13/betty-lou-elrod-remembered-life-devotion-ouachita-family/>.