



For information contact:

Nancy Lindell  
Mission Hospital  
828 257-1202 24/7 pager  
828 775-3075 cell  
Nancy.Lindell@msj.org

A. Larry Ross,  
Director Media/Public Relations  
for Billy Graham  
972.267-1111 Office  
(469) 774-6362  
alr@alarryross.com

## **Evangelist Billy Graham home for the holidays following hospital stay**

*Asheville, N.C., Dec. 6, 2011* - Evangelist Billy Graham returned to his home in Montreat, N.C., Tuesday afternoon following a six-day stay at nearby Mission Hospital in Asheville for treatment of pneumonia. Mr. Graham was hospitalized on Wednesday, Nov. 30.

Pulmonologist Mark Hellrich, M.D., physician for the 93-year-old evangelist, said he has made good clinical progress in combating the pneumonia in his steady response to antibiotics, first intravenously and then following his improvement, transitioning to oral medication. His program of physical therapy also advanced daily as he demonstrated increased strength and mobility.

This recent hospital stay also gave Mr. Graham's personal doctors an opportunity to work with hospital colleagues to complete routine tests and studies that were already scheduled for Nov. 30. Mr. Graham's home staff and physicians were also able to refine his ongoing plan of care for age-related medical challenges after reviewing the latest test and study results.

"I am grateful for the many thoughts and prayers expressed by individuals across the country and around the world during my stay at Mission Hospital," Mr. Graham said upon discharge. "I also appreciated the wonderful treatment I received here from such caring doctors and nurses, and feel I have made some new friends. But I am especially looking forward to seeing my home decorated for Christmas and spending the holidays with members of my family."

Mr. Graham's staff confirmed he will continue with physical therapy at home, with the goal of returning to normal activities in the coming weeks. This includes resuming his next writing project, summarizing the message he has proclaimed for more than 60 years, incorporating thoughts and discussions on that topic that occurred during his hospitalization.

"We are gratified that he has had a good response to treatment and we're committed to good home care to continue his improvement," said Mr. Graham's personal physician, Lucian Rice, MD.