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news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PUBLIC INVITED TO ATTEND FUNERAL SERVICE FOR RUTH BELL GRAHAM, LATE WIFE OF BILLY GRAHAM Mrs. Graham to be Honored by Friends and Family in Montreat, N.C., Followed by a Private Family-Only Interment in Charlotte

ASHEVILLE, June 14 – Mrs. Ruth Bell Graham, beloved wife of evangelist Billy Graham, died in her home at 5:05 p.m. today from complications of pneumonia, surrounded by her husband and five children. Though her health became increasingly unstable in recent days, she was very peaceful at the end and simply stopped breathing.

A public funeral service to honor Mrs. Graham, has been scheduled for 2 p.m. on Saturday, June 16 in Anderson Auditorium at the Montreat Conference Center in Montreat, N.C.

Mr. Graham and his family have extended an invitation for the public to join them in honoring the life and memory of their wife and mother at this event. Anderson Auditorium's seating capacity is limited to 2,000, on a first come basis, after which guests will be directed to additional overflow seating at three closed-circuit video venues, including Chapel of the Prodigal and Gaither Chapel in Montreat. As security precautions will be in effect, no large bags, backpacks or coolers will be allowed into the auditorium.

This will, in essence, be Mrs. Graham's only funeral. A private, family-only, interment service will be held the following day at her final resting place in the Prayer Garden on the grounds of the recently-dedicated Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, N.C., which is closed on Sundays, with no events for the public at that location on the day of her burial.

During the height of the summer conference season, access to Anderson Auditorium is limited, so a shuttle service has been arranged to accommodate public attendance at the service. Because of the absolute unavailability of parking in Montreat, anyone interested in attending the funeral must use public shuttles, which will begin operating at 11 a.m. on the day of the service. Shuttle pick-up points for the public will be in Black Mountain at the following locations, in order of pick-up: the old Food Lion, 408 U.S. 70 Highway; the Ingles Market parking lot at 2913 U.S. Highway 70 West (southeast corner of the Campfire Restaurant); and the BI-LO grocery store at 205 N.C. Highway 9, Black Mountain.

Additional information on Mrs. Graham's life and memorial events is available online at www.billygraham.org/ruthgraham; individuals can also send condolences and reflect on her unique ministry impact. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that tax deductible contributions be made to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) General Fund, 1 Billy Graham Parkway, Charlotte, N.C., 28201.

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Arrangements have also been made for the public to place memorials at two remembrance locations, where BGEA staff will be on hand to receive flowers and condolences. The first site is located at Chatlos Chapel on the grounds of the Billy Graham Training Center at The Cove, in Asheville, N.C., which will open at 10 a.m. on Friday, June 15. A second location is at the "rock" entrance to the Charlotte headquarters of the BGEA, located off Billy Graham Parkway at 4350 Westmont Drive, which will be open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. from Friday June 15 to Sunday June 17.

Members of the public desiring to pay their respects to Mrs. Graham are also welcome to position themselves along the processional route the morning of the service. The cortege will depart Morris Funeral Home, 304 Merrimon Ave. in Asheville, and proceed east on Route 70 to Anderson Auditorium.

Note to Editors: Thank you for your assistance in announcing the need for public and media to take the shuttle to the funeral service as well as limitations on large bags, backpacks and coolers at that service. Please note that the Media Center will open at 8am on FRIDAY, JUNE 15th in Dogwood Lodge at the Billy Graham Training Center at The Cove to facilitate media coverage of the memorial service for Ruth Bell Graham. The Billy Graham Library parking lot will open at 4:30am on Friday for media stand-ups. For further information, please call the Media Center at (828) 771-4901, or find details online at www.alrcnewskitchen.com/ruthgraham.