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# news release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **RUTH BELL GRAHAM LAID TO REST IN PRAYER GARDEN AT BILLY GRAHAM LIBRARY IN CHARLOTTE**

#### **Billy Graham Reflects on Wife of 64 Years at Private Interment**

#### **Attended by Family and Close Friends**

**CHARLOTTE, N.C., June 17** – Evangelist Billy Graham, surrounded by his five children; sister-in-law, Rosa Montgomery; and extended family and close friends laid his wife to rest at a private interment today. Mrs. Graham passed away Thursday, June 14, at the age of 87.

Ruth Graham was buried at the foot of a cross-shaped walkway on the grounds of the newly-dedicated Billy Graham Library adjacent to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association ministry headquarters in Charlotte.

Her casket was built by prisoners at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola – former hardened criminals in prison for life, who wanted to give a pair of simple plywood coffins to the Grahams as an expression of their own faith in Christ.

During the half-hour service, led by Dr. Richard White, Mrs. Graham's longtime pastor at Montreat Presbyterian Church, Billy Graham shared fond memories of his wife of more than 64 years. "You are such a wonderful family – she loved you all," he told them reassuringly. "The Bible says the Lord has prepared a place for us and I know He has prepared a home for her -- I hope she saves a room for me.

"I believe the Lord has brought us to this point; I am looking forward to the day when we'll have the next service here," he concluded, referencing the announcement last week that he and Mrs. Graham will be buried side by side at that location.

"The graveside is a place of great rejoicing for the believer, because we know this is not the end," Dr. White encouraged those gathered. Rev. Richard Bewes, former rector of All Souls Langham Place in London, England, read a Scripture from Malachi and closed in prayer. "May we each fortify ourselves for the grave," he said, challenging each one present to reflect on his or her own relationship with Christ.

At the conclusion of the service, Mr. Graham took a red rose, which he kissed and prayed over for several minutes before placing it on the casket, followed by each of the five children in turn similarly honoring their mother. After the other guests departed, the immediate family remained at the casket for a few more moments of quiet reflection together.

Following the ceremony, the family dispersed and the grounds were prepared so that the public may visit Mrs. Graham's grave when they walk through the Prayer Garden after the Billy Graham Library re-opens tomorrow 9:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

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**Editor's Note: Photos from the interment are available at a virtual newsroom located at [www.alarryross.com](http://www.alarryross.com), where a video clip of the interment ceremony will also be posted later today.**