



Press Release

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Shirley Hawkins, Wife of Harvest House Founder, Dies at 90

Eugene, Oregon—November 25, 2016—Shirley Jean Hawkins, loving wife of Harvest House Publishers’ visionary founder, Bob Hawkins Sr., went home to be with the Lord on Wednesday, November 23, 2016. At 90, she died quickly after being diagnosed just weeks earlier with advanced inoperable ovarian cancer.

A memorial celebration service will be held on Sunday, December 11, 2016 at 3:00 pm at First Baptist Church of Eugene, Oregon. Arrangements and private burial for family and close friends will be held at Rest-Haven Memorial Park in Eugene, Oregon.

Though Shirley was recognized within the Christian publishing industry as the elegant and exuberant wife of innovative risk-taker Bob Sr., her clear passion was to her family and focusing her amazing vocal talents on glorifying God.

Raised in Wenatchee, Washington, Shirley studied voice at Gonzaga, where she became the lone female soloist among 48 men in the university’s prestigious traveling Glee Club. Having received high accolades and great pleasure from appearing on such programs as *The Bing Crosby Show* and in such places as the San Francisco Opera House, her future in the entertainment industry seemed bright and promising. But deep in her heart she was dissatisfied with the kind of life she was leading, and the prayers of her family intensified her uneasiness.

It was in 1949, while singing at an evangelistic meeting, that Shirley’s life and plans completely changed. That evening she surrendered her talents to Christ, which opened the door to a life of sharing her stellar mezzo-soprano voice in churches and choirs wherever she had opportunity. In the early 1950s, Shirley moved to Minneapolis as one of the first five employees of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association. There she met her beloved husband and life partner, Bob Sr., going on to support his notable career for more than half a century in the heyday of Christian bookselling and publishing.

“My mom loved attending CBA and ECPA industry events,” notes Bob Hawkins Jr., president of Harvest House. “In the early days she was found hosting annual breakfasts for the children of booksellers, and in the latter years she became a fixture at executive publishing seminars. She was truly loved for her self-effacing humor, but to her family and closest friends, it was her simple and genuine faith in Christ that will be remembered and appreciated the most.”

Shirley so loved her husband and family. Married to her entrepreneurial-minded husband for more than 56 years, she was the consummate servant and source of stability for the creative personality of Bob Sr. and the family she cared for with fervent prayer and a huge heart. She is survived by her three children, Sheree, Bob, and Gary, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

About the Publisher:

Harvest House, a Christian publishing company based in Eugene, Oregon, publishes more than 135 books per year and carries a strong backlist offering more than 1,200 titles. Over 125 million Harvest House books have been sold worldwide through diverse distribution channels, and additional millions have sold in over 75 different languages.

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