



Willis E. Elliott

February 4, 1918 - July 5, 2014

Willis E. Elliott, 96, of Kearney died Saturday, July 5, 2014, at Emeritus at Northridge Place.

Memorial services will be at 10 a.m. Monday at First Baptist Church with the Rev. Stan Murdoch officiating. Burial of cremains will be later.

His body was donated to the Anatomical Board of the State of Nebraska for medical research.

He was born Feb. 4, 1918, in Buffalo, N.Y., to Willis and Ada (Volk) Elliott. On Sept. 14, 1945, he married Loree Gangwish at First Baptist Church in Gibbon.

The Rev. Dr. Willis E. Elliott was a student all his life with 14 years of higher education. He completed five degrees in religion, including two doctorates: Th.D. from Northern Baptist Seminary and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. His professional ministry included chair of religion and philosophy from Ottawa University in Kansas, 10½-year pastorate in Morton, Ill., visiting professor at the University of Hawaii and teaching in four theological seminaries with his last 10 years at New York Theological Seminary.

As an administrator, he was on the national staff of the United Church of Christ, serving in in-service training for clergy, literature planning and production, and teaching clergy/laity in conferences in almost all of the 50 states for nine years.

His writings include five books and 4,000 "Thinksheets," which were intended to stimulate thought on issues of Christian concern — not give answers. He

also wrote extensively for the OnFaith column of Newsweek/Washington Post from 2007 through 2011. In devotional literature he edited Kirkridge Readings and Intentions for eight years and for nine years edited "Family Devotions and the Fellowship of Prayer" for the UCC.

Much of his writing is available through the online archives of Ottawa University: https://myottawa.ottawa.edu/ICS/Resources/Myers_Library_Online/Archives_and_Collections/Willis_E_Elliott_Collection_RG_65.jnz

When he retired to Craigville, Mass., for 10 years he was volunteer chair of the worship and education committee of the Craigville Conference Center, a retreat center of the United Church of Christ.

While growing up in Kenmore, N.Y., he graduated from Houghton College in New York where he sang in the college choir and often was the speaker when on tour. In 1944, he met Loree at Ottawa University where she was a student majoring in religion and philosophy while he was majoring in her. They married the following year when he accepted the position to teach at Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He enjoyed working with his hands, making toys for his children, bicycling, gardening and traveling with Loree.

Survivors include his wife; son, Willis E. Elliott III "Bill" and his wife, Jennie; grandson, Matthew Mines Elliott and his wife, Lacey Mae; and granddaughter, Emma Rachel Brooks and her husband, Lucas.

He was preceded in death by his parents; two sisters; an infant son, Stephen John; and son, Peter Mark last year.

Memorials are suggested to Craigville Retreat Center with "Colloquy Scholarship Fund" in the memo line and mailed to Craigville Retreat Center, 39 Prospect Ave., Craigville MA 02632; or to Ottawa University with "Willis Elliott Fund" in memo line, Ottawa University, 1001 S. Cedar, Ottawa KS 66067; and AseraCare Hospice in Kearney.

Tribute Wall



“ *Willis E. Elliott*

January 28, 2023 at 08:01 AM