

Obituary for Dorothy Shanks Holder



Dorothy Holder completed her journey to the Lord on January 15, 2015 where she will dwell in His heavenly home forever.

Dorothy was born on September 15, 1924 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma to Earl and Marie Shanks. She grew up in the First Presbyterian Church where she learned about, served as and enjoyed being a Christian. Her mother and grandmother taught her to have an active prayer life and the importance of reaching the scriptures, both of which were her guiding principles throughout her life.

She attended public schools in Oklahoma City where she greatly enjoyed being a member of Kelita Klub, her high school sorority. She was swept off her feet by the charming Russell Lee (R.L.) Holder, also of Oklahoma City, whom she married on September 12, 1943 after he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Field Artillery. She and R.L. have enjoyed 71 years of marriage.

During the war years, they lived at several army posts across the US before R.L. was deployed to Germany. Dorothy was able to join him with their one year old son, Russell, Jr. and they made the best of being in war-torn Europe for a year. Upon returning home, they lived in various cities as R.L. completed his electrical engineering degree at Oklahoma University and began his career with Westinghouse Electric Corporation.

R.L. and Dorothy joined the First Presbyterian Church once they moved to Houston where they spent the most enjoyable years of their lives. They volunteered to lead the Senior High Department and Dorothy so thoroughly enjoyed these years that she was inspired to become a school teacher. She attended the University of Houston where she graduated Cum Laude with a B.A. in English with awards in Latin and honors in history. She continued her education there at night and attained a Master's degree in Education.

Dorothy taught English at both Johnston Junior High School and Bellaire High School. She always believed in the power of education and was delighted to see both her children, Russell, Jr. and Pamela,

complete their degrees; Russell, Jr. completed a Bachelor's degree with a double major in Mathematics and Computer Science and Pamela graduated Magna Cum Laude with a Bachelor's degree in Mathematics.

While the years of teaching were richly rewarding, Dorothy spent many late nights on her work and retired after seventeen years. Her retirement enabled her to further her commitment to teaching at First Presbyterian. She became a Stephens Minister where she helped many individuals through troubling times. She also served as co-chairman of the Klesis Homebound Ministry. She went on to serve with the Memorial Assistance Ministries and other volunteer services. Again, she was inspired to further her education and trained at the Cenacle as a Spiritual Director. She completed a Master's degree in Religious Education at St. Thomas University and actively led contemplative prayer sessions for individual guidance sessions, group instruction and retreats.

Dorothy's greatest strength was her faith in God. Her wish for everyone reading this obituary is that you find peace and comfort in the knowledge that you are never alone. God is here for you. You know that He will never leave you or ignore your needs. He is ever aware of your circumstances and ready to be your strength and your peace. He is there to cast sunlight into your darkened shadows, to send encouragement through the love of friends and family, and to replace your weariness with new hope. He is your provider, today, tomorrow, and always. And He loves you. Cast all of your cares on Him... and believe.

Dorothy is survived by her beloved husband R.L., their son Russell, Jr. and their daughter Pamela. Her surviving grandchildren are Faydra and her son Ari, Maryann and Russell III. She is also survived by her sister Jane and her husband Calvin Watson as well as many nieces and nephews and their children.