

## Dr. Ronald W. Gilbert

May 28, 1935 - September 17, 2017

Ronald Wilson Gilbert died on September 17, 2017. Ron was born on May 28, 1935 in Fort Smith to Flora Ellen (Hawkins) and James William Gilbert. He was his parents' pride and joy, as he was born 18 years after they lost his older brother, Lonnie Cletus, as an infant. He spent his childhood in Sallisaw, where his first job was popping popcorn at the local movie theater (a skill that would serve him well later in life when he popped popcorn for events at the Coleman Theater). He graduated from Sallisaw High School and Northeastern State University in Tahlequah, obtaining a BS in biology and a minor in music. He attended dental school at the University of Tennessee in Memphis, where he met the love of his life, Ann Dunkin of Kingsport, Tennessee at the Methodist Student Union. They were married in 1958 and returned to Oklahoma. He practiced dentistry for 52 years for the Oklahoma Department of Health and in private practice in Miami.

Ron and Ann moved to Miami in 1960 committed to service to the community and their church. Professionally, Ron was active in the Oklahoma Dental Association and served on the Board of Directors of Delta Dental Insurance Company. He loved being a part of the Miami community. He served on the Miami Board of Education (President) and was a member of Rotary International (President, Secretary, Treasurer), Jaycees (President), Miami Library Board (Chairman), Friends of the Coleman Theater (Board of Directors), Ottawa County Historical Society (Board of Directors), Oklahoma Junior Miss, Inc. (Chairman) and the Miami Recreation Tourism Convention

and Visitors' Advisory Board. He was often called the "Grandfather of Tourism" as he spearheaded the drive for Miami's first hotel tax to support tourism. Ron was co-chairman (with his good friend, Willie Osborn) of the 100th anniversary celebration of Miami. Ron was honored by many of the organizations and groups in which he has been active, including being named Rotary's Paul Harris Fellow, being chosen as one of Jaycee's Ten Outstanding Young Oklahomans, and with the Miami Chamber of Commerce's Impact Award. Ron particularly loved serving the United Methodist Church. He held most positions in the First United Methodist Church in Miami, sang in the chancel choir, and was a substitute organist. He was a delegate to South Central Jurisdictional and General Conference many times and served as Chairman of the Oklahoma Conference Board of Finance and Administration. He was a member of the General Conference Board of Finance and Administration, serving as Chairman of the Investment Committee. He especially enjoyed serving on the Board of Directors of Mount Sequoyah Retreat Center in Fayetteville Arkansas.

Ron is survived by his wife of 59 years, Ann; his children, Ron Gilbert II (Jean Ann), Kabeth Jarvis (David), Karen Ramsey (Paul) and Kelley Loud (Jeff); his grandchildren Emily Kearney (Rob), Amanda Hagelin (Kyle), Sara Bailin (Bryan), Wil Ramsey, Claire Jarvis, Jack Ramsey, Aaron Loud, Allison Ramsey, Carter Loud and Duncan Loud; his great grandchildren Trae Kearney, Teaghan Kearney and Kennedy Hagelin; and a host of extended family and friends, including his beloved Lotsa Family.

The family will be receiving visitors at the First United Methodist Church of Miami on Friday, September 22nd from 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. A celebration of Ron's life will be held at the church on Saturday, September 23rd at 1:00 pm. Services are under the care of Brown-Winters Funeral Home and Cremation Service of Miami.

In lieu of flowers, the family would suggest donations to the First United Methodist Church of Miami or a charity you believe will better our world.



# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP **22.** 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church - Miami  
200 B NW  
Miami, OK 74354  
<http://www.fumcmiami.org>

## Celebration of Life

SEP **23.** 1:00 PM (CT)

First United Methodist Church - Miami  
200 B NW  
Miami, OK 74354  
<http://www.fumcmiami.org>

# Tribute Wall

JB

“*Ron was my other dad, being best friends with my parents in Miami. He and Ann were sweet and supportive as we all experienced life's joys and sorrows and our families joined at the heart. Blessings to us all in this time of loss. Judith Bartlett*

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**Judith Bartlett** - September 23, 2017 at 06:50 PM



“*My earliest memory of Dr. Ron is chewing those pink tablets to reveal particulates still clinging to our teeth, even after brushing. "Brush harder! Brush better!" Ann and Ron together served the community, the church and the greater public health in big ways on Boards and Committees. And in small ways, too, "kindling the life quality where it was not," with a smile, a gentle touch, and words of encouragement at a particularly important moment. generations of people have better health and greater hope thanks to the enduring witness and spirit of Dr. Ron Gilbert.*

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**Rob Bartlett** - September 23, 2017 at 05:31 PM



“*Dr. Gilbert was my first dentist. I remember on my second visit to his office he identified a surface cavity which he immediately remedied. However, I remember being so frightened but his kindness and professionalism nurtured me through it. While I have not lived in Miami for many years I have always admired his positive persona.*

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**Rick Carr** - September 21, 2017 at 08:13 PM

RE

“ My prayers to Ann and family at Ron's home going. My memories of Ron date back to our days in Oklahoma JayCees. His enthusiasm for Service to Humanity fulfilled the creed by which we strived to practice. It was a joy to become Ron's pastor in the '90's and then connecting at Annual Conference functions. He will be truly missed! Rest In Peace, my friend!

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**Rev. Jim Edmison** - September 21, 2017 at 12:31 PM

MD

“ Heartfelt condolences to this wonderful and amazing family. Dr. Gilbert and his wife Ann have demonstrated what selfless service looks like and this community is far better as a result of their involvement. Know that the legacy that Dr. Gilbert has left will not be forgotten. May God comfort this family during this difficult time as only He can. Prayers for peace, comfort and strength from the staff and members of the Ottawa County Health Department where Ann serves as the Chairman of the Board of Health.

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**Maria Alexander, Director** - September 20, 2017 at 12:37 PM

JH

“ My heart and prayers are with the Gilbert family. I was so very touched when I heard the news yesterday. I had two wonderful memories with Dr Gilbert, first from my youth in the church choir: every Sunday I sat in the middle between Ron Gilbert and Willie Osborn! I'm sure they were there to keep me out of trouble and in tune, well Ron for sure kept me in tune. Second: five years ago we sat down and he took my hand and he said "I am so happy you found the right path in life". Dr. Ron Gilbert was a true man of God and he's home now.

*Blessing,*

*James Hetherington Jr.*

*Peacehaven, England UK*

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**James Hetherington** - September 19, 2017 at 05:02 AM



“ I can easily say that Dr. Ron and his wife Ann have had a tremendous impact upon many lives. I can't speak for others, but I can easily state that I would not be where I am today without their love and support. Ron took me under his wing and helped me to achieve many things in both my professional and private life. Ron was a glowing example of compassion, charity, kindness, and a true community leader. My deepest condolences to all who will feel this tremendous loss, especially his wife and family who he adored and loved.

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**Chris Robinson** - September 18, 2017 at 08:50 PM

LM


“ Doctor Gilbert was our family dentist until we loved away from the area. He was a good man and so caring of his patients. He will be greatly missed.

*Pete and Lynda Martinez*



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**Lynda Martinez** - September 18, 2017 at 07:53 PM

 Leann  
Greek-  
Muisse

“ Leann Greek-Muisse lit a candle in memory of Dr. Ronald W. Gilbert



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**Leann Greek-Muisse** - September 18, 2017 at 04:44 PM

KH

“ Dr. Gilbert was my dentist from the start of my childhood until he retired. What I liked about Dr. Gilbert was he treated you like family and always spoke to you and asked how you were if he saw you outside of his office. He will be greatly missed! Prayers for Ann and the family.

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**Kyle Highsmith** - September 18, 2017 at 11:37 AM

DW

“ I remember many holidays and family meals at the Gilbert house! Si many fun times! Heaven has gained an angel and he is perfect now! I love you Ronnie!

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**dana wyman** - September 18, 2017 at 09:05 AM

JN

“ As I reflect on the life of this wonderful man, I am thankful for: teaching me proper popcorn popping technique, introducing me to the music of Ray Charles, opening all the stops when playing the organ at FUMC, and most of all, opening his home and heart to me for as long as I can remember. I hold him and his family in my heart.

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**Jane Ellen Neal** - September 17, 2017 at 10:46 PM

 Donni  
Ham-  
Long

“ Dear Miss Ann,  
My prayers are with you today and always. I added some wonderful pictures to FUMC Miami fb page to honor him today. Dr Ron will be so missed as he was loved by many as are you.  
God Bless You and Keep You.  
Donni

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**Donni Ham-Long** - September 17, 2017 at 08:45 PM

CA

*So many wonderful memories of Dr. Ron as my childhood dentist and later on working with Ron, Ann, and Rhonda. I can hear him telling the little kids he was going to count their teeth and if they had any loose teeth, he called them "Uncle Wiggles". He was kind to his patients and staff and treated us like family. I remember being invited for dinner in their home at Christmas time and the wonderful pot roast "they" prepared. Very gracious hosts and very gracious people. He was so proud of all of his children and loved all the grands and greats! My thoughts and prayers are with you Ann and all the family.  
Cindy (Starcher) Anderson*

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**Cindy Anderson** - September 19, 2017 at 01:16 AM