

**Willis, Orville Earl**

1935-2021

By [Messenger Staff](#) / Published on March 19, 2021**Orville Earl Willis**

Orville Earl Willis, 85, of Boyd, peacefully passed into the presence of the Lord on Thursday, March 11, surrounded by family at Hilltop Park Care Center in Weatherford. Memorial service will be 10 a.m. Monday, March 22, at Fossil Creek Community Church, 6700 N. Riverside Drive, in Fort Worth.

Family visitation will be 6 to 8 p.m. Sunday, March 21, at Mount Olivet Funeral Home Chapel, 2301 N. Sylvania Avenue, in Fort Worth.

Orville Earl Willis was born in Lubbock on July 27, 1935, the third of four sons of the Rev. Otis and Gertrude Willis. Though his early years were spent in Texas, Colorado and California, he always considered Texas his home. He found the love of his life in a Sunday night church service at First Assembly of God in Fort Worth. He often said it was "love at first sight" when he saw her on the platform playing the organ. He married that "blue-eyed girl," Beverly Ann Stroup, on Nov. 30, 1956. They remained wholly devoted to one another for 64 years.

As a young man, Orville served for six years in the United States Army Reserves, achieving the rank of staff sergeant, (E-6) before being honorably discharged in 1962. He was always known as a hard worker and became a skilled craftsman,

painter, carpenter and builder who also loved working his land in rural Wise County. He utilized those skills as a commercial painting contractor, a construction supervisor and a builder of houses and churches. He spent more than a year volunteering full time with Assemblies of God World Missions, building missionary housing and rural churches in East Africa and supervising the construction of a large church/school in the impoverished Mathare Valley area of Nairobi, Kenya. He continued volunteering his construction skills on mission trips to various places, including Alaska and the countries of Belize, Ecuador, Cameroon, Mexico and Belgium.

He was an active, 50-plus year member of Fossil Creek Community Church (formerly Rockwood Park AG Church) where he was also noted for his building and construction skills. He loved singing in the church choir and served on the deacon board for several terms. He was the contractor for the construction of the current building and built many of the items still in use at Fossil Creek Community Church, including the portable baptismal, altars, pulpit, welcome desks, bookshelves, classroom cabinets, etc. He was often recognized as one who could fix almost any problem with furniture. Orville was a devoted husband and a much-loved father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, brother and friend. Orville was preceded in death by his parents, Otis and Gertrude Willis; and by his three brothers, John Willis, William Willis and James Willis.

He is survived by his wife, Beverly Ann Stroup Willis; and his children, Vicki Willis Ross, Tamara Willis Allen and husband, John Allen, Steven Willis and wife, Shelley, and John Timothy Willis and wife, Angela. His legacy includes 13 grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and many nieces, nephews and friends.

*Mount Olivet Chapel*