

A TRIBUTE TO SHEILA COOK

First Lady of Dallas Baptist University



One of the greatest strengths of DBU lies in the first lady. While pamphlets and advertisements about DBU will show the beautiful buildings and landscapes, they are unable to capture the entire story—that behind the 25 years of growth and success has been the continual support, faithfulness, prayers, and humor of Mrs. Sheila Cook.

Twenty-five years ago when the Lord called Dr. Cook to lead an institution in desperate need of direction and vision, He also called Sheila to help guide and support DBU. While Dr. Cook has remained at the forefront of leadership, Sheila has ably stood by his side.

"Sheila has served joyfully and tirelessly alongside Dr. Cook to make DBU a university that is fully committed to Christian education and to advancing the kingdom of God," expresses Kathy Knight, long-time friend and DBU staff member.

With a background as a public school teacher, Sheila's 18 years in the classroom developed within her a servant's heart to nurture and care for

students that has translated to the thousands of DBU students she has welcomed into their home and their lives. Without question, her greatest asset to Dr. Cook's administration has been her gift of hospitality, which has proven providential in her calling as first lady of DBU. Over the years, she has hosted countless showers, receptions, luncheons, and parties, setting the tone for an inviting and welcoming DBU community.

At the root of Sheila's hospitality is ultimately her relationship with the Lord which shines through all she does and blesses those whom she encounters. Her gifting is evident not just in the way she opens her home, but in her ability to put people at ease with her joyful spirit and engage their lives with sincerity.

"Sheila's joy is unmistakable," states Dr. Gail Linam, friend and DBU provost. "Her joy comes from Christ, and she pours her enthusiasm for God's work into all that she undertakes on University Hill. Her upbeat spirit is contagious, and her presence enriches any event she attends."

Certainly her infectious love of life has been a foundational

element in the strength of her family's bond. No matter the number of banquets to attend or showers to host, Sheila's family has always taken precedence, and she has delighted in her roles as devoted wife, mother, and most recently, grandmother. "I could not have asked for a better mother," says David, the Cooks' oldest son. "From basketball games, to talent shows, to helping with schoolwork, she was always there for us and even more than that, we always knew she loved us as only a mother could."

"Mom modeled for us what it means to truly walk with Jesus every day," states Mark, the Cooks' younger son. "Her spirit of hospitality and love is what we saw and experienced at home. She's just really been a great mother to us: genuine, kind, fiercely supportive, and always letting us know she's praying for us."

As a wife, Sheila has been a continual and faithful source of strength for Dr. Cook as well throughout their years together, providing unwavering support and encouragement through both the good and the hard times. She has set a beautiful example of what it means to come alongside a husband and partner



“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

-1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

with him in both his personal and professional life.

“I could never have asked for a more wonderful wife than Sheila,” Dr. Cook, her husband of 38 years, shares. “It’s been a joy to share my life with her. She is a loving wife, a devoted mother, and a doting grandmother. She loves the DBU family, and we are both so grateful that the Lord called us here.”

On a most important note, her new role as “Grammy” to David and his wife Nicole’s two-year-old daughter, Molly, has provided a new and endless source of happiness and devotion.

For her family, she has always set the example of pouring her time, energy, and resources into service for others whether at DBU, their church, or the community.

“Mom has been integral in helping build community at DBU in so many ways,” David notes. “She truly does an amazing job of shining God’s love into every relationship, and that influence has helped strengthen the DBU community in so many intangible ways.”

Outside the DBU community, Sheila has been equally giving of herself through her service (as an accompanist for children’s choir; teacher for Mission Friends, GAs, RAs, VBS and Sunday School classes) at their church, Park Cities Baptist.

In addition, Sheila has been a small group leader for a Ladies Bible Study at Park Cities for the past 14 years. As a part of their weekly large-group meetings, Sheila is also responsible for leading discussion, keeping prayer requests, and fostering a sense of community within her small group.

As Bobbie Pinson, friend and DBU

trustee, states, “The foundation of whatever she does is based on her deep faith in and love for the Lord. And this leads her to a great love for other people, in word and in deed.”

Another ministry dear to her heart is the West Dallas non-profit, Brother Bill’s Helping Hand, where she has for years helped lead a women’s Bible study and was the founding president for the ministry’s Women’s Council. She also serves as a member of the Gospel For Muslims advisory council.

“I consider my friendship with Sheila to be one of my greatest blessings,” states long-time friend Janet Denison. “She has the great capacity to genuinely care for people and invest in their lives. I am grateful to be included in the large group of people who have been blessed to be one of Sheila’s friends.”

In years to come, no one may be able to count how many showers Sheila Cook has hosted, how many people she has welcomed into her home, or how many prayers she has offered on behalf of the DBU community; but her lasting legacy will certainly be the faithfulness, dedication, and joy that she has embodied over the past 25 years.



Pictured above (top to bottom) is Sheila Cook along with Donna Jones and the late Amy Jones, former DBU Trustee; the Cooks’ granddaughter Molly; longtime friend Janet Denison; and the Cook family: Mark, Gary, Sheila, Molly, Nicole, and David.