



Elder Donald F. Gilbert

October 8, 1930 - August 7, 2022

Donald F. Gilbert

Donald Floyd Gilbert died on August 7 in Gentry, Arkansas, United States. He was 91. He was born on October 8, 1930, in Belle Fourche, South Dakota, to Floyd Parker Gilbert and Alice Mildred Sorenson Gilbert. He grew up on the 1,100-acre (445-hectare) family farm and sheep ranch in the Black Hills, where he learned early on the value of hard work and developed a strong work ethic that he retained for the rest of his life. South Dakota was Don's home until he graduated from high school and enrolled at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1948.

During a time that Don spent at his home (now in Minnesota), he met a girl named Irene Julius. Eventually, Don and Irene fell in love. Irene graduated from Maplewood Academy in the spring of 1951, and six months later, on December 25, Don and Irene were married. Don was 21. Irene was 18.

Don and Irene both took heavy class loads each year, enabling Don to graduate from Union College in 1955 with a degree in business. The couple accepted a call to serve at Sandia View Academy in Sandoval, New Mexico. After seven years of marriage, Don and Irene welcomed Russell into their family in 1959. In 1960, Ozark Academy called, and Don and Irene pulled up stakes and moved to Gentry, Arkansas. Then, in 1961, they moved to Taiwan,

where Don served as treasurer of the South China Island Union Mission for the next 13 years. Upon arrival, Don immersed himself in language study and soon became proficient in Mandarin. With this ability, he was often asked to officiate in weddings, of course giving the homily in Mandarin. A few months later, on June 5, 1962, Kathy was welcomed into the world.

The responsibilities of his work took Don away from home to Hong Kong, Macao, and other far-flung parts of Asia. In 1974, Don was asked to be the assistant treasurer of the Far Eastern Division located in Singapore. He accepted and enjoyed the challenges of the larger field that extended across Asia from Indonesia in the south to Japan in the north. After a short period of time as assistant treasurer, Don was appointed division treasurer, a position he held until 1981.

Not long after they put in their request to return to the U.S., Don received an invitation to serve as the treasurer of the newly reorganized, but struggling, Iowa-Missouri Conference. Don accepted, and he and Irene moved to Des Moines, Iowa. In 1984, church leaders asked him to serve as an associate treasurer at the General Conference, the church's world headquarters. A year later, he was elected to serve as the treasurer of the General Conference, a position he held until he and Irene retired in 1995.

After retiring in 1995, Don and Irene returned to Arkansas. Although officially retired, Don never really retired. In 1995, he and Irene spent six months volunteering at the Sir Run Run Shaw Hospital in Guangzhou, where he enjoyed using his Mandarin language skills once again. Don also served on the board of Adventist Heritage Ministry, spending countless weeks and months working on church heritage sites in the Northeast and Michigan as well as sharing the fascinating history of the Adventist Church with Pathfinders attending International Pathfinder Camporees in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

According to his son, Don lived his life with purpose and gusto. He shared his faith right up to the end of his life. He urged everyone who visited him during his final days to “never give up.” It was his dying wish, hope, and prayer that he will meet his family and friends again when he rises from the grave.