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On July 22, 2002, Corella Allen Bonner died after complications arising from a stroke six days earlier. Her funeral was held at the Nassau Presbyterian Church in her hometown of Princeton, New Jersey. Six weeks later, on September 9th, a memorial service was held at the Princeton University Chapel. On that day more than 700 people from around the country gathered to honor a woman they admired, pay tribute to the life she led, and mourn the loss of her friendship.

Despite the overwhelming turnout at this event, there were many more who wanted to attend but could not. Many who did attend have asked for copies of the service. These realities and requests have led to this publication. Because of the number of participants in the service, tracking down everyone's remarks was not a simple task.

The words and sentiments that were shared on that day offered deep insight into the meaning not only of Mrs. Bonner's life and death but also of our lives, here and now. The friends and admirers who spoke on that day, whether a college president or student refugee from a war-torn country, affirmed the life of a devout woman and reaffirmed the life of the spirit.

On that day Buddhist, Muslim, Hindu, and Jewish faiths and traditions were upheld and connected to the life of Mrs. Bonner and her Christian practice. On that day Christians from many backgrounds, including Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Church of God, offered a diverse, yet unified, affirmation of the Christian spirit.

Mrs. Bonner's devotion and practice of her Christian faith, and her openness to and acceptance of all people of faith, help us understand and affirm the divine presence in ourselves and in each other. She did not simply encourage service or practice giving. She was inspired to serve and give because of her faith. Her philanthropy and her generosity were founded upon and affirmed by her beliefs. This truth was the central theme of her life.
A Tribute to a Local Hero
Letter to the Editor
Printed in the Princeton Packet, September 8, 2002

Mrs. Bonner grew up in the coal mining towns of Kentucky and West Virginia. And despite her moving into their grand home at 36 Rosedale, she never forgot the struggles and hardships she endured as a child. When she took over as chair of the Bonner Foundation with the passing of her husband, she approached this leadership position with the passion, commitment, and enthusiasm of youth. Despite her age, she would travel throughout the country, visiting the students she supported and the administrators and community members she admired. In one eight-day stretch, she visited eight colleges, covering more than 1,300 miles throughout the Appalachian Mountains. I did the driving.

Those who knew her would see her zip around town in her little blue Volvo, on her way to get her hair done at Kathy’s, with her dog Zorro going to the vet, or on Sunday morning going to church—where she always sat in the middle of the right-hand side next to the aisle. There was hardly a day when she would not pull into the driveway of the Bonner Foundation to check in with her staff and to discuss current activities as well as plan future policies.

One thing few people knew about was her age. Not that she kept it a secret, but rather no one would believe she was 93. When she would remark that someone was looking old, despite that person being 10 or 15 years younger than she, I would protest that it was not fair for her to compare. Few of us will be lucky to have the kind of health, energy, and outlook that Mrs. Bonner had at her age.
Mrs. Bonner was both tough and tender. Despite a limited formal education, she was brilliant, well read, and a stickler for good grammar—never allowing a misplaced ‘me’ or ‘I’ to go uncorrected. She expected a lot out of people, but never more than she demanded of herself. She was wonderful to everyone who encountered her. She had an uncanny ability to forgive people who disappointed her or somehow made a bad choice. She wasn’t by any means a pushover, but she would allow people to make mistakes and then correct those mistakes, realizing and embracing the fact that we are all human. Mrs. Bonner had the ability to make each of us feel better about ourselves—I guess in large part because she believed in who we are and what we could do. As a result, we drew strength and courage to become who we always hoped we might be.
Order of Service
Monday, September 9, 2002
1:00 PM

Prelude Dr. David Messineo
Principal Organist, Princeton University

Welcome Rev. Sue Anne Steffey Morrow
Chaplain, Princeton University

Hymn “Now Thank We All Our God”
Hymn No. 419
English Verse

Introduction Rev. Wayne Meisel
President, The Bonner Foundation

Remarks Malesore Hajdini
Bonner Scholar, Union College

Linda Meisel
Director, Jewish Family and Children’s Service
of Mercer County

Lan To
Bonner Alumna, Rhodes College

Abhishek Singh
Bonner Scholar, Concord College

Music “Al Shlosha D’varim”
The Covenant Singers
Sue Ellen Page, Director
Desiree Melegrito, Accompanist

Sung in Hebrew. Translation:
“The World is Sustained by three things:
by truth, by justice and by peace.”

Remarks Dr. Timothy Thyeeren
President, Waynesburg College
Rev. Felecia Pearson-Smith
Director, Spelman Bonner Program

Kenneth F. Kunzman
Board Member, The Bonner Foundation

Passing of the Peace

Prayer
Rev. Dr. John Kuykendall
President Emeritus, Davidson College
Board Member, The Bonner Foundation

Hymn
“Amazing Grace”
Hymn No. 547

Benediction
Rev. Dr. Stuart Lord
Associate Provost and Dean, Dartmouth College
Former Bonner Director, DePauw University

Recession
Organ
Dr. David Messineo

At the end of the service we will be led by two bagpipers and recess from the University Chapel to the Bonner Foundation where there will be a reception. All are welcome to participate and encouraged to attend.
It is an honor to welcome you to the University Chapel. In this service of thanksgiving to God for the life of Corella Allen Bonner, the University Chapel serves as the intersection of religious life and social justice, Christian faith and community engagement—a place of compassion in a liberal arts institution; and so it is fitting that we are here to celebrate Mrs. Bonner’s witness and God’s love.
Now Thank We All Our God

Now thank we all our God with heart and hands and voices,  
Who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices,  
Who, from our parents’ arms, has blessed us on our way  
With countless gifts of love, and still is ours today.

O may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
With ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,  
And keep us still in grace, and guide us when perplexed,  
And free us from all ills in this world and the next.

All praise and thanks to God our Maker now be given,  
To Christ, and Spirit, too, our help in highest heaven,  
The one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore,  
For thus it was, is now, and shall be evermore.
Rev. Wayne Meisel  
President of the Bonner Foundation

- A thirteen-hour bus ride from Western North Carolina;
- A 4 am wake up and a three-hour drive to Louisville Airport, a flight to Baltimore on Southwest Airlines, and a ride on Amtrak to Trenton;
- An early flight this morning from Atlanta to Newark Airport and a car ride to Princeton;
- A ten-hour ride, a ten-minute walk.

Hundreds of us involved in the Bonner community have traveled by bus, by plane, by train, by automobile, and by foot not only to celebrate the life and work of Mrs. Bonner, but also to recommit ourselves to her vision of service.

College presidents, faculty, trustees, Bonner directors and coordinators, Bonner Scholars and Bonner Leaders, and community members from thirty-four colleges are in attendance today. Dozens of congregations and anti-poverty agencies who have received funds from the Bonner Foundation and received support and encouragement from Mrs. Bonner are here today. You have come from as close as across campus to as far away as Tennessee, Minnesota, and Washington State.

This weekend we have gathered together to break bread, to plant over 1,000 daffodil bulbs, to plant trees and bushes as a memorial garden, to glean over a thousand pounds of tomatoes for the local area food bank, and to prepare and cook soup for three hundred. We did all of this in order that we may pay tribute to Mrs. Bonner.
In late July, Mrs. Bonner’s funeral service was held at the Nassau Presbyterian Church here in Princeton. The sanctuary was filled with members of her church, as well as other family and friends, to be a part of a worship service that celebrated her life. Today we gather as the Bonner community to do the same and also to affirm our allegiance to her and to each other. Mr. and Mrs. Bonner have not only brought us together but helped make us who we are today—both as individuals and as a community.

While all of us have been made to feel like part of the Bonner family, I would like to introduce to you her son, Bert Bonner, Jr., her daughter, Carol Clark, and her grandson, Bradford Bonner. Also with us are Thelma and Adrick, who have worked for years for Mrs. Bonner at her house. Unfortunately, Maria, Mrs. Bonner’s long-time friend and housekeeper, was not able to be with us at this service. But we do remember her today.

The only thing firmer than Mrs. Bonner’s handshake was her faith. It was as strong as it was simple, founded in a daily reading of scripture, morning and evening prayers, and regular attendance at church. She read her Bible every day. She drew her strength and lived her life based on her relationship with God and urged others to do likewise.

People of different faiths encountered her and felt her love and support. She embraced each one of them with a witness of Christian love that was not intended to convert but rather simply to share that sense of Christian love that was so important to her and which she embodied.

Many faith traditions are represented here today. I have asked the first group of presenters to honor Mrs. Bonner by talking about their encounters with her and the Bonner Foundation from their own faith journey.

And I have asked others to draw from, recognize, and honor Mrs. Bonner from her own faith tradition, as we offer a Christian memorial service to a woman who centered her life around Christ’s love.
Hello, my name is Malesore Hajdini. I am from Kosova and I am Albanian.

In 1998 the war started in Kosova between Serbs and Albanians.

In 1999 my mom, my brothers, and I were forced to leave home. That same year my family and I came to Denver, Colorado as refugees. When I got to Union College, I found out about the Bonner Scholars Program. I have always wanted to help people—especially children.

At that time I had only heard about Mrs. Bonner; I never dreamt that I would meet her. But luckily during my freshman year, I had an opportunity to be invited to her house for lunch during a service trip to New Jersey.

It was a dream come true to meet her. She was very interested to know about my country and how I got to the U.S. For me coming from a Muslim background and Mrs. Bonner coming from a Christian background, she was very gracious the way she accepted me. She was not concerned with our religious differences.

In the moments I spent with Mrs. Bonner, I felt that all of her words and actions were sincere.

Recent events in the world have brought to the surface so many emotions regarding religious and ethnic differences. Some people have felt very threatened by these differences, while others have chosen to embrace them for the sake of unity. Thinking about my country, Kosova, I remember what an
important part faith played in our lives. In Kosova, there are people of
many religions, Muslims, Catholics, Protestants, etc. But these differences
were never part of our daily life; they were celebrated and accepted. And
that is why I think that the Bonner Program has meant so much to me.
Mrs. Bonner accepted and embraced every part of me—she made me feel
at home. How many of you here today could say the same thing?

Last summer I worked with orphans back home. It was my job to add cheer
to their lives—at least for the summer. While I was there, I worked with
children who either had lost their parents or didn’t know what really hap-
pened to their parents.

I am one of those people.

Since May 1998, when my dad was taken from our home, my family and I
have wondered where he may be. What really happened? I didn’t know
what happened to him at the time, and I still don’t know. After searching
in many places I discovered the Council of Defense of Human Rights and
Freedoms, an organization that deals with missing persons from the war. I
worked with this group for my Bonner summer service placement. Four
hundred families have received news about their loved ones. Unfortunately
all of them are victims, but at least their families know the truth.

Mrs. Bonner has taught me the truth—the truth about God's love and com-
mitment.

The truth that Muslims and Christians are brothers and sisters—not en-
emies or adversaries.

Mrs. Bonner taught me about the truth about myself: that I am a child of
God who has a place in this world and who is called to live out a role of
service, commitment, and love.

Finally, an Albanian prayer for Mrs. Bonner…my friend.

“Zoti e bekoftë dhe e nderoftë jetën dhe vepren e saj, nderkaq
brezat qe vijne le te vazhdojne rrugen e saj.”
“Ani Ve’ata Neshane et ha’olam—You and I can change the World.” The words of this Hebrew song urges each of us to take responsibility to change the world—to collectively work together to make the world a better place. Through Mrs. Bonner’s vision and the support of the Bonner Foundation, I had the opportunity to change my world, the Jewish community here in the Greater Princeton area, by opening the Ohel Avraham Kosher Food Pantry. Ohel Avraham translates to Tent of Abraham, honoring the Patriarch Abraham who opened his tent to the strangers and fed them as they were hungry. The Mitzvah, the commandment to feed the hungry is not voluntary, but rather part of the context of living a Jewish life and a continuing Jewish tradition. Yet, for many Jews, the hungry were seen as those outside their own community. Jews were not hungry. The path to the establishment of the Ohel Avraham Kosher Food Pantry was rocky, as there were those in the Jewish community who could not believe that there were hungry among us.

The notion that there were members of the Jewish community who simply did not have enough food was considered unthinkable. Mrs. Bonner, with her thoughtfulness and caring, recognized that this stereotype was unfair and burdened both the individuals in need of the food and the community itself. Yet Mrs. Bonner was unwavering in her support. After considerable discussion within the community we pushed forward, and, with initial funding from the Bonner Foundation, the Ohel Avraham Kosher Food Pantry became a reality.

Anne Frank said, “How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single
moment before starting to improve the world.” And so it was when the Ohel Avraham Kosher Food Pantry opened its doors. Families came immediately looking to the pantry to provide much-needed food. The community paradigm shifted as Jewish congregations took note that each time they brought food it quickly disappeared as families used the pantry. What did this mean for our community? Yes, indeed, there were Jewish people who were hungry. This inspired congregations to take an increasingly active role in gathering food. Next Sunday night as we in the Jewish community begin the fast of Yom Kippur, congregations will gather hundreds of bags of Kosher food for the pantry so that our voluntary fast has increased meaning. The Ohel Avraham Food Pantry is a Kosher food pantry respecting and affirming the Jewish tradition of Kashruth (keeping Kosher).

Mrs. Bonner recognized and honored this core value by supporting the Kosher Food Pantry, understanding that, for our families, it is their strong and vital link to faith. As Jews, we are commanded to feed the hungry as part of the overriding Jewish tradition of Tikkun Olam, repairing/healing the world. Mrs. Bonner shared this vision, knowing that addressing the issue of hunger is central to healing the world. For me, whose personal and professional life is deeply intertwined with my faith, the challenge to change preset communal ideas and expand the giving and caring capacity of my community has been a true gift. In the Jewish Midrash Psalms it says, “When you are asked in the world to come ‘What was your work?’ and you answer ‘I fed the hungry’ you will be told ‘This is the gate of the Lord, enter into it you who have fed the hungry.’” I believe Mrs. Bonner has entered that gate.
Ms. Lan To  
Alumna, Bonner Scholars Program

In the temple of my childhood, the bell was a calling—an encouragement to mindfulness and awakening. It called us to listen deeply and appreciate the moment in which we were living. After a pause, we resumed or reentered our activities and lives with renewed energy, vision, and hope.

Mrs. Corella Bonner is like this bell. She called me and my fellow Bonners to be mindful of the communities that we live in. To be mindful is to be deeply aware of its circumstances and its needs. Mrs. Bonner was our Bodhisattva that stood before us to say “You can do it!” And after a pause, we returned to our communities with the loving capacity that she knew we all possessed.

In Buddhism, a Bodhisattva is an “awakened being.” The capacity to wake up, to understand, to love is called Buddha nature. It was through Mrs. Bonner’s generosity and vision in the Bonner Scholars Program that I came to learn that we are all Buddhas. It is through each of us that understanding and love becomes tangible and effective. When we realize awakening, when we are compassionate, each of us emanates the Buddha. Mrs. Bonner has given us all the opportunity to wake, understand, and love.

The Buddha teaches the interconnectedness of all things. The Bonner Scholars Program ingrained this important facet of life into my being and belief system. My service experience at Rhodes allowed me to explore my Buddha nature and that of others. At the same time, it opened my eyes to the concept that we are all empty—empty of a separate, independent existence. We are all connected to each other and the world around us in
undeniable ways. Within us, we hold everything and nothing at the same time. We hold the joys and sorrows of every being and creature. This is why service is one of the greatest efforts towards peace. To serve one person, one tree, one piece of trash, is to serve the entire world. When you produce peace and happiness for yourself and others, you begin to realize peace for the whole world.

I was first introduced to the essence of human compassion when I was a very young girl. My family had arrived in the United States from a refugee camp in Malaysia. In our first two years in America, my family was adopted by an entire community of Catholics. They taught my parents how to read, how to drive, how to write a check, and even how to make french fries. Although we were not Catholics, the spirit of service and helping one’s fellow human beings made an enormous impact on me.

In Buddhism, we do not conceive the birth of anything. There is only continuation. One form of energy can only become another form of energy. This is reincarnation. No matter what your faith, I think we can all agree that Mrs. Corella Bonner continues to live within all of us. Therefore, every act of good or evil that we choose to do reflects her life as well. So please continue to serve. Continue to love. Continue to forgive. Continue to find joy and hope. Continue to choose the great acts in which Mrs. Bonner lived for herself. She will be in the flowers that you plant, the children that you teach, the elders that you greet, and she will smile and say “hello.”

People continue to be with us after death, perhaps even more than before, because they continue in other forms. We, ourselves, continue their being. I am honored to carry the name of “Bonner Scholar” not only because of the great opportunity and service that it grants to communities and young people across the nation, but also because it embodies the nature of a strong, caring, youthful, loving, and generous woman. In her face, you see the angel. In her face, you see the Buddha. In her face, you see peace.
Mr. Abhishek Singh  
**Bonner Scholar, Concord College**

Sanskrit Sloak:  
Let us pray:

Om Purnamhdah: Purnamidam Purnat Purnamnudachete  
Purnas Purnamah: dayet Purnamehyah: Vasisstey  
Om Sahnti Shanti Shanti hi.

According to this Sloak:  
Completion is a pristine and pure state.  
Completion can be mathematically seen as a zero.  
Adding zero to zero, results in zero.  
Likewise, subtracting, dividing, and multiplying zero by zero leaves the zero unaffected.

The vastness of completion can be compared with the vastness of the ocean.  
Adding or subtracting water from the ocean does not affect its vastness.

Most of us strive for completion, but only some of us realize that the completion cannot be achieved by just leading our individual, solitary lives in isolation.

These people also realize that we can only enrich our lives and eventually achieve completion by enriching the lives of others.

I encountered one such soul—Mrs. Bonner. She touched my life in a way
which provided me the education I need to realize my potential and incul-
cated in me the desire to be complete through service.

Immortality may be biologically impossible, but some people live in our
hearts for eternity through their actions and example. Mrs. Bonner is one
such soul and she will live within us as long as we lead the Bonner way of
life. So, today I ask you to make a promise to this Bonner family that we
will keep Mrs. Bonner alive within us through service.
Al shlosha d’ varim haolam kayam, Al haemet v’al hadin v’al hashalom. The world is sustained by three things: by truth, by justice, and by peace.

— A Maxim from Pirkei Avot (Jewish morality laws)
In the early 1990s Waynesburg College was rediscovering its founding mission as an institution of Christian higher education. The focus was placed on helping students to develop a purposeful life. At the center of their experience was the idea that service to God would be demonstrated through one's service to others—within the community and throughout the world. Community service became a core requirement for all students. It was at this crucial moment that the Bonner Foundation offered their support to Waynesburg College by providing scholarships for needy students who would do community service. I had the opportunity to share the importance of the Foundation’s support with Mrs. Bonner on her first visit to our campus. We had a personal discussion about our Christian faith. She enthusiastically agreed that the talents that God has given to each one of us must be used to improve the condition of all humankind.

The belief that all people are the children of God was a major tenet of her faith. Mrs. Bonner loved the example that I often shared of two of our finest Bonner Scholars, who had chosen to live together as roommates: one was a Christian and one was a Muslim. Both students regarded service as an integral part of their faith. Augie and Antwon were wonderful models for the rest of our students as to how two people of different faiths could live and serve together to better humankind. Augie later described his experience as a Bonner Scholar at Waynesburg College as “a time of awakening and transformation.”

All of us who knew Mrs. Bonner would agree that she made each one of us feel important. She was interested in every Bonner student and would take
the time to hear each story—the story of how they became a Bonner Scholar and the service that they were presently involved in. When she would visit a service site, she was most interested in hearing from the people who were being served. She truly cared about each one and wanted to know their story—gracious and generous with her time and love. She would often share her own story in order to show that she understood how hard life can be. She always spoke with compassion.

It was her zest for life that always encouraged me. On one of her last visits to our campus, Mrs. Bonner and I were standing on the balcony of our Stover Campus Center overlooking the many improvements. As I shared some of the future projects and pointed to the direction of the sites, she turned to me and said (with her usual enthusiasm and directness) “Oh, I hope that I live long enough to see it!” She paused and then said “Oh, but I’m ready to go,” and threw up her hands as a sign that her life was in God’s hands.

I consider it as one of the privileges of my presidency to have known Mrs. Bonner. Carolyn and I would often remind our students on one of Mrs. Bonner’s visits to campus that they were the privileged few who would have the opportunity to meet her and to know her. To be greeted by her beautiful smile and the warmth of her personality was a treasured moment, as was the opportunity to say “thank you” in person to the one who was so faithful in providing the means for a college education. Mrs. Bonner is no longer with us, but in the center of our campus center is the Bonner Leadership Center—with photos of her visits to our college and photos of our Bonner Scholars doing community service, literally throughout the world—which will continue to tell the story to future Bonner students who come to our college and to challenge them to make a difference with their lives. We are thankful to God for Mrs. Bonner—for her faithful model of living and serving.
Rev. Felecia Pearson-Smith  
Director, Bonner Scholars Program  
Spelman College


My first contact with Mrs. Bonner was in 1998 at the Foundation. In 1999 she visited Spelman College. Her presence and her sense of purpose touched all of us. Her interaction with the students was wonderful! The thing that struck me most about Mrs. Bonner was her faith. Through her life experiences she was able to put her faith into action. The last conversation that I had with her was in December 2000 at a breakfast here in Princeton.

I always commented on the necklace that she wore. It was a simple gold chain with a charm which displayed her belief and trust in God. Here was a woman who had the resources to establish one of the greatest service programs in this country, and yet she realized that “to whom much is given, much is required.” I believe that she lived her life understanding this spiritual principle.

So for those of us who have been left here on this earth, the question is raised, what really brings wealth and honor and life? Clearly it must be more than earthly resources for they soon will pass away.

The word of God in Proverbs 22:4 states “Humility and the fear of the Lord bring wealth and honor and life.” What do we mean by humility? Is it the posture that we take as we walk along life’s journey? Is it the worldly definition of not being proud or assertive? Do we equate it with being soft-
spoken or quiet? I would say that humility is taking what God has given you and thanking him for it. It is taking on the spirit that Christ had in Philippians 2:5-11. “Though he was in the form of God he did not count himself equal to God…He humbled himself even to the point of death on the cross.” I sensed this type of humility when I was in the presence of Mrs. Bonner.

The text just doesn’t stop with humility, but it says, “Fear of the Lord.” Fearing God means to revere Him. It is to understand that we honor our creator. It is realizing that “the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof and they that dwell therein.” Therefore, as we give and serve, we are being good stewards. We are not the owners, but we are stewards. Mrs. Bonner was a good and faithful steward. Therefore, whatever God has entrusted us to do, “we must work while it is still day.” These are the tenets that bring wealth and honor and life. How simple, but yet so profound. Humility and the fear of the Lord—I believe that this was part of the legacy left by Mrs. Bonner.

Finally, being an African-American institution with a Bonner program enables us to celebrate the life of one that gave like our founding mothers, Sophia B. Packard and Harriet Giles. Mrs. Bonner’s life will be woven into the tapestry of Spelman College…“continuing a tradition of women who serve.”
Mr. Kenneth F. Kunzman  
Board Member, the Bonner Foundation

Bert, Carol, and Brad, I speak to you and the many friends of your mother and grandmother in a representative capacity—on behalf of the Board of Trustees of her beloved Foundation.

We on the Board were particularly blessed to share with her—her ideals, passion, and total commitment to “helping others.” I would be remiss and in clear error if I did not refer at this service to her late husband, your father, and grandfather, Bertram F. Bonner. For it is through him that each member of the Board became involved and committed to implement the unique ideas they both shared to help a myriad of people by giving them the opportunity to serve others as you have heard so eloquently expressed from the speakers today.

It was the combination of Bert Bonner’s development genius and Billie Bonner’s deep abiding faith that permitted the Foundation to be formed and developed. As Mr. Bonner said to us all, “I didn’t make my money foolishly, and I am not going to give it away foolishly.” They created a foundation of substance and order.

Their relationship was one of complete trust, and he frequently reminded us that he only had one partner in his life who shared equally with him—his wife. But I do not believe that Mr. Bonner, for all his genius and trust in her, would ever have envisioned the extent to which she succeeded in fulfilling their dream. She was no shrinking violet; she was no absentee chairman. She devoted all the time and energy she could to visit schools, meet the presidents, meet the students, and to become Mother Bonner to thousands.
We on the Board marveled and frankly worried about the sometimes ex-hausting schedule that she kept, but when caution was suggested, she would firmly, and I emphasize firmly, say, “This is what I want to do and I love it.” Our fellow Board member, her daughter, Carol, was an integral part of her ability to fulfill these commitments, and we thank her for her efforts and pure love for her mother.

The Board has always received the support of Bert, Jr. and we thank him for that support. His son, Bradford, had a unique relationship with his grandmother, and I believe he truly considered her one of his best friends. We thank Brad for that relationship.

The Trustees of the Foundation are now joined by Dr. John Kuykendall, who not only was an integral part of the initial planning for the Foundation but was always a close and valued friend of the Bonner family. Mrs. Bonner personally endorsed the appointment of Dr. Kuykendall prior to her death, knowing that he would give valuable insight to the Board.

It has been said that death is not a putting out of the light—it is rather an extinguishing of the lamp because the dawn has come.

Billie Bonner lived her life always with the dawn of that new day before her. She was like one of the attentive women of the Bible who waited with her lamp lit with plenty in reserve ready to meet her God in the new day which she now shares.

Reference has been made to her daily recognition of her faith by the simple necklace she wore—Try God. She wore it proudly but not pretentiously. She tried God every day of her life, and we are sure she is discovering the perpetual happiness for trying. I think the greatest legacy of her wonderful giving life is to follow her example and her motto and to Try God.

Billie will be sorely missed, and there will be a true void on the Board, but we will continue to follow her example and to the best of our abilities fulfill her desires for the Foundation.

We bid goodbye, Billie, and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.
Mrs. Bonner had an uncanny ability to make people feel special, to make us feel like we had become what someday we hoped we might be. There were times when I would get annoyed when she would take group after group to those fine restaurants, La Bonne Auberge and Lahiere’s, which she loved to frequent. There was something that didn’t sit well with my Scottish sensibilities. But in the last six weeks since she died, I have come to understand and appreciate her actions. She treated all of us like we were dignitaries, because in her eyes, we were.

I then had the realization that no one would treat me or most of us as nicely as she treated us—no one, that is, unless we learned from Mrs. Bonner and her lessons of hospitality, empowerment, forgiveness, and belief in people. Then I realized what we could do is treat each other the way she treated us.

And so I am again reminded of the Apostle Paul and his words to the church in Philippi, which might well have been Mrs. Bonner’s words to us: “Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”

So with your neighbor in front and in back and side-to-side pass the peace of God’s love by saying “peace be with you” and responding “and also with you.”
Almighty and Eternal God, before whom ages and generations rise and pass away; our times are in your hands. You have shown us the marks of our mortality and the transience of our days—“threescore [years] and ten, or even by reason of strength fourscore”—all encompassed by your loving care and support. Surely it is enough; and more than our deserving.

Yet we gather this day to say our thanks for your servant, Billie Bonner, and especially for the extra measure of life you gave to her, both in years and in attentiveness to your call.

We thank you for her faithfulness to you and your kingdom; for her unfailing openness to life and to all its experiences; for the many ways in which she touched so many lives; for her respect and dedication to all your children; for the special capacity she had to make each of us feel unique; for her infectious good humor, her persistent optimism, her sincere encouragement to those around her as they confronted the challenges and opportunities of life.

We thank you for her dedication and skill in dealing with her own several and particular callings in life: daughter, sister, wife, mother, and grandmother; business person, church member, volunteer, board member; these latter days (when others of her age might seek rest) presiding officer of a creative and notable foundation, where she was not only supervisor, but colleague, cheerleader, and servant.
We give you thanks, O God, for all the ways in which Billie Bonner has set a good example for us all. In her we have seen grace; we have seen faith and faithfulness, wit and wisdom, sense and sensitivity, joy and gentleness, compassion and creativity and caring.

As we give thanks from hearts full of gratitude for the instances and occasions upon her pilgrimage in which her life touched each of ours, grant us also the will and the way to make her good example our own; to “Try God” and put our whole trust in you; to live as your faithful servants; to seek justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with you, for all the days of our lives.

We pray for your name’s sake. Amen.
Amazing Grace

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.

’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!

Through many dangers, toils, and snares, I have already come;
’Tis grace has brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.

My God has promised good to me, whose word my hope secures;
God will my shield and portion be as long as life endures.

When we’ve been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise than when we’d first begun.
Benediction
Rev. Dr. Stuart C. Lord
Associate Provost and Dean of the Tucker Foundation at Dartmouth College

I pray that we all leave here this afternoon with the lessons and the values that represent the life of Mrs. Bonner. That these lessons will grow in our hearts and consciences today, tomorrow, and all the days of our lives. I invite you now to repeat after me:

I am only one,
but still I am one.
I cannot do everything,
but still I can do something.
What I can do,
I shall do,
and with faith,
and with the help of another,
I will do.
I am only One, but still I am One.
With the help of another, I will do.
List of Participants

Ms. Malesore Hajdini, Bonner Scholar, Union College
Only days before Ms. Hajdini enrolled at Union College, she was a refugee from Kosova living in Denver, Colorado. She and her mother both now live in Barbourville, Kentucky, where Union College is located. For her Bonner summer service, Ms. Hajdini returned to her home country and worked at the Council of Defense for Human Rights and Freedoms and dealt with the missing persons unit that operates in Kosova.

Mr. Kenneth F. Kunzman, Board Member of the Bonner Foundation
Mr. Kunzman has been a friend to Mr. and Mrs. Bonner for two decades. He has served as an attorney for the Bonners and is founding member of the Bonner Foundation Board of Trustees.

Rev. Dr. John Kuykendall, President Emeritus, Davidson College
As one of the founding college presidents involved in the Bonner Scholars Program, Dr. Kuykendall has helped shape and lead the Bonner Program since its inception. A former Princeton resident, John and his wife Missy were among Mrs. Bonner’s closest friends and regularly accompanied her on an annual trip to England. Dr. Kuykendall is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Rev. Dr. Stuart C. Lord, Associate Provost and Dean of the Tucker Foundation at Dartmouth College
Previously, Dr. Lord was the founding director of the Bonner Scholars Program at DePauw University. Dr. Lord is an ordained minister in the American Baptist Church.

Ms. Linda Meisel, Director of the Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Mercer County
Ms. Meisel is a long-standing community leader in Princeton, New Jersey. Under her leadership and with the support of the Bonner Foundation’s Crisis Ministry Program, the first Kosher food bank in Mercer County, New Jersey was created.

Rev. Wayne Meisel, President of the Bonner Foundation
Rev. Wayne Meisel is the President of the Corella and Bertram F. Bonner
Foundation. He is an ordained minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA).

**Rev. Sue Anne Steffey Morrow, Associate Dean of Religious Life and the Chapel**
Rev. Morrow’s responsibilities include advising the Student Volunteer Council, which is a student-directed community engagement program that sponsors weekly projects, break trips, summer internships, and the Community Action Program.

**Rev. Felecia Pearson-Smith, Director of the Bonner Scholars Program, Spelman College**
For the past four years, Rev. Pearson-Smith has served as the Director of the Bonner Scholars Program at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. She is an ordained minister in the Church of God, Anderson, Indiana.

**Mr. Abhishek Singh, Bonner Scholar, Concord College**
Mr. Singh is a junior Bonner Scholar at Concord College in Athens, West Virginia. He serves as a member of the Bonner Student Congress, a leadership group within the Bonner Foundation. Mr. Singh is the current student body president. He was born in India.

**Dr. Timothy Thyreen, President, Waynesburg College**
Dr. Thyreen is one of the founding college presidents of the Bonner Scholars Program. He is also a founding member of the Bonner Foundation Presidents’ Advisory Committee. Waynesburg College is located in southwestern Pennsylvania and is affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (USA).

**Ms. Lan To, Bonner Scholar Alumna, Rhodes College**
Following her graduation, Ms. To came to Princeton to serve as the Bonner Intern, a one-year appointment for a recent graduate of the Bonner Scholars Program. She now works for the Eagle Rock School in Estes Park, Colorado.

**The Covenant Singers**
The Covenant Singers are a community initiative led by Nassau Presbyterian Church of Princeton, New Jersey, the home church of Mr. and Mrs. Bonner. Led by founder and music director, Sue Ellen Page, the Covenant Singers are made up of middle school students from among the choristers at Nassau Church and from the Trenton Children’s Chorus, a Bonner Foundation grantee.
Resolution Honoring
Mrs. Corella Allen Bonner
By the Board of Trustees of the Bonner Foundation
September 9, 2002

With this being the first board meeting following Mrs. Bonner’s death, the Board of Trustees of the Bonner Foundation puts forth the following resolution to express our collective sentiments. The resolution reads as follows:

In honor of Corella Allen Bonner and her

■ founding of the Bonner Foundation along with her late husband, Bertram;

■ determined leadership as Chair of the Board for the past eight years;

■ example of service that she left to Bonner Scholars and Bonner Leaders across the country;

■ involvement in the colleges and agencies that she supported, both financially and emotionally;

■ devotion to her family and friends;

■ commitment to her church and Christian faith,

The Board of Trustees puts forth this resolution of gratitude and appreciation for the life’s work and her generosity of spirit.

We recognize the trust and encouragement that she and Mr. Bonner gave to the Foundation’s Board of Trustees, and we commit ourselves to ensuring the legacy of her wonderful life and the vision and mission of the Bonner Foundation.
We thank thee, Lord, for the life and times of your servant and our friend, Billie Bonner: a loving daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, citizen, manager, community leader, board chair, philanthropist, friend, and Christian.

We begin by honoring her very real, down-to-earth, day-by-day, practical and practicing, prayerful faith in you, as signaled not least of all by the simple “Try God” necklace that she wore every day and by her presence here in her pew, down the right center aisle and to the right, Sunday after Sunday, year after year.

We call to mind the fine, supportive wife she was to husband, Bert, their fifty years of marriage, out of which came the Foundation that bears both of their names.

We remember her commitment to her mother and the enduring, mischievous, joyful relationship that she had with her sister, Pat, for whom we pray this day.

We honor the loving mother Billie was to Bert, Jr., to Carol and husband Ray, her deep fondness for her grandson, Brad, his mother, Helen, and her love for granddaughter, Elizabeth, whose courageous young life ended too early.

We remember her many years of active involvement in the work of the New Jersey Neuro-Psychiatric Institute in Skillman and the close friend-
ships that she developed there, including her soul mate, Sister O’Hara, and young friend, Genevieve Gorman.

We remember her dependence on the Mayo Clinic and her support of the clinic in research and education.

Many of us sitting here this afternoon have reason to claim Billie’s caring and supportive friendship and love. She was generous in every way.

And we gather here today to celebrate her founding role in the Bonner Foundation, an institution that affords a powerful, living legacy of her faith in God, her belief in others, and her hope for the future.

As part of all that, we celebrate:

- Her role in the founding of the Crisis Ministry program, first here in this community and then in hundreds of communities throughout the country;

- Her own daily presence in the office and her presence on those now-famous marathon trips to the many college communities;

- Her engaging in the lives of her staff and her confidence and trust in her Board of Trustees;

- Her genuine interest in and love for the thousands of Bonner Scholars whom she supported by providing an access to higher education and an opportunity to serve;

- Her support of the college presidents and the important institutions that they lead;

- Her role in the pioneering of the notion of service-based scholarships in higher education and the expansion of the concept throughout the country by the creation of the Bonner Leaders Program.

We honor Billie Bonner’s strong commitment to the Foundation and her determination that it live on well beyond this day, as symbolized by the purchase and restoration of 10 Mercer Street, the home of her Foundation and the repository of her values, beliefs, hopes, and dreams.

Lord, hear our prayer for Maria, Billie’s faithful friend and housemate for a quarter of a century. May the memory of their long afternoon walks to-
gether across Elm, down Cleveland Lane, and up Hodge Road be sustain-
ing to her now.

We give thanks that by her endearing presence, her ready smile, her spon-
taneous laughter, her simple elegance, and her courageous faith, she gave
definition to what it means to be both Christian servant and leader.
Corella Allen Bonner, 93, of Princeton Borough died July 22 of complications arising from a stroke. She passed away in Jackson, Wyoming where she was vacationing.

Mrs. Bonner was the widow of Mr. Bertram F. Bonner, a developer and builder whose property interests extended from Massachusetts to Florida and included more than 30,000 homes and apartments. The two of them together co-founded the foundation that carries their name. Upon the death of her husband in 1993, she assumed the role of Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Since it was activated in 1989, the Bonner Foundation has awarded over $100 million dollars, mostly to congregations, colleges and universities. The foundation continues to thrive at its office in Princeton, New Jersey. In 1990, the Bonner Foundation inaugurated the Bonner Scholars Program that has now grown to support more than 1,500 students annually to attend college and engage in community service activities while in school. Every year this group of “Bonners” (as the students call themselves) contributes more than a million hours of service. Guided by its motto of “Access to Education, Opportunity to Serve,” the Bonner Program has become a national model for service-based scholarships throughout the country. The Bonner Scholars Program represents one of the largest private scholarship programs in the country.

Born in the Tennessee mountains, Mrs. Bonner grew up in the mining towns of Kentucky and West Virginia. As part of the northern migration out of Appalachia in the early 1920’s, she left with her mother to live in Detroit.
Mrs. Bonner was an early success story as a business woman. She began working in the hotel business early on—fibbing about her age so that she could get a job at the Statler Hotel. She rose up the ranks leaving Detroit to go to New York City where she became the head of all dining services of the Statler Hotel chain. After marrying her husband, she retired from her position at the Statler Hotel chain and raised her children.

Mrs. Bonner came to work daily and, despite her age, would travel to visit the schools and the churches that she supported. In one recent trip, she traveled 1,300 miles to visit eight college campuses in eight days.

Mrs. Bonner was the recipient of thirteen honorary degrees. In 1995 the Bonner Foundation was chosen as The Foundation of the Year by the National Association of Fund-raising Executives, the national body that represents development and fund-raising professionals.

Mrs. Bonner is survived by a sister, Clayton Roger of Manchester Center, Vermont, a son, Bertram F. Bonner, Jr. of Bonita Spring, Florida, a daughter, Carol A. Clark of Wellington, Florida, and a grandson, Bradford R. Bonner of New York City.