

How Oral Roberts' Namesake University Will Honor His 100th Birthday

Jan. 24, 2018, is a special day at Oral Roberts University as we commemorate the day ORU's founder and namesake would have turned 100 years old. The university will have a daylong celebration, including dedicating our regularly scheduled chapel service to honoring and remembering Oral Roberts, his ministry, and the university he built.

In 1960, Roberts, while having dinner with Pat Robertson, wrote his vision for a university on a napkin: "Raise up your students to hear My voice, to go where My light is dim, Where My voice is small and My healing power is not known. To go even to the uttermost bounds of the earth. Their work will exceed yours and in this I am well pleased."

"Oral Roberts made no little plans throughout his life," said Dr. William M. Wilson, ORU president. "We want to honor his legacy and his extraordinary life on what would have been his 100th birthday. When he dedicated the university, he emphasized the development of the whole person, and that is still the focus of ORU's mission, 'to build Holy Spirit-empowered leaders through whole person education to impact the world with God's healing.'"

Granville Oral Roberts was born near Ada, Oklahoma on Jan. 24, 1918. After God healed him of tuberculosis at the age of 17, he became an ordained Pentecostal minister. He married Evelyn Luhman and set up his ministry in Tulsa in 1947. He traveled the world with his evangelism and healing ministry as thousands attended his tent revivals.

Oral Roberts was a pioneer in 1954 when he took his ministry to television, eventually going prime time in 1969. As the

ratings rose, his use of television sent his ministry soaring and became an important part of his ministry throughout the remainder of his life.

In 1961, he purchased 160 acres near 81st and Lewis Ave. in Tulsa and broke ground on Oral Roberts University, dedicating it in 1967. In its 50 years, the university Roberts built, on God's authority and the Holy Spirit, has grown in dramatic ways, with over 4,000 students from more than a hundred nations attending this academic year. (The story of ORU's creation, near-demise and subsequent resurrection is told in the forthcoming book *The New ORU*. Visit for more information.)

In 1972, Roberts was inducted into the Oklahoma Hall of Fame. That same year, he dedicated the Mabee Center arena which has since hosted countless basketball games, concerts and commencement ceremonies. Roberts broke ground on the City of Faith in 1978, which now houses a number of medical facilities and is the new home to the Army Corps of Engineers.

Roberts was named Chancellor of ORU in 1993, later retiring to his California home, where he passed away at the age of 91 in 2009.

The chapel service honoring Roberts begins at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 24, at Christ's Chapel on the ORU campus. The public and media can watch the chapel service live at [Directly](#) after the Centennial Chapel Celebration, a bust of Oral Roberts will be unveiled in the ORU Prayer Tower.

There will also be a special Founder's Centennial Celebration Dinner that evening at 7 p.m. at ORU's Global Learning Center. From a Napkin to the Nations is a ticketed event with proceeds going to a new International Quest Whole Person Scholarship fund to bring more students from around the world to ORU for a Spirit-empowered whole-person education.