

# **Charles Buster Prewitt**

## **May 1, 1930 – August 11, 2023**

### **Obituary**

Charles Buster Prewitt passed away peacefully on the morning of August 11, 2023, at the age of 93. Charles was a dedicated servant of God and mankind throughout his long, full life. His career began as a young pastor in the Baptist Church in Oklahoma. He served in the U.S. Air Force for 20 years as chaplain, rising to the impressive rank of Lt. Colonel. After retirement he spent 30 years as a psychotherapist in private practice, always working to help others to grow and evolve as he did. He was a philosophical, intellectual and gentle soul at work in the world.

Charlie was a dedicated father, and took his family on many adventures wherever his career took them, traveling and camping throughout Europe and the U.S.

Charlie and Martha were avid tennis players, and brought the family out to the courts regularly. They played tennis late into life before injuries sidelined them, but they continued to enjoy the game as fans.

Charlie was a singer all of his life. He performed early in childhood at school, and continued to sing in church, including many stirring solos over the years. Later in life he enjoyed being in plays, acting was an fulfilling pastime for him.

Within his nuclear family, Charles was preceded in death only by the untimely death of his son-in-law, Darleen's husband John Park.

Charles is survived by his wife of over 70 years, Martha, and six adult children.

Kathy, her husband Rick, and their daughters Crystal, Tarra, and Jessica. Karen,

Darleen, and her sons J.P., Dakota and Sawyer and daughter Amber. Kimi, and her children

Joseph, Jennifer and Charli. Keri, her husband Dennis and their children Haley and Casey, and

Kip, his wife Catherine, and their sons Logan and Evan.

All who knew Charlie will miss his kind nature, and his willingness to be with others in an authentic way.

**A Celebration of life ceremony will be held on:**

**Thursday, September 14, 2023, at 10:00 am, at the Trinity Baptist Church – 319 E. Mulberry Avenue – San Antonio, Texas 78212 with the visitation preceding it at 9:00 am. The internment ceremony will be held at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery at 11:30 am. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Morgan's Wonderland.**

## **Charles Buster Prewitt**

### **May 1, 1930 – August 11, 2023**

### **Biography**

The man we all knew as Charles “Buster” Prewitt was actually born Robert C. Duvall on “May Day” 1930, in Ponca City, Oklahoma. It was six months after the 1929 Stock Market crash, and the beginning of the Great Depression. He was born to Nellie Mae Agnes Barr and Raymond Claytor Duvall. Unfortunately, their marriage was tumultuous and short. They divorced in 1935, leaving Nellie Mae and young Robert to face the world together, alone. The pain of this period would affect the rest of his life. Rather than making him bitter, it gave him compassion for others in pain and a desire to help them, and in the process, himself.

In 1936 Nellie Mae married a widower named Max Prewitt. This expanded Robert's family from two to seven with the addition of new siblings Bob, Dot, Richard and Nancy. “Robert's” name was changed because there was already a Robert in the Prewitt clan. Buster was a nickname he had acquired earlier. The “C” which had represented a family name “Claytor” became Charles.

“Buster” had a decent life in northern Oklahoma, even in a bad economy. Although

they didn't have much, it was enough. He had family and fellow church members around that supported him. He had some health issues as a young teenager, and was diagnosed with Juvenile Arthritis, a painful autoimmune issue of unknown origin in children. He had a forward thinking doctor, who attributed his issues to the psychological strain of his early childhood. Buster spent much of his early teenage years in bed, while life outside went on without him.

Upon graduation from high school in Ponca, Charles continued his education at Northern Oklahoma College in Tonkawa, then transferred to Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee Oklahoma. These were his "wild days", to the extent his conscience would allow. He was still determined to take care not to "let his mother down". This period was also when he heard "the call" to the ministry. He was licensed to preach by his home church and began guest preaching in local churches.

Charles entered Air Force Basic Training on New Years Eve, 1950. North Korea had invaded South Korea, and he had received word that his draft notice had been sent. He decided to enlist in the Air Force to avoid the battlefield. He completed his three year stateside tour with the Air Force Medical Corps in San Antonio during the Korean War. He met Martha Ann Foster, who was in Nursing School in San Antonio and they were married on September 14th, 1952. Their first child Kathy was born a year later. He was discharged and subsequently attended Hardin Simmons in Abilene, where their second child Karen was born. He then entered Southwest Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth and became an ordained minister. He served as pastor at Trinity Baptist Church in El Reno, then First Baptist in Maysville. His third daughter Darleen was born in 1958. That same year he performed the marriage of his mother (Honey) to Richard Leland Horton (Dick,) bringing Dick's daughter Jeannie Horton into the family. "The twins", Kimi and Keri, were born in 1960 in Oklahoma City, making it a total of 5 girls, six and under!

Charles was commissioned as Second Lieutenant and chaplain in the Oklahoma Air National Guard in 1963. He later transferred to active duty, attending Chaplain School at Lackland AFB. He served as chaplain at Kirtland AFB in New Mexico, where Kip was born in 1964.

A year later Charles was sent overseas (alone) to Nha Trang South Vietnam to serve as the 14th Air Command Wing Chaplain. He loved flying, and would ride along any chance he got. Once he was invited to take the controls himself, having to be relieved when he had veered off course toward home! It was Thanksgiving Day 1966 when he actually left for home.

Reunited with his family, they were stationed at McConnell AFB, Kansas. This was close to Ponca City, allowing for more visits to Honey and Dick's. They were the center of gravity of the larger family on Charles' side, and the family often made the pilgrimage to Ponca to visit with their extended family. While there, they rode horses and enjoyed the bucolic life at "Honey and Dick's".

The family were sent overseas to Torrejon AFB in Madrid Spain. While there they explored Europe in a blue and white VW bus named "Kettle". Seeing castles and ruins, fantastic architecture and classical art works of Michelangelo and many others. We were lucky to take advantage of his time stationed there.

Four years later, returning stateside, he was stationed at McCoy AFB, Orlando Florida for a year. The weather there was wonderful for the family to play tennis, one of Charles and Martha's favorite pastimes.

Charles then returned to school to get his Doctorate in Theology at Clairmont school of Theology in California.

In 1975 he was assigned to The Air Force Chaplains Resource board at The Air University at Maxwell AFB, Montgomery Alabama. This post was at the height of the wrangling with teenagers phase for Charles and Martha, which they did with great skill

and care.

Four years later he was back, full circle, to Lackland AFB in San Antonio. He retired as a Lt. Colonel in 1980. It was a large impressive retirement ceremony, with a parade ground full of Airmen marching in formation, and passing in review with the flags of all 50 states.

Charlie retired on a Friday, and immediately started a new phase of life as Chaplain at Baptist Hospital in San Antonio on Monday, but not before conducting a Marriage and Family Therapy workshop on the weekend between! While there he created a counseling center at Baptist Hospital for the employees of the hospital.

Later, he transitioned to a full time private Psychotherapy practice. This was a natural evolution after years of providing pastoral counseling as a Chaplain, and of conducting Marriage Enrichment Training with Martha for Air Force personnel and civilians.

In 1992 Charlie was diagnosed with prostate cancer. He was treated with surgery and radiation, and was able to recover, but it was the first of some health challenges he faced later in life. His back, which had been occasionally problematic throughout his adult life, became more chronic. Later his shoulders developed issues which required surgery that his structure couldn't hold. This added to his chronic pain and further limited physical activity. Hearing loss was another factor in the eventual decline of his functionality. He and Martha moved into Morningside Ministries, a facility which allowed for their autonomy while they were capable of caring for themselves.

At Darleens invitation, the family started having Sunday dinner regularly at her house after the untimely death of her beloved husband John. This was a beautiful gift that brought everybody closer. It created more opportunities for the wider family to come together, providing a regular opportunity for Charlie and Martha to enjoy all of the kids and grandkids.

Another enhancement to the quality of life for Charlie and Martha in this period, was

that Karen made dinner for them at her house on most Saturday nights, providing more love and companionship. Kimi, Keri and Dennis were steady in their attention to Charlie and Martha too, constantly visiting and running errands to keep their lives running smoothly. Kip and Catherine came down frequently, and Kathy and Rick came too, when they able to come from out of state.

In 2022 Charlie fell, and the impact punched the head of his femur through his pelvis, an injury which was inoperable, relegating him to a wheelchair. Martha also had a rough year in 2022. She broke both hips on separate occasions, and had some life threatening heart issues. When they both were released from concurrent hospital stays, they returned to their assisted living situation, where the family, especially Karen, Kimi, and Keri really made the situation work by visiting daily. This wasn't sustainable however, as they had both were at risk of falling again and needed full time care.

Again Darleen stepped up, and invited them into her lovely home, which also has a beautiful garden. Darleen and Karen figured out how to hire full time help, which made the situation more comfortable and sustainable for everyone. This situation was a Godsend to Charlie and Martha they were needing more care, and they were getting it, from Maggie (the aide) and from their own loving family, in a beautiful environment. As Charlie experienced decline in his physicality, he eventually slept more and more. He lost his taste for food, stopped eating much, and slowly withdrew from the world, passing away peacefully on the morning of August 11th, 2023.

Charlie's life of purpose is exhibited by his many years of serving as Pastor, Chaplain, and Psychotherapist. As patriarch with skills, he conducted the marriage ceremonies of all of his children and grandchildren.

Charlie and Martha served as wise counselors for all of the family in times of struggle. Together, they have been the rock that everyone in the family has clung to at one time or another. Martha and Charlie both have continued their personal growth journeys

throughout their lives, investing time and focus on living in the present moment, and practicing gratitude as a way of life. They have been a wonderful example of how to continue evolving throughout life. This has helped them to age gracefully despite their challenges, and to maintain optimistic and loving natures.