

**Bill & Joan Eldred:  
*A Life of Loyalty***



*If* you had to choose one word to describe Bill and Joan Eldred, it would have to be “loyal.”

They’ve been loyal to their alma mater, Occidental College, where they met after World War II. They’ve been loyal to their church, Glenkirk Presbyterian, for more than 35 years. And, married for more than 50 years, they’ve been loyal to each other.

What’s more, loyalty is the hallmark of their life story in Glendora and for the needs of their community and Foothill Presbyterian

Hospital. Their support for the hospital has made a big difference in the development of this facility for the benefit of so many in our community.

Both Bill and Joan were born and raised in the San Gabriel Valley—Bill in San Marino and South Pasadena, Joan in Glendale. After a two year stint in the U.S. Navy during World War II, Bill enrolled at Occidental College in Eagle Rock under the GI bill. It was during this time that he and Joan met, marrying in 1951 and living in on-campus veterans’ housing until graduation.

Following graduation, the couple lived briefly in Northern California, where Joan worked as a kindergarten teacher. They returned to the San Gabriel Valley a few years later, initially renting a home in Arcadia. It was in Arcadia where they also met their longtime friends, Orv and Shirley Mestad, who lived right next door.

“Orv had just started his dental practice, and Shirley was teaching at the time,” states Joan. “When they decided to move to Glendora, we followed their lead. Our daughters are also the same age and have also enjoyed a long friendship.”



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In fact, both Orv and Bill have been involved with Foothill Presbyterian for many years—Orv served on the board of directors from the very beginning, with Bill involved in the hospital’s initial fund-raising efforts. Bill later served on the hospital board for a total of 16 years, during the 1980s and 1990s. Their long-time commitment to the hospital continues today, with Bill serving on the Executive Campaign Committee of the Friends for Life Campaign—a committee chaired by Orv.

Professionally, Bill was a partner in Plato Products, Inc., a company manufacturing soldering tools and equipment, for 50 years. Primarily located in the City of Industry, the company provided supplies for the electronics industry, conducting significant business with television manufacturers during the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. The company, which was sold two years ago, also included a manufacturing division in Costa Rica and an international office in Germany.

Bill and Joan have also been blessed by family: Daughters, Karen and Gretchen, and son, Kirk, have in turn blessed them with four granddaughters and two grandsons. Karen, Gretchen and their families live locally in Southern California, with Kirk and his family recently moving to Washington state.

In addition to their involvement with Foothill Presbyterian Hospital (Joan has also been a member of the hospital Auxiliary for many years), the Eldreds’ other volunteer commitments have largely centered around Occidental College and their church. Bill has served on Occidental’s Alumni Association Board of Governors and the college’s Board of Trustees, with Joan serving as President of Occidental College’s Women’s Club, which raises funds for scholarships. The Eldreds’ commitment to Occidental is a multi-generational one, with Bill’s parents graduating from the college, and their children Kirk and Gretchen also alumni of “Oxy.”

At Glendora’s Glenkirk Presbyterian Church, Bill has served as a deacon and elder; Joan taught Sunday school and participates in women’s ministries. While her children were young, Joan was also active with the PTA and volunteered to tutor students.



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In her spare time, Joan enjoys quilting and knitting, and spends a great deal of time with the couple's grandchildren. In fact, their recently remodeled family room includes several "grandchildren-friendly" features. Bill enjoys gardening, and continues to work part-time, overseeing the final details of Plato Product's recent sale. The couple also enjoys trips to Colorado to see Joan's brother, and are planning to travel to Washington state to visit son Kirk and his family.

During Bill's service on Foothill Presbyterian Hospital's Board of Directors, the couple enjoyed participating in a number of hospital board retreats, held in locations such as San Diego and Palm Springs. "While Bill was in meetings, I enjoyed getting acquainted with the other board members' spouses," states Joan. "The retreats were very worthwhile."

"The hospital has always been well-run, and I also enjoyed my association with my fellow board members and the hospital staff," comments Bill. "It's a joy to serve an organization that has a real purpose and does its job well."