The Stillwell Ministerial Scholarship

Believing in the powerful role of ministry and wanting to encourage other ministries, Rev. Bobby J. and Billie Jean Stillwell created this endowed scholarship to benefit ministerial students into the future.

After starting his education at Decatur Baptist College (now Dallas Baptist University), Bobby Stillwell first came to Wayland in 1953 to work on a bachelor’s degree. He preached at small churches in the area while trying to fund his education.

The couple returned to Wayland in 1963 to complete Bobby’s degree, with three children in tow. He pastored a church at Hart Camp, some 35 miles from Plainview, and the family lived in the parsonage while Bob finished school, graduating in 1965 with a degree in history and religion. He holds fond memories of his time at Wayland, noting the influence of former president Dr. A. Hope Owen and registrar Audrey Boles, who provided encouragement and assistance in his journey.

The family moved back to California, where Bob spent more than 30 years teaching math and government and pastored small churches in the Bakersfield area bivocationally. Billie Jean worked as a seamstress most of her life.

The Stillwells want the scholarship “to encourage young ministers in college who will be propagating the gospel further in various places. Wayland has impressed me at how big they’ve grown, making it possible for a lot of people to be blessed by the university.”