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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **MEMORIAL SERVICE CELEBRATED THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF ORAL ROBERTS: A MAN WHO OBEYED GOD**

**TULSA, Okla., Dec. 21, 2009** – Evangelist Oral Roberts' life and legacy were celebrated today against the backdrop of Oral Roberts University (ORU), by a gathering of more than 4,000 with a host of who's who from the Evangelical and Charismatic communities at the Mabee Center in Tulsa. Granville Oral Roberts was a man who obeyed God and popularized the Pentecostal movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Roberts, 91, passed away in a Newport Beach, Calif., hospital on Dec. 15, due to complications from pneumonia, following a fall that broke several bones the previous weekend.

Dignitaries from around the state, including Oklahoma Governor Brad Henry, U.S. Congresswoman Mary Fallin, Tulsa Mayor Dewey Bartlett, former Tulsa Mayor Bill LaFortune, State Senator Dan Newberry, State Representative Pam Peterson and many local politicians were seated as some of Roberts' favorite hymns and songs were played preceding the memorial celebration.

International luminaries from the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements were in attendance throughout the arena, including John Hagee; Kenneth and Gloria Copeland; James and Betty Robison; and Kenneth and Lynette Hagin, among many others.

Songs of praise and worship, beginning with "God is a Good God," which the Roberts family sang together at their patriarch's bedside during his last hours, started off the celebration of the legendary evangelist's life. The program then segued into the opening prayer by Pat Robertson, followed by comments from Mark Rutland, newly-installed ORU president.

"We do not today celebrate the passing of a perfect man; none of us is perfect," Rutland said. "He was an extraordinary man; he was a giant who served a perfect God."

As tears flowed and hands were uplifted, many attendees joined together praising God for Roberts' faithful ministry and impact on their lives during the more than two-hour event. Kelly Wright, ORU alumnus and FOX News correspondent, was the featured musical guest.

A 15-minute memorial video provided a powerful summary of Roberts' remarkable life, his family and highlights of his evangelistic ministry, and pioneering approach to education. Both of Roberts' surviving children, Roberta Potts and Richard Roberts, each took turns on the stage, sharing precious memories in eulogy of their father.

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“One of the reasons he was criticized so often was because he made his best effort to obey God,” Roberta said. “He was asked by a reporter what his greatest fear was. He said, ‘That I might not obey God.’ He was just a poor boy from Oklahoma, who loved Oklahoma and loved God and did great things for God. That man did everything he knew to obey God.”

A poignant moment came when Roberta and Richard shared the stage and sang one of the songs remembered so well from their father’s crusades, “Don’t Turn Him Away.” As Richard put his arm around his sister’s shoulder, they led the audience in a bittersweet moment of reflection.

During Richard’s remembrance of his father, he shared his grandmother’s prophetic words spoken over young Oral as a stuttering child: “Son, someday God’s going to heal your tongue and He’s going to raise you up and you’re going to take His healing message around the world. You just obey God, stay small in your own eyes, and you’re going to bless the world.”

After acknowledging that he had three earned degrees from ORU, Richard added, “I got a fourth degree sitting at the feet of Oral Roberts; he taught me how to walk in love and harmony. He taught me how to expect a miracle.”

At the conclusion of his remarks, Richard sang, “Something Good Is Going To Happen To You,” the familiar song which always marked the beginning of the television program, “Expect A Miracle,” one of the hallmarks of the Oral Roberts Evangelistic Association’s (OREA) ministry.

Marilyn Hickey, OREA board member and chairman emeritus of the ORU board of regents, touched many hearts with her recollections of Roberts’ ministry and his impact in her life.

“The wonderful thing about Oral is that he was the first to blast the world with the message of healing; he really sacrificed and I remember the criticism he suffered,” Hickey said. “He sacrificed his reputation, his money, his family – everything. Now you can go all across the world and they know the healing message.”

Within her closing remarks, she gave an altar call, giving everyone in attendance an opportunity to make a personal commitment to Christ. Similar to the way Roberts closed every one of his crusades, the response to the invitation was a fitting tribute to his life and legacy as attendees joined hands across the aisles and hearts with countless thousands more watching live around the world via television and Internet.

The closing prayer, given by Creflo Dollar, concluded the service on a celebratory note, expressing thanks and praise for Roberts’ life and ministry.

“He kept the faith. He finished the course and left us with a double portion of his anointing,” said Creflo Dollar. “Oral Roberts was an ordinary man who knew that God could not be kept in a box.”