

Wallace Merle Robeson

November 24, 1930 – March 21, 2020

Wallace Merle Robeson, died peacefully surrounded by his loving family on Saturday March 21, 2020, at Fairhaven Retirement Community in Whitewater, Wisconsin. Wallace, known as Wally to all, was the only child of Paul D. and Mary (Doubleday) Robeson born on November 24, 1930 at home in Bradford Township, Rock County, Wisconsin.

Wally studied in one-room country schools and graduated from Clinton High School in the class of 1948. He attended Milton College for three semesters and after completing the requirements for a Bachelor of Education degree in Secondary Science Education, Wally graduated from Wisconsin State College in 1952. He served as a student pastor of the Methodist churches in Jasper and Trosky, Minnesota for one school year.

In August, 1953, Wally and twenty other colleagues sailed for Turkey. Wally's assignment was to Tarsus American College (TAC), a secondary boarding school for boys in Tarsus, Turkey, the hometown of St. Paul, the apostle. Wally taught classes in health, general math, chemistry, biology, bookkeeping, and was school treasurer during his three years there.

Wally met Ruth C. Sowter at an annual meeting between board schools in Istanbul, Turkey. After a short courtship by letter, they married on June 13, 1955 in Izmir, Turkey. In 1956, Wally and Ruth returned to the United States where Wally enrolled in the Graduate School of Theology at Oberlin College in Ohio. Ruth worked in her librarian profession while earning her PHT (Putting Hubby Through). Wally was awarded his Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1960.

The couple were given career appointments to the Near East Mission by the United Church Board for World Ministries and returned to Turkey in August 1960. From 1960 to 1965 they lived in Izmir where Wally was the business manager of the school. In December, 1961 they welcomed to the world their one and only daughter who was the light of their lives. From 1965 to 1966, Wally was the principle of a boarding middle school in Talas, a small town in central Anatolia. Much to his dismay, he was forced to close the school in 1966 due to a lack of funds. For the next year, the family lived in Madison, Wisconsin where Wally earned his Masters of Administration in Secondary Education.

Wally spent the majority of his career as the principle of TAC from 1967 to 1988. He touched the lives of many through his years of service. He taught his students the importance of being individuals and worked hard to raise independent thinkers. Many of Wally's students went on to become prominent businessmen, doctors, CEO's, and politicians in Turkey. Wally and Ruth opened their home to international teachers to make them feel at home and were like parents to the students whose families were far away. Wally and Ruth retired to Fairhaven Retirement Community in 1996.

Wally is survived by his daughter, Mary Heather (Dogan Satir); three granddaughters: Ayse Celik (Ural Celik), Zeynep Goktepe, and Ipek Goktepe; Troy Marinkovic who was like a grandson; and

his pride and joy Aria Celik, his beloved great granddaughter; he is also survived by many cousins.

He was preceded in death by his parents and wife, Ruth. A memorial service will be held at a later date.