

Judge Bascom William Bentley, III passed away on Monday, December 11, 2017 at Christus Mother Frances Hospital in Tyler, Texas with his family beside him. Judge Bentley was born on March 27, 1951 to Kelly and Dr. Bascom Bentley, Jr. He is preceded in death by his father, Dr. Bascom Bentley, Jr. He is survived by his wife, Carol Swift Bentley; his children and their spouses: Bonnie Bentley and her husband, Matthew Frederick; Bascom W. Bentley IV; Hunter Bentley and his wife, Meghan; Matthew Bentley and his fiancé Sallie Armstrong; a granddaughter Scarlett Bentley; his mother, Kelly Bentley; his sister, Belle Todd and her husband, Jim; his brother, Newell Bentley and wife Mary Ann; along with many beloved extended family members.

Judge Bentley recently retired as the Texas 369th District Judge where he presided since 1989. He was grateful for his time on the bench and for all the people he worked with in Anderson, Cherokee and Leon counties. Prior to that he served as County Court at Law Judge and County Attorney for Anderson County, as well as City Attorney for Palestine. He was also a professor at Trinity Valley Community College for 37 years.

Judge Bentley graduated from Palestine High School in 1969, where his father and grandfather also graduated. He received his BBA degree from The University of Texas at Austin and his JD from the University of Houston School of Law.

Judge Bentley was a lifelong member, teacher of the Judge EV Swift Men's Bible Study, and Chairman of the Board of the First Christian Church of Palestine. He helped manage numerous local charities and was always an advocate for the people of his district, especially the less fortunate.

Throughout his life, Judge Bentley received numerous honors and awards, including the Palestine Lifetime Builder Award, the Distinguished Alumni Award from Palestine High School, the Palestine Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award and Lifetime Achievement Award, the Distinguished Alumni Award from Trinity Valley Community College, the Outstanding Local Leader Award from the John Shepperd Public Leadership Institute and the University of Texas, the "Damn Good Judge" award from the Texas Gang Investigators Association, and Citizen of the Year by the Disabled American Veterans (District 3) for outstanding support of veterans. He served on the faculty of the Texas Center for the Judiciary and the Texas College for new judges. He was the former president of the Anderson County United Way, the Anderson County Salvation Army and the Anderson County Red Cross.

The pallbearers will be Glen Ashworth, Shelby Bentley, Elton Bomer, Jack Brittingham, Barrett Broyles, Chris Davis, Tucker Farris, Curtis Fitzgerald, George Fore, Jimmy Frye, Johnny Gurganus, Jay Herrington, Cliff Johnson, Hunt Kay, Harris Lohmeyer, Larry Martin, Larry Mayo, Robert McFarlane, Jerry Nowlin, Rick Perry, David Purcell, Tucker Royall, Billie Schick, Todd Staples, Matt Swift, Dick Swift, Jim Todd, and Paul Woodard.

Funeral services will be held at 11:00 am on Saturday, December 16 at First Christian Church of Palestine, Texas with a reception to immediately follow at The Museum for East Texas Culture. In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate donations to the Salvation Army of Palestine, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, or the charity of your choosing.