

For almost 30 years while Warren taught at Houghton College Ella served as a kind, loving, wise counselor and mentor to generations of young women. She had a gift for hospitality and was an excellent cook and baker who often invited college students and campus guests to join the family for dinner. After retiring from teaching Ella was an active in-home visitor with the Allegany County hospice program. She loved to garden and took special delight in wildflowers, fall foliage, and the wooded hills and fields of western New York.

To the very end of her life Ella was devoted to her children and their spouses, grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and also to a ministry of prayer. She never lost her kind, loving, positive outlook on life. Before his death in December 2017, looking back on decades of partnership with Ella in life and ministry, Warren declared, "we made a good team." It is characteristic of Ella that among her very last words were "thank you" to those caring for her at Absolut.

Memorials, if desired, may be made to the Houghton Wesleyan Church, the Allegany County Area Foundation Dollars for Scholars program, c/o Student Scholarship Fund or the Child Education fund of World Hope International.

*Thank you, dear friends, for supporting our family during this difficult season of loss. Your love and concern demonstrated in countless tangible ways, and your prayers offered on our behalf, have sustained and encouraged us. We are deeply grateful.*

*- The Woolsey family*



*You are invited to join the family for a luncheon  
in the church Community Room.*



Service of Worship  
For the Glory of God and in Celebration of the Life of

*Ella Minette Phelps Woolsey*

Dec. 26, 1922 – Mar. 29, 2018

Houghton Wesleyan Church  
Houghton, New York  
April 7, 2018  
11:00 a.m.

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## Prelude

### Selected Scriptures

*from Psalm 130, Isaiah 66 & 49, & Psalm 34*

**Prayer:** Compassionate and loving God, you are present with us always. We praise you for the great company of all those who have faithfully gone before us and now rest from their labors. We praise you for those dear to us whom we name in our hearts before you. (pause) Especially today we praise you for our sister, Ella Woolsey. We thank you for giving her to us, her family and friends, to know and to love as a kind companion on our earthly pilgrimage. In your boundless love, comfort us who mourn. Help us to trust that your faithful presence will guide us through our years, and bring us at last, with them, into the joy of our eternal home; through Jesus Christ our Risen Lord. **Amen.**

**Psalm 104** *In Praise of God the Creator* Peter, Lydia & Mary Strand

**Hymn # 65** *This is My Father's World*

**Poem** *Let Evening Come*, by Jane Kenyon Caitlin Woolsey

**Ministry in Music** Medley: *Children of the Heavenly Father* and  
*Savior like a Shepherd Lead Us* Amanda Cox & Debbie Shea

### Words of Remembrance

#### Prayer for Family and Friends

**Ministry in Music** *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* Stephen J. Woolsey

**\*John 13:1-9, 12-15, 34-35 and I John 4:7-12** Hannah Mills-Woolsey  
& Naomi Woolsey

**\*Hymn #378** *O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus*

**Ministry of the Word** *Our Helper*

#### Words and Prayer of Committal

**\*Hymn # 85** *Blessing and Honor and Glory and Power*

#### \*Benediction

**Postlude:** *For All the Saints; Like a River Glorious*

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#### \*Please stand if able.

Officiants: Pastor Wes Oden, Pastor Cindy Oden

Organist: Judy Congdon

Harpist: Laurie Smalley



Ella Phelps Woolsey of Houghton died on Thursday, March 29, 2018 in the Absolut at Houghton Nursing Home. She was born on December 26, 1922 in Batavia, a daughter of the late Harvey and Viola Woolf Phelps. On August 23, 1946 in Indian Falls, New York she married Warren M. Woolsey, who recently preceded her in death. They were devoted, loving partners for 71 years.

Ella grew up on family farms operated by the Phelps brothers and their wives in Indian Falls. She attended high school in Akron, New York, then enrolled at Houghton College, graduating in 1943. After college she accepted a faculty position at Allen Home High School in Asheville, North Carolina, a boarding and day school for African-American women whose graduates include the renowned musician and civil rights activist Nina Simone. Teaching in what was then the deeply segregated South, Ella helped her students navigate the indignities and pain of blatant racial discrimination, also coaching the school's basketball team which went to the state championship. As was always her way, she gave all the credit to the young women.

After she married Warren Woolsey, recently returned from active service as an airman in World War II, the couple moved to New York City so that Warren could pursue a seminary education, which included a ministry practicum in the Appalachian Mountains of eastern Kentucky where they worked together, often visiting people in the remote "hollows" on horseback. In 1950 they accepted a call to missionary service in Sierra Leone, West Africa; they ministered there until 1966. Ella especially loved her work with women and children, teaching the women to read, assisting nurses in dispensing medications and delivering babies, and supporting women's institutes meant to foster spiritual formation and strong marriages.

When they returned to the United States with their family in 1966 they settled in Houghton. Ella joined the faculty of Rushford Central School and was a much-beloved fourth grade teacher. Many former students still describe her as their favorite teacher ever. She was also an active member of Houghton Wesleyan Church, finding special joy working with children in the nursery and young women in Pioneer Girls.