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President, Chancellor, Friend: Dr. Dixon's 40 Years

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- In 1978, Cedarville University was forever changed with the installation of its eighth president, Dr. Paul Dixon. He currently serves as chancellor of the university, a position he's held since stepping down as president in 2003.

In May, Dixon celebrated 40 years of service with Cedarville University. And, he will return to campus October 3 to speak in chapel as part of the annual homecoming activities.

During his time as president, Cedarville University expanded from 180 acres to 400 and built \$100 million in facilities. Dixon oversaw Cedarville's transition to university status in 2000 and grew the student population from 1,185 to more than 3,000. The university currently has an enrollment of 4,085 students in undergraduate and graduate programs.

Dixon is a graduate of Tennessee Temple University and Temple Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1986, Dixon earned his doctorate in higher education from the University of Cincinnati.

Before serving as Cedarville's president, Dixon spent 14 years as an evangelist. In 1971, his wife, Pat, accepted a teaching position at Cedarville, and the Dixon family moved to the village of Cedarville. Several years later, Dixon was asked to become president of the university.

At first, he resisted the invitation.

"I tried to talk them out of it!" said Dixon. "I always had a strong commitment to evangelism and really struggled with the decision. Before working at Cedarville University, I had never been the leader of anything other than my family. I had turned down leadership positions at missions organizations, but I finally said yes to Cedarville. It was just a good fit."

Once at Cedarville, Dixon oversaw one of the greatest seasons of growth in the university's 131-year history.

"I did not have the vision at the beginning to foresee all the growth that God would grant us," said Dixon. "We trusted God and He provided. He provided a wonderful administrative team, board of trustees, faculty and staff who all helped maintain the high standards of the university. We had to maintain the mindset that success was not in the numbers, but in our commitment to our mission and quality of education."

“Dr. Dixon understood the importance of biblically grounded tradition in the life of an institution,” said Dr. Thomas Mach, vice president for academics. “He knew that it provided a valuable sense of identity, community and standard for an institution like Cedarville.”

Dixon left a legacy of excellence that has been followed by faculty and the administration.

“Dr. Dixon is a visionary and evangelistic leader,” said Dr. Thomas White, president of Cedarville University. “He and his wife, Pat, stamped quality all over Cedarville and set it on a trajectory to become the premier Christian university in the world. They have been dear friends to Joy and me. We are thankful to God for their friendship.”

Dixon retired from the presidency in 2003, full of memories and pride in his students. He moved seamlessly into the position of chancellor.

“I just loved the students,” said Dixon. “There was a group of girls from the Faith dorm that would always meet me coming out of my office. Other students would call me if they were having a hard time. I’ve spent hours at night with students going through tough seasons of life and I wouldn’t change it for anything.”

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 3,963 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.