



## Foundation Thankful Series #1 – Thankful for Helen W. Watt’s Vision for the Foundation in the Future

*“May He give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed.”*

Psalm 20:4

By Sid Johnston

November and December are typically charitable, generous and thankful months where communities and families come together to reflect on their good fortunes and blessings. We would like to foster the spirit of reflecting on your blessings through a blog series during the months of November and December. We will take a moment to share our blessings at the Foundation with all of you to give a voice to what has made us the Foundation that we are presently.

This week we are reflecting on the incomparable Helen Watt and the Helen W. Watt Society that was created to honor her lasting legacy of work within the Foundation. We are so incredibly blessed by her executed vision for the Foundation. Helen is directly responsible for securing some of the earliest and largest gifts for the Foundation ensuring that the head start created by these gifts would catapult the Foundation into the compounding wealth we experience today.

After marrying W.R. Billy “Bob” Watt and moving to Fort Worth from Oklahoma, Helen began establishing her family’s life here in Fort Worth starting with raising her two boys (Bob Jr. and Tom) and devoting a large portion of her time to our Church through Sunday School class teaching and attending Church regularly.

In 1964, when the Foundation was created, Helen was intrigued by the new endowment. She soon began participating in fundraising efforts for the Foundation, eventually serving as the first female director elected to the board. By 1976, the Foundation’s assets were \$150,000. Through inspiration and hard work, Helen went about cultivating a generous gift of oil and gas assets from Mrs. A. J. Broderick. She was equally instrumental in prompting another major gift, one from the Ballard family, investors in the Southland Corporation in its early years.



Always, Helen's goal was to ensure the future of her Church. She saw the Foundation as the indelible and ever-present supporting entity. Her service sparked a tradition that her son Bob Watt Jr., a current member of the Foundation's board, carries forward today as a board member himself.

"My mother's work benefited from her reputation in the community. Her integrity and others' trust in her made it easy for her to contact individuals by phone, quickly set up appointments and go visit with them," Bob said. "Interestingly, she was not bashful at all about calling on people! That made her fundraising efforts very successful."

The Broderick and Ballard gifts and others generated through Helen's work set the stage for the Foundation's exponential growth in the 1990s.

"Her involvement with the Church and the Foundation were very precious to her," Bob Jr. said. "But she was private about her endeavors, never seeking the limelight, recognition or applause."

Helen was a sensitive, perceptive and disciplined individual, one who was well-respected by all throughout her lifetime. Though Helen passed away in 1997, her legacy of hard work to raise funds for the Foundation lives on.



Her efforts created our planned giving platform: Based on her groundwork, the Foundation established the [Helen W. Watt Society](#) in 2006 to honor those who make a planned gift to the Foundation to sustain our church's future. Helen W. Watt Society membership is open to anyone who advises the Foundation of a plan to establish a legacy gift to the Foundation. Legacy gifts are ones made through a bequest in a will or living trust or designation as beneficiary of a retirement plan or life insurance policy. Such endowment gifts will benefit the Church for countless generations to come, mirroring the vision that Helen had for the Foundation's future many years ago. Currently, there are dozens of HWWS members.

The Foundation will forever be indebted to the visionary, Helen W. Watt for taking up cause for the Foundation so long ago to safeguard the preservation of the funding in perpetuity. We are thankful beyond words for Mrs. Watt, not only this week but every week especially when we see the benefits of the Foundation working to renew and restore the Church. We would love to hear from you and what you are thankful for during these months of positive reflection and generosity, please contact us at 817-336-5698 or at [fmc@fmcfoundation.org](mailto:fmc@fmcfoundation.org). We look forward to hearing from you.