

**A Service of Thanksgiving  
for the Life of  
Louise Pretlow Coward Kopecky**

**May 1, 1944 — November 10, 2024**



**Monday, December 9, 2024  
11:00 a.m.**

**St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
Richmond, Virginia**



# The Burial of the Dead

## Prelude

The King of love my shepherd is  
Be still, my soul  
Brother James' Air  
Cedar

arr. Daniel Burton  
arr. Jennifer Haines  
arr. Joseph Martin  
Connor Chee

*Please stand at the sound of the bell.*

**Opening**      Heron Rises from the Dark, Summer Pond

Mary Oliver

So heavy  
is the long-necked, long-bodied heron,  
always it is a surprise  
when her smoke-colored wings

open  
and she turns  
from the thick water,  
from the black sticks

of the summer pond,  
and slowly  
rises into the air  
and is gone.

Then, not for the first or the last time,  
I take the deep breath  
of happiness, and I think  
how unlikely it is

that death is a hole in the ground,  
how improbable  
that ascension is not possible,  
though everything seems so inert, so nailed

back into itself—  
the muskrat and his lumpy lodge,  
the turtle,  
the fallen gate.

And especially it is wonderful  
that the summers are long  
and the ponds so dark and so many,  
and therefore it isn't a miracle

but the common thing,  
this decision,  
this trailing of the long legs in the water,  
this opening up of the heavy body

into a new life: see how the sudden  
gray-blue sheets of her wings  
strive toward the wind;  
see how the clasp of nothing  
takes her in.

1. I come with joy to meet my Lord, for -  
 2. I come with Chris - tians far and near to  
 3. As Christ breaks bread and bids us share, each  
 4. And thus with joy we meet our Lord. His  
 5. To - geth - er met, to - geth - er bound, we'll  
 giv - en, loved, and free, in awe and won - der  
 find, as all are fed, the new com - mu - ni -  
 proud di - vi - sion ends. That love that made us  
 pres - ence, al - ways near, is in such friend - ship  
 go our dif - f'rent ways, and as his peo - ple  
 to re - call his life laid down for me.  
 ty of love in Christ's com - mu - nion bread.  
 makes us one, and stran - gers now are friends.  
 bet - ter known: we see and praise him here.  
 in the world we'll live and speak his praise.

**The Collect**

*Officiant* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Officiant* Let us pray. *A period of silence is kept.*

O God, who by the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ destroyed death, and brought life and immortality to light: Grant that your servant Pret, being raised with him, may know the strength of his presence, and rejoice in his eternal glory; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**The Reading** Romans 6:3-11 *Please sit.*

*Reader* A reading from the Paul's letter to the Romans.

Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we were buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, so we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all, but the life he lives, he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

*A period of silence is kept.*

Hymn 645 The King of love my shepherd is *Sung by all, standing.**St. Columba*

1. The King of love my shep - herd is, whose  
 2. Where streams of liv - ing wa - ter flow, my  
 3. Thou spread'st a ta - ble in my sight; thy  
 4. And so through - out the length of days thy

good - ness fail - eth nev - er; I noth - ing lack if  
 ran - somed soul he lead - eth, and where the ver - dant  
 unc - tion grace be - stow - eth; and oh, what trans - port  
 good - ness fail - eth nev - er: Good Shep - herd, may I

I am his, and he is mine for - ev - er.  
 pas - tures grow, with food ce - les - tial feed - eth.  
 of de - light from thy pure chal - ice flow - eth.  
 sing thy praise with - in thy house for - ev - er.

## Homily

The Rev. John Rohrs

## The Prayers

*Please stand.*

**Officiant** For our sister Pret, let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ who said, "I am Resurrection and I am Life."

**Officiant** Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to us who mourn for Pret and dry the tears of those who weep.

**People** **Hear us, Lord.**

**Officiant** You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend; comfort us in our sorrow.

**People** **Hear us, Lord.**

**Officiant** You raised the dead to life; give to our sister eternal life.

**People** **Hear us, Lord.**

**Officiant** You promised paradise to the thief who repented; bring our sister to the joys of heaven.

**People** **Hear us, Lord.**

**Officiant** Our sister was washed in Baptism and anointed with the Holy Spirit; give her fellowship with all your saints.

**People** **Hear us, Lord.**

**Officiant** She was nourished with your Body and Blood; grant her a place at the table in your heavenly kingdom.

**People** **Hear us, Lord.**

**Officiant** Comfort us in our sorrows at the death of our sister; let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope. *Silence is kept.*

**Officiant** Father of all, we pray to you for Pret, and for all those whom we love but see no longer. Grant to them eternal rest. Let light perpetual shine upon them. May her soul and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

**Additional Prayers of Intercession and Thanksgiving** *Please sit.*

*During the instrumental music and hymn, and at any time thereafter, you are welcome to proceed to any of the stations of votive candles to light a candle as a symbol of your prayer.*

**Music for Meditation**

*Due tramonti* (Two sunsets)

Ludovico Einaudi

**Hymn** How great thou art

*Sung by all, standing.*

*O store gud*



1. O Lord my God! when I in awe - some won - der  
 2. When through the woods and for - est glades I wan - der,  
 3. When Christ shall come with shout of ac - cla - ma - tion



con - sid - er all the worlds thy hands have made,\_\_\_\_  
 and hear the birds sing sweet - ly in the trees;\_\_\_\_  
 and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.\_\_\_\_



I see the stars, I hear the roll - ing thun - der,  
 when I look down from loft - y moun - tain gran - deur  
 Then I shall bow in hum - ble ad - o - ra - tion,



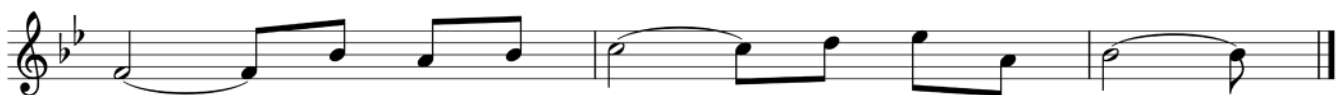
thy pow'r through - out the un - i - verse dis - played.\_\_\_\_  
 and hear the brook, and feel the gen - tle breeze;\_\_\_\_  
 and there pro - claim, my God, how great thou art!\_\_\_\_



*Refrain*  
 Then sings my soul, my sav - ior God to thee;\_\_\_\_ how great thou



art,\_\_\_\_ how great thou art!\_\_\_\_ Then sings my soul, my sav - ior God to



thee;\_\_\_\_ how great thou art,\_\_\_\_ how great thou art!\_\_\_\_

## The Commendation

*Please stand.*

*Officiant* Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,

*All* **where sorrow and pain are no more,  
neither sighing, but life everlasting.**

*Officiant* You only are immortal, the creator and maker of mankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return. For so did you ordain when you created me, saying, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

*All* **Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,  
where sorrow and pain are no more,  
neither sighing, but life everlasting.**

*Officiant* Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant John. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

## The Blessing

*Officiant* God be your comfort and your strength; God be your hope and your support; God be your light and your way; and the blessing of God, Creator, Redeemer, and Giver of life, remain with you now and for ever. **Amen.**

## The Dismissal

*Leader* Go out into the world in peace, have courage, hold on to what is good, return no one evil for evil, strengthen the faint-hearted, support the weak, help the suffering, honor everyone, love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

**Hymn**

Swing low, sweet chariot

*Sung by all, standing.*

Traditional Spiritual



Swing low, sweet char - i - ot, — com-ing for to car - ry me home.



Swing low, sweet char - i - ot, — com-ing for to car - ry me home.



1. I looked o - ver Jor-dan, and what did I see — com-ing for to car-ry me home.

2. If you get — there be - fore — I do, — com-ing for to car-ry me home.

3. The bright - est day that — ev - er I saw — com-ing for to car-ry me home.

4. I'm some - times up and — some - times down, com-ing for to car-ry me home.

*to refrain*

A band of an - gels com - ing af-ter me, — com-ing for to car-ry me home. O,

Tell all — my friends I'm com - ing — too, — com-ing for to car-ry me home. O,

When Je - sus wash'd my sins — a - way, — com-ing for to car-ry me home. O,

But still — my soul feels heav - en - ly — bound, com-ing for to car-ry me home. O,

**Postlude** *O store gud* (How great thou art)

arr. John Purifoy

*Please join the family for a reception in the Large Fellowship Hall immediately following the service.***Officiant:** The Rev. Cate Anthony**Homilist:** The Rev. John Rohrs**Readers:** Yancey Travassos, Anne Coward**Musicians:** Diana Chou, *piano*; David Garcia, *oboe*; Lauren Clay, *cantor*

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