

A Service of Thanksgiving
for the Life of
Elizabeth Parker Whittet O'Connor
October 26, 1949 – September 1, 2025



Monday, September 15, 2025
10:30 a.m.

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Richmond, Virginia

The Burial of the Dead

Greetings and welcome to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church.

The Episcopal liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Thus, the color for the altar hangings and vestments is white, the color of Easter and celebration of new life.

This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian or unacknowledged. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who bear the grief and pain of mourning.

In order to prepare for worship and allow for private prayer, please observe silence upon entering the worship space and ensure that electronic devices have been silenced. All hymns are found in The Hymnal 1982, the blue book in your pew rack.

Prelude

Opening Anthems *Please stand as you are able* The Book of Common Prayer, page 491

I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.
Whoever has faith in me shall have life, even though she die.
And everyone who has life,
and has committed herself to me in faith,
shall not die for ever.

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth.
After my awaking, he will raise me up;
and in my body I shall see God.
I myself shall see, and my eyes behold him
Who is my friend and not a stranger.

For none of us has life in herself,
and none becomes her own master when she dies.
For if we have life, we are alive in the Lord,
and if we die, we die in the Lord.
So, then, whether we live or die,
We are the Lord's possession.

Happy from now on are those who die in the Lord!
So it is, says the Spirit, for they rest from their labors.

Hymn 671 *Amazing grace!* *Sung by all.*

New Britain

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 of grace and glory, we remember before you this day our sister, Elizabeth. We thank you for giving her to us, her family and friends, to know and to love as a companion on our earthly pilgrimage. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see in death the gate of eternal life, so that in quiet confidence we may continue our course on earth, until, by your call, we are reunited with those who have gone before; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Poem "They softly walk" by Hugh Robert Orr *Please sit.* Read by Emma O'Connor

The First Reading 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9 Read by Liz O'Connor

Following the reading, the reader says

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Hymn 517 How lovely is thy dwelling place *Sung by all, standing.* *Brother James' Air*

The Gospel John 14:1-6, 25-27 *Please be seated.* Read by Thomas Dean

Homily The Rev. William S. Stanley

Hymn 488 Be thou my vision *Sung by all, standing* *Slane*

The Lord's Prayer

Officiant and People

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

**And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

Prayer Book, page 497

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

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

All **Hear us, Lord.**

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

All **Hear us, Lord.**

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

All **Hear us, Lord.**

Leader You promised paradise to the thief who repented; bring Elizabeth to the joys of heaven.

All **Hear us, Lord.**

Leader Comfort us in our sorrows at the death of Elizabeth; let our faith be our consolation,
and eternal life our hope.

A period of silence is kept.

Leader Father of all, we pray to you for Elizabeth 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.**

The Commendation

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

People **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.

People **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, Elizabeth. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive her into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

Blessing Paraphrase of Henri Frederic Amiel
Officiant Life is short and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who are traveling the journey with us. So be swift to love, and make haste to be kind. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

Dismissal

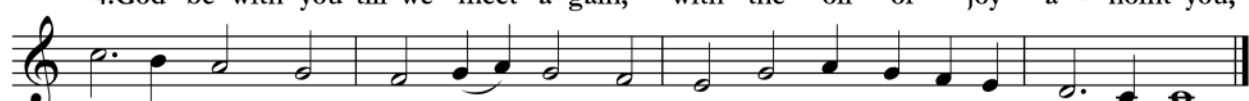
Officiant Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Closing Hymn



1. God be with you till we meet a-gain; lov - ing coun-sels guide, up - hold you,
2. God be with you till we meet a-gain; un - seen wings pro - tect - ing hide you,
3. God be with you till we meet a-gain; when life's per - ils thick con - found you,
4. God be with you till we meet a-gain; with the oil of joy a - noint you,



with a Shep-herd's care en - fold you: God be with you till we meet a-gain.
dai - ly man - na still pro - vide you: God be with you till we meet a-gain.
put un - fail - ing arms a - round you: God be with you till we meet a-gain.
lov - ing min - i - stries ap - point you: God be with you till we meet a-gain.

Postlude

Following the service, all are invited to a reception next door in the Large Fellowship Hall.



Participants:

Officiant and Homilist: The Rev. William S. Stanley

Readers: Emma O'Connor, Liz O'Connor, Thomas Dean

Organist: Diana Chou

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