

Service of Celebration for Alan Richard Nunn

Welcome

Peter Bishop

Introduction

Keith:

Of all the wonders that I yet have heard,
It seems to me most strange that men should fear;
Seeing that death, a necessary end,
Will come when it will come.

Julius Caesar Act II, sc ii

Beth:

I am sure 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.

Romans 8:38-39

Keith:

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God
and no torment will ever touch them.
In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died
and their departure was thought to be a disaster
and their going from us to be their destruction,
but they are at peace.

Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-2

Beth:

Dear friends,
We are gathered here in faith
to remember and celebrate the life of Alan Richard Nunn.
We come together in grief, acknowledging our human loss.
May God grant us grace, that in pain we may find comfort;
in sorrow, hope; in death, resurrection.

Amen.

Hymn

To Be a Pilgrim

He who would valiant be 'gainst all disaster,
Let him in constancy follow the Master.
There's no discouragement shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent to be a pilgrim.

Who so beset him round with dismal stories
Do but themselves confound—his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might; though he with giants fight,
He will make good his right to be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, Thou dost defend us with Thy Spirit,
We know we at the end, shall life inherit.
Then fancies flee away! I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labor night and day to be a pilgrim.

Tune: "Monk's Gate"; traditional Sussex melody; arranged by Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1904

Words: John Bunyan, Pilgrim's Progress, 1684; modified by Percy Dearmer in The English Hymnal (London: Oxford University Press, 1906). Bunyan wrote these words during his 12-year prison sentence for refusing to conform to the official state church.

The Word

One: "The Cost"

Led by Cliff. Congregational parts in bold.

Death is not too high a price to pay for having lived.

Mountains never die, nor do seas or rocks or endless sky.

Through countless centuries of time, they stay
eternal, deathless, Yet they never live!

If choice there were, I would not hesitate to choose mortality.

Whatever Fate demanded in return for life I'd give
for, never to have seen the fertile plains
nor heard the winds nor felt the warm sun on sands
beside the salty sea, nor touched the hands of those I love —
**without these, all the gains
of timelessness would not be worth one day
of living and of loving; come what may.**

by Dorothy N. Moore (slightly repunctuated for antiphonal reading)

Prayer

Beth:

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, Creator of all life,
help us to accept death as part of life,
trusting in your goodness and great love for every one of us.
We feel now the pain of parting with a loved one,
but we rejoice that so many were privileged to experience life with him.
We entrust Alan to you in death as in life you entrusted him to us.
We pray in sincerity and hope.
Amen.

Two: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Readers: Sybil & Darrell

For everything there is a season,
And a time for every matter under heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die;
A time to plant,
 and a time to pluck up what is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to throw away stones,
 and a time to gather stones together;
A time to embrace,
 And a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to throw away;
A time to tear, and a time to sew;
A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate,
A time for war, and a time for peace.

Three: Sonnet 55

Reader: Kevin

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme,
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmeared with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,
Nor Mars his sword, nor war's quick fire shall burn:
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death, and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth, your praise shall still find room,
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.

So till the judgment that your self arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.
Wm. Shakespeare

Hymn

Let There Be Light, #274, red book

Remembrances

Darrell

Prayers of the People

Leaders: Andrea & Morgan

Loving Creator, you have given us life, a circle of days. And you have made generation follow generation, so that life endures, circle repeating circle. This is how you give life and keep life. And you have put death at the end of our days, closing the circle of each life.

We give thanks for the life of Alan, Dad, Grampa, Gaffer. We remember him for who he was, though we each only know a portion of his world. We give thanks that he lives on in all of us.

Praise God.

Alleluia.

We hold in our minds and hearts the needs and sorrows of others as well as our own needs and sorrows. We seek to know the places we may serve and how best to do the right thing. God in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

Help us to endure even hard and bitter things — pain, sickness and death. May we gain from these experiences a greater strength and a truer sense of direction in the days ahead.

God, hear our prayer.

And let our cry come unto you.

Loving Creator, we fashion from our grief and sadness a song of praise to the goodness of life. We hope that the love gathered here for Alan may be a source of renewal, strength and love for the communities around us and the world at large.

God in your mercy.

Hear our prayer.

May we be part of the world's peace and not its violence, its faith and not its fear, its love and not its hate, so we may know in new and deeper ways that we are all part of one another.

God, hear our prayer.

And let our cry come unto you.

Let the horizons of our lives include the great family here on earth with us; those who have gone before and left to us the heritage of their memory and the fruits of their labours; and

those whose lives will be shaped by what we do or leave undone.
God in your mercy.
Hear our prayer.

Lord's Prayer

Commendation

Beth:

Into your hands, O merciful Saviour,
we commend your servant Alan.
Acknowledge, we pray, a sheep of your own fold,
a lamb of your own flock.
Receive him into the arms of your mercy,
into the rest of your everlasting peace,
and into the company of saints in light.
Amen.

Keith:

Long may thy worthiness thy name advance
Amongst the virtuous and deserving most,
Who herein hast forever happy proved:
In life thou lived'st, in death thou died'st beloved
from "A Funeral Elegy for Master William Peter" by Wm. Shakespeare

Invitation to reception & Announcements

The dismissal

Beth:

Spirit of Life be with us
Giving us the peace of acceptance and understanding
And the assurance in those things that never die —
Those things that pass from person to person
 through the generations into eternity —
Especially love.

In a spirit of love we have gathered.
In a spirit of love we depart.
Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Lord of the Dance #106, red book