

SERVICE OF COMMITTAL AT GRAVE SIDE

Opening Sentences

Sentences of Scripture

Opening Prayer

Scripture Readings

Micah 6:6a, 8

II Corinthians 4:16-5:1

Reflections

Closing Prayer

Words of Committal

Benediction

† † † † † † †

Joanne Patricia Wooldridge, age 68, of Newark, DE, passed away Thursday, April 23, 2020,

Born in Buffalo, NY on March 20, 1952, she was a daughter of Jack Richard and the late Gladys Norma (Carson) Hendricks. Joanne enjoyed caring for children and previously ran a home day care. She was always concerned about others and offered a helping hand when she could. In her spare time, Joanne enjoyed going on trips to the beach. Above all, she loved her grandchildren and cherished time spent with them. Joanne will be dearly missed by everyone who knew her.

Joanne is survived by her loving husband of 46 years, Robert Edward "Bob" Wooldridge; sons, Rob (Mandee), Jeff (Jenna) and Steve (Sarah); siblings, Jerry Hendricks (Barbara), Jimmy Hendricks (Jennifer) and Susie Nagle (Mike); 7 grandsons; and 1 granddaughter.

*A Service of Witness to the Resurrection
of Our Lord Jesus Christ and in Celebration of the Life of
Joanne Patricia Wooldridge*



***Spicer-Mullikin Funeral Homes & Crematory
121 W. Park Place
Newark, Delaware 19711
(302) 368-9500***

A Service of Witness to the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ
and in Celebration of the Life
of
Joanne Patricia Hendricks Wooldridge
March 20, 1952 - April 23, 2020

April 30, 2020

10:30 A.M. Worship

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WORDS OF GREETING

CALL TO WORSHIP *(Please join responsively)*

Leader: I lift up my eyes to the hills – from where will my help come?

People: **Our help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.**

Leader: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

People: **Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea.**

Leader: The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

All: **Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!**

PRAYER OF INVOCATION *(Unison)*

We thank you, God, that nothing in all creation –
nothing in life and nothing in death – can separate us from your love.
Fill us with your Spirit in this time of grief and loss,
and remind us that Jesus Christ is Lord of both the dead and the living.
Speak to us now through your Word,
that we may trust Christ to rescue us from all destructive powers
and show us the way to a new and everlasting life. Amen.

READINGS FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Job 28:12-15, 20-21, 23-28

Lamentations 3:22-26

Psalms 121

John 14:1-7, 27

Revelation 21:1-5

REFLECTIONS

FAMILY TIME

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

THE LORD'S PRAYER *(Unison)*

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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(Unison)*

The 23rd Psalm

The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his
name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me;
thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

BENEDICTION

Old Scottish Blessing

† † † † † † †

WORDS OF GREETING

Grace to you, and peace; from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ....

We are gathered to remember – and give thanks –
for the life of Joanne Wooldridge.

And we are here – together – to seek God’s consolation – and guidance –
as we go on to live our days without her physical presence.

Let us now prepare our hearts for worship....

CALL TO WORSHIP *(Please join responsively)*

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People: Our help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

Leader: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

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though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea.**

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Speak to us now through your Word,
that we may trust Christ to rescue us from all destructive powers
and show us the way to a new and everlasting life. Amen.**

READINGS FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Job 28:12-15, 20-21, 23-28

Lamentations 3:22-26

Psalm 121

John 14:1-7, 27

Revelation 21:1-5

{May the Lord bless each of these readings to our understanding. Amen}

REFLECTIONS

On occasions such as this,
we do well to focus our attention on the **Scriptures** as **God's Word** to us –
to inform the living of our days.

And – most certainly –
the **Scriptures** *can* give us hope..., assurance..., comfort..., and direction....

Indeed, the **English** word “**Gospel**” has – as its basic connotation –
the conveying of “**Good News.**”

And so it is that *today* –
in addition to the gift of the **Scriptures** which have been *read* –
we have the *gift* of the “**Gospel according to Joanne,**”
and that is where *we* will focus *our* attention.

The fact is that many people *never open* a **Bible** –
they never have the advantage and blessing
of learning from **God** in that way.

But – when a person lives a life such as **Joanne's** –
God *speaks most clearly* through the life of the *disciple of Christ.*

And – now that we can see **Joanne**'s earthly life as *completed* –
that is *all the more true*:

We can see the *individual details* from the perspective of **Joanne**'s *whole life* –
from the *beginning* to the *end*.

Just as you can never fully appreciate a *day of childcare*
until the last child has been *safely turned over to a parent*,
so you can never appreciate the true significance
of a person's earthly life
until **God** has granted the *final gift of time*.

And so – *today* – we look to **Joanne**'s life as **God's Word** – and gift – to us.

Here – we might note –
the Bible itself has something to say about a virtuous woman:

(Proverbs 31:10-12, 26-29)

A capable wife who can find?
She is far more precious than jewels.

The heart of her husband trusts in her,
and he will have no lack of gain.
She does him good, and not harm,
all the days of her life.

She opens her mouth with wisdom,
and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

She looks well to the ways of her household,
and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children rise up and call her happy;
her husband too, and he praises her:
“Many women have done excellently,
but you surpass them all.”

With these thoughts in mind, we can truly give thanks to **God**
for all the *goodness* and *character* that Joanne's life gave to us
and to the world.

On Tuesday evening,
the community expressed their thanks
in a very dramatic and tangible way.

But, perhaps the best way for us to show our thanks is by remembering that –
in a most important sense –
we are at the very center of Joanne's legacy.

That is to say, how we go on to live our lives
will be a continuing expression of the impact
that Joanne's life had on our own.

Thanks be to God for the life of Joanne Wooldridge! Amen.

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FAMILY TIME....

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

You are holy, O God of majesty, and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

He lived as one of us, knew our joy, our pain and our sorrow,
and he died our death.

By his death on the cross. you revealed that your love has no limit.

By raising him from death you conquered the last enemy,
crushed all evil powers, and gave new life to the world.

And – in his victory – you comfort us with hope of eternal life.

Risen and ascended, Christ is alive forevermore and,
by the power of the Holy Spirit, is with us always.

Reigning with you in glory, Christ intercedes for us,
our High Priest and our Advocate.

And – in Christ – you promised many rooms within your house.

We remember how – when he walked among us –
our Lord Jesus Christ reached out to touch those who grieved –
and how his touch was healing.
Even so,
come now by the power of your Holy Spirit and touch each one of us.

O God, you know if we are lonely:
Send the warmth of your presence by the power of your Spirit.
You know if we have regrets:
Send us the balm of renewal and forgiveness;
for we know that – in Jesus Christ – we are forgiven,
You know the condition of our hearts:
Give us joy in the knowledge that we have a new day to live,
even as Joanne has entered a new dimension of life in Christ.
And you know our weakness:
Help us to lean on you today – and all the days of our lives –
for from you our help comes.

As we have gathered this day to remember Joanne's life,
we thank you now for the gifts you shared with us
through that life.

We thank you for her faithfulness, in 46 years of marriage to Bob,
for her love of – and dedication to – family and friends,
for her years of care for children,
shaping their character and behavior.

And we thank you for her love of your good Creation,
especially that mystical area where the sand meets the sea.

Most of all, we thank you for her sheer delight in the presence
of her eight grandchildren.

We cherish those gifts,
and ask that you continue to remind us of the goodness of her life –
that our lives may continue to be enriched by hers.

And – as we remember Joanne in the days ahead –
may these memories inspire us
to live lives of faithfulness, love and service.

And we thank you that, for Joanne, death is past.... pain is ended....
and that she has entered into the joy
that you have prepared for us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Indeed, help us to know that – because Christ lives – we shall live also,
and that nothing in this world or in the world to come
is able to separate us from your steadfast and abiding love,
shown to us in Jesus Christ our Lord;
who taught us all to use these words when we pray:

**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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.
Amen.**

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Psalm 23 (Unison)

**The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul:
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil:
for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies:
thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.**

BENEDICTION

Old Scottish Blessing

If there is righteousness in the heart,
there will be beauty in the character.

If there is beauty in the character,
there will be harmony in the home.

If there is harmony in the home,
there will be order in the nation.

If there is order in the nation,
there will be peace in the world.

So let it be.

And may the blessing of God Almighty –
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit –
remain with us always.

Amen.

SERVICE OF COMMITTAL AT GRAVE SIDE

Opening Sentences:

We are gathered to continue to remember and give thanks
the life of Joanne Wooldridge,
and to commend her into God's eternal care.

Sentences of Scripture:

Hear these words of the Psalmist:

*Our help is in the name of the LORD,
who made heaven and earth.*

Psalm 124:8

*God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear.*

Psalm 46:1

Hear also these words of the prophet Isaiah:

*The grass withers, the flower fades;
but the word of our God will stand forever.*

Isaiah 40:8

Opening Prayer:

Creator God: we acknowledge that, like grass,
we flourish briefly and fade all too soon.

Come to us, we pray, in power and in love.

In the midst of fading grass and fading lives,
remind us of the things that cannot perish;
your written Word, preserved in Scripture,
and your living Word, Jesus the Christ,
in whose name we pray.

Amen.

Scripture Readings:

Micah 6:6a, 8

“With what shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before God on high?

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;

and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice,
and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

II Corinthians 4:16 – 5:1

We do not lose heart.

Even though our outer nature is wasting away,
our inner nature is being renewed day by day.

For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us
for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure,
because we look not at what can be seen
but at what cannot be seen;
for what can be seen is temporary,
but what cannot be seen is eternal.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed,
we have a building from God,
a house not made with hands,
eternal in the heavens.

May the Lord bless each of these readings to our understanding. Amen.

Reflections:

When a person is outdoors,
a tent can be a wonderful place in which to rest.

There – within the tent –
that person can *get out of the sun, or rain,*
sit down for a few minutes,
and be *refreshed*.

And – in our passage from **II Corinthians** –
the **Bible** describes our earthly bodies as “tents.”

But, tents are very temporary, and –
while they’re wonderful for their intended purpose –
one *doesn’t* expect to live in a tent forever.

One soon longs to “return home” and live in a *house* –
so much more *permanent* and *sturdy* and *comfortable* than a tent.

Friends, this is precisely what Joanne has done.

Her forwarding address is the “House of the Lord.”

She has relocated to a beautiful dwelling place
that her heavenly Father has prepared for her.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled,” said Jesus.
“In my Father’s house are many dwelling places....”

I go to prepare a place for you....
so that where I am, there you may be also.”

Tents – while good for their purpose – can and will *wear out*.

It's wonderful to be safe and dry inside a tent
when the weather is bad outside.

But no one likes to be in a tent that is *leaky* –
with the *fabric torn* –
and the *tent poles collapsing*.

It's just not much of a tent anymore!

We know – and I suspect that Joanne realized – that her tent was collapsing.

I'm sure that she was frustrated by the inability
to do the things she was used to doing.

Joanne was an active person,
and she treasured a variety of interests and activities....

But her tent was collapsing, and even **Joanne** –
as much as she loved *those dear* to her –
as much as she loved all the *associations* and *activities* of life –
was ready to “strike her tent” and “go home.”

And so, she did.

And she is now in the very presence of God,
in a place where there is no sickness, no weeping, and no sorrow.

So let us not mourn for **Joanne**;
rather, let us continue to celebrate her life –
to seek to carry on her *values* and to honor her *standards*,
while we still occupy our own tents.

For – someday – we, too, will put down our tents,
and enter into the blessed rest
which **Joanne Wooldridge** now enjoys.

**I would also like to share with you these wise words
that someone has written,
perhaps in response to the death of a precious loved one:**

“If some messenger were to come to us with the offer
that death should be overthrown,
but with the one inseparable condition that birth also should cease;

if the existing generation were given the chance to live forever,
but on the clear understanding that never again would there be a child,
or a youth,
or first love,
never again new persons with new hopes,
new ideas,
new achievements;

ourselves for always – and never any others – could the answer be in doubt?

“Let us treasure the time we have,
and resolve to use it well,
counting each moment precious –

a chance to apprehend some truth,
to experience some beauty,
to conquer some evil,
to relieve some suffering,
to love and be loved,
to achieve something of lasting worth.

“For in so doing, we may fulfill the promise that is in each of us –
so to conduct ourselves that – generations hence –
it will be true to say of us:

The world is better because – for a brief space – they lived in it.”

Her extraordinary life – and your presence here this morning –
are a testimony that we can make this statement
concerning the life of Joanne Wooldridge.

Thanks be to God! *Amen.*

Closing Prayer:

O God, whose days are without end:

Help us always to remember how brief life is,
and that the hour of our death is known only to you.

So, lead us, by your Holy Spirit,
to live in holiness and justice all our days.

Then, after serving you in the fellowship of your Church,
in faith, hope, and love,
may we enter with joy
into the fullness of your eternal realm.

God of boundless compassion,
our only sure comfort in distress:

Look tenderly upon your children,
in the midst of loss and sorrow.

Lighten our darkness with your presence, and assure us of your love.

Enable us to see beyond this place and time
to your eternal kingdom,
promised to all who love you in Jesus Christ our Lord.

It is in his most holy name that we pray. *Amen.*

Words of Committal:

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life,
through our Lord Jesus Christ,
we commend to almighty God our sister,
Joanne Patricia Hendricks Wooldridge,
and we commit her ashes to their final resting place.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, says the Spirit.
They rest from their labors,
and their works follow them.

Amen.

Benediction:

Robert Schuller

“And now may the Lord bless you, and keep you.
May the Lord make His face to shine upon you.
and be gracious unto you.

“And may God give you His peace –
in your going out and in your coming in,
in your lying down and in your rising up,
in your labor and in your leisure,
in your laughter and in your tears –

“Until you come to stand before Jesus,
in that day in which there is no sunset, and no dawning.”

And may the blessing of God Almighty –
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit –
remain with us always. Amen.