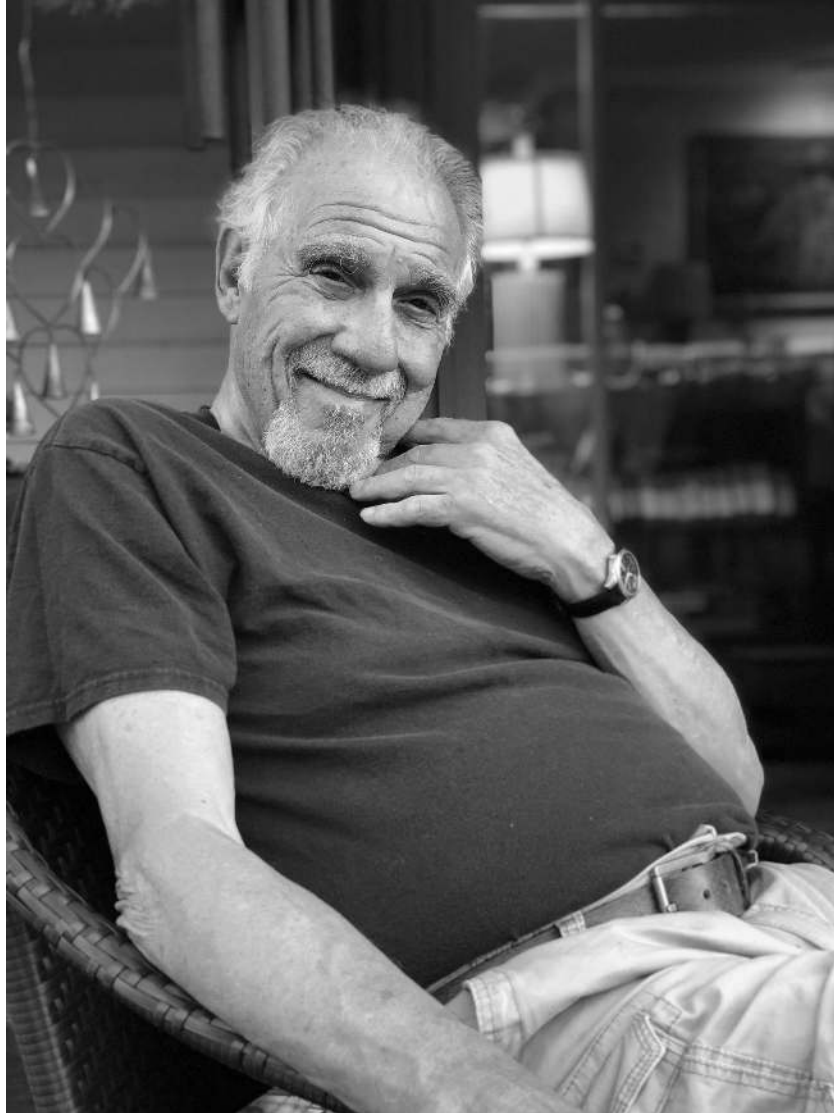


Celebration of Life
Stanley Sherrel Smith
March 31, 1938 - May 2, 2025



Saturday, July 19, 2025 ~ 4:00 PM

Rector
The Reverend Michele H. Morgan

Director of Music
Jeff Kempskie

PRELUDE MUSIC

Down to the River to Pray

Traditional

All Sing.

As I went down to the river to pray, studyin' about that good ol' way
and who shall wear the starry crown. Good Lord, show me the way.

O sisters, let's go down, let's go down, come on down.

O sisters, let's go down, down to the river to pray.

Verse 2: O brothers... Verse 3: O fathers... Verse 4: O mothers...

As the family procession enters the nave, all, as able, please stand.

PROCESSION MUSIC Kyrie, from *Missa Luba**

Fr Guido Haazen

As recorded by Les Troubadours Du Roi Baudouin

Family Weekend Poem

Stan Smith

Thursday, March 28, 2013

.....Paint and canvas,
Music and Instruments,
Words and paper
Are mediums designed
to show us of what life is about.
But life itself is the Master Medium.
This earth its canvass
The tears and laughter its music
The sometimes soft, and sometimes angry words
That print themselves upon our souls
Are the pieces of Wordy Puzzles
Designed to confuse and enlighten us as we wander.

All read together:

We are the poems.

Each of us

**Struggling with and shaped by each
other,**

Are the poems.

And in this evening time

**With or without the requisite rhyme
We surround each other in our love.**

The people stand, as able.

HYMN Lord of the Dance

Words: Sydney Carter, Music: Shaker Tune

VERSES



1. I danced in the morn - ing when the world was be - gun, and I
2. I danced for the scribe and the Phar - i - see, but they



1. danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I
2. would not dance and they would - n't fol - low me, I



1. came down from heav - en and I danced on the earth, at
2. danced for the fish - er - men, for James and for John, they



1. Beth - le - hem I had my birth.
2. came with me and the dance went on.

REFRAIN



Dance, then, wher - ev - er you may be. I am the Lord of the



Dance, said he. I'll lead you all wher - ev - er you may be, I will



lead you all in the dance, said he. dance, said he.

The people sit.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

WELCOME

Trevor Smith, Son

One of the greatest joys in Stan's life was being "dog nose one", leader of the pack: husband, father and grandfather. Our family will be participating in the service today. We hope the service brings you gifts of light, love and laughter or lough as Stan would say.

Bobbi and Stan met in the summer of 1966 on her visit to Walden School with a close friend. A year later in 1967, back in DC, she went to see a Bergmann double feature at the iconic Circle Theater. Stan was there, standing outside with a group of Walden students, some of whom are here today. She walked over and reminded him of having met the year before. Stan wrote this poem 41 years later on their 39th anniversary.

THE FIRST READING

Read by Lee Pellegrino, Son-in-Law

Annie's Versary: #39 - Stan Smith 2008

So I was standing in front of the theater,
Waiting to go in
And you appeared
Reminding me
Of all that I was missing.

You had come to see the movie,
And I was shepherding wandering students
Towards the pastures of enlightenment.

Full of myself, and only myself,
I felt my heart scramble for protection
From your overwhelming beauty.

Hope fled,
Too often betrayed by
My own delusions,
And I was left
With nothing more than longing.

Pity the poor fool
Pretending to maturity.
Pity the poor fool
Pretending.

Coffee and cigarettes,
A book and a pen
And solitary thought
Will see me through.

Love is a dimension denied
To men like me,
Rumpled and careless
Adrift in a sea of hero hood.

Your smile was a soft silken net
That wrapped my soul
And bound it close to yours.
And there they have been all these years
Growing in tandem with each day,

With each child
With each pleasure and pain that life brings.
Change is galloping towards us
With determination
And will engage us in ways

Wonderful and worrisome.
But we found our shelter and our ship
In front of that theater
Where we were standing
Waiting for this show to begin.

THE SECOND READING “The Boy is Seven” - Stan Smith 1981

Read by Koda Smith, Grandson

The boy is seven. He grows in front of me, slender, furry headed, bull tempered. The world will bend or budge. Or so he believes, needs to believe beneath the wonder that leaves him breathless with surprise.

“I know that.” What else can I expect him to say when I tell him something new?

“I know that.” He is quick to remind me after I have finally lost patience and told him for the tenth time in as many minutes that some particular trick is dangerous, or unfunny, or inappropriate or some other parental word.

The boy is seven.

And my heart breaks just to watch him grow.

What I can never really adjust to is the simple fact that the toddler is gone. I can remember certain moments, running moments, quick giggling, tackling my knee.

We used to play a wrestling game, rolling on the floor, me covering him like a bridge, cradling him with my arms,

“The daddy’s got the baby, the daddy’s got the baby.” And then a quick reversal and he’s on top of me lying on my chest laughing into my face, laughing deeply into my years, and my saying, “the baby’s got the daddy; the baby’s got the daddy.”

THE THIRD READING “Spring” by Edna St. Vincent Millay

Read by Finn Smith, Grandchild

To what purpose, April, do you return
again?
Beauty is not enough.
You can no longer quiet me with the redness
Of little leaves opening stickily.
I know what I know.

The sun is hot on my neck as I observe
The spikes of the crocus.
The smell of the earth is good.
It is apparent that there is no death.

But what does that signify?
Not only under ground are the brains of men
Eaten by maggots,
Life in itself
Is nothing,

An empty cup, a flight of uncarpeted stairs.
It is not enough that yearly, down this hill,
April
Comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing
flowers.

REFLECTION

Leonard Wartofsky, Friend

As an old friend, I have been asked to say a few words about Stan Smith. Am I qualified to do so? Well, I am 88 years old and have known Stan since I was 13. For anyone who is math challenged that comes to 75 years. We lived less than a mile from each other in Northwest Washington DC and first met at MacFarland Junior High School in the Petworth district. Stan was one of the most popular boys at school and very easy to befriend. For Stan, this was especially true for all the cute teenage girls at school. Donna, my wife, recalls seeing Stan for the first time jitter bugging on the landing between levels of the stairs at MacFarland. The high school adjoining the grounds was Theodore Roosevelt High School and Stan and I both moved on to Roosevelt where we cemented our bonds of friendship. Just as at MacFarland, Stan was very popular at Roosevelt, both with the boys and girls and the teachers as well. He excelled scholastically and was the president of his class and a leader at the school as president of the student council.

After high school, our joint educational initiatives continued further as we both then matriculated at George Washington University. We were fraternity brothers in Phi Alpha fraternity and we were both so carried away by the fraternity and social life at college that our grades suffered and he unfortunately lost his scholarship funding. Stan dropped out and joined the army and was stationed in Puerto Rico which served to both improve his Spanish and his dance steps. After his service time, Stan took advantage of the G.I. bill to return to George Washington University as a more serious student where he pursued highly successful undergraduate and graduate degree programs.

During those college years, we considered ourselves in the Beat Generation, revering the icons of the time such as Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Allen Ginsburg. I recall that we surreptitiously smoked pot and traveled to New York and took part in the Village scene in New York with Stan at his peak, sitting in coffee houses and little jazz bars, musing

and pontificating on most any topic of the times such as free love, war, and peace. It was through Stan at that time that I met Ross Gelbspan whose collaboration with Stan and Alex Rode spawned the birth of the Walden School. Stan was a much beloved teacher at Walden exemplified by the many students who remained in touch with him for years after. Stan and Ross shared rooms off Ontario Road in Kalorama, and that apartment was the home of Ross's coatimundi and much wine drinking and pot smoking with no shortage of dialectical discussions. Ross and his wife Tottie remained dear friends to us all until Ross died early last year.

Importantly, it was in those years that Stan began to develop his depth of understanding and skill as a poet that can only be partly appreciated as reflected by his published poems. Indeed, he was a true poet who fortunately left us a strongly founded legacy of his poetry. But this was a remarkable human being, who was not just a poet, but also an extremely clever comedian and punster, a humanist and ethicist, but first and most importantly of all, a highly devoted husband, father, grandfather, and true friend. He obviously loved all of his offspring deeply and they returned that love and goodwill in spades.

Stan was an avid Redskins fan and aficionado of Mel Brooks, Humphrey Bogart, and Orson Welles. As he was always kind, sensitive to others, impeccably honest, and trustworthy, it is easy to appreciate why he was so beloved. During our college years, Stan and I often double-dated and that practice continued into our respective marriages. Stan really hit the proverbial jackpot in landing Bobbi and knew it as he leaned on her reciprocated love right to the very end. Donna and I with Bobbi and Stan have been a regular foursome since the early days, with scores of hours and years of dinners, movies, plays, travels, walks and drives or just plain conversation. Oh, how we will miss Stan's presence at these events in future.

I can't recall the film in which I heard it, but I'm reasonably certain the words were spoken by Morgan Freeman, who said that no one is truly gone after death unless their memory is lost from one's mind. And so Stan will never be dead to us for our memories of Stan will never be lost.

MUSIC How Can I Keep from Singing?

Traditional Words

Music by Ira Sankey, arr. Eva Cassidy

Jilian McGreen, soloist

*My life goes on in endless song, above earth's lamentation.
I hear the real, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.
Above the tumult and the strife, I hear its music ringing.
It sounds an echo in my soul, how can I keep from singing?*

*What though, the tempest loudly roars, I hear the truth, it liveth.
What though the darkness round me close, songs in the night it giveth.
No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that rock I'm clinging.
Since love is Lord of Heaven and Earth, how can I keep from singing?*

*When tyrants tremble, sick with fear, and hear their death knell ringing,
When friends rejoice both far and near, how can I keep from singing?
No storm can shake my inmost calm, while to that rock I'm clinging.
Since love is Lord of Heaven and Earth, how can I keep from singing?*

*My life goes on in endless song, above earth's lamentation.
I hear the real, though far-off hymn, how can I keep from singing?*

REFLECTION

Trevor Smith, Son

Thank you all so much for pausing your other commitments and coming here today to honor the love my dad shared with you.

Life doesn't stop for us when the ones we love leave this place; the little and big things that fill our time keep demanding our attention, so I'm grateful that we can all be here together today.

With the understanding that words fail to convey the importance of our loved ones and can never capture their spirit but only be like a finger pointing at the moon, I'd like to

observe silence for just a moment here. If you would be so kind as to fill your hearts and heads with your own memories of my dad

So, it may come to no surprise to some of you that I haven't finished preparing my remarks...

No matter what I wrote it couldn't reflect the depth of appreciation I have for my dad, so I won't worry that it's not good enough.

My father would've loved this- his signature toast at the dinner table was "Family & Friends, Near & Far". His life was framed by this deep understanding of what is truly valuable- connection with the world, with each other, with our Self.

My dad was not a perfect man, but to me he was the perfect dad.

He was calm

And furious

He was silly

And serious

He was hopeful

And he despaired

And he reveled in all these

Things that make us human.

When I drove away for the last time with tears streaming down my face I told myself there were no words to express the love and admiration I have for my father.

Immediately followed by the thought that my father's son lacking words would be sad indeed.

Death is the greatest affirmation of life. As long as death exists, we will know that life does too.

Yet the mystics of the past and scientists of today point to realities beyond our understanding: the weird world of quantum physics and the realms of spirits, of dimensions beyond life and death. All our mysteries can only venture as far as our imagination, or the edge of the Universe, whichever comes first.

Personally, I believe the Soul is not bound in Space-Time, but its consciousness is entranced here while it inhabits form.

Life goes on, Death sits still.

I said everything I wanted to say to my father, and what I wanted him to know words cannot convey.

I never wanted to live in a world without him in it, and I told him as much.

No words can truly convey Love.

How can there be no words to say the thing that is most important to say?

Poetry is where words can escape their meaning, free themselves from the lines they are drawn in, alchemize and evolve and transform themselves into something deeper.

Stan was a true poet, melding emotion and philosophy and imagery, and his freedom in expressing himself is something I always admired.

My dad left me many character traits:

The incessant ideas

The ability to exist in multiple roles simultaneously

He left me that thing in me that's always looking for the setup to a pun or joke.

The pure pride and joy I feel as I watch my children grow.

The thing in me that wants to understand, to synthesize all the various aspects of life into a cohesive worldview, and that looks for opportunities to share and call that out in others.

He left me his sweet nature, and his fiery temper.

Those of you who met him later in his life might not have seen his anger, but leading up to this ceremony my sisters and I regaled friends of our family with tales of my dad storming off from the dinner table to take a walk around the block. Raising children puts one's patience to the test, and he was not above losing his.

Caretaking him in his final weeks was an exercise in patience for us all. The simple things became complicated; the complicated things became impossible. The time it would take him to get out of bed and with our assistance get to the living room or bathroom, it was a laborious process- and he would say "This is ridiculous" and "You all are working your asses off". I am so grateful I got the chance to help him in any way, because a parents' love is not something you can ever repay- it can only be paid forward.

I can see my dad at the beach, sun and wind and sand and sky. Wading out, into the Ocean

Backing into a wave that would splash around him as he raised his arms and fell into the embrace of her infinite depths. Floating on waves with the family, we were truly together in happiness that will reverberate throughout our lives until we're at that day where we must merge back into the Ocean of Love.

I can remember

Early AM donuts at the boardwalk in Ocean City, his hand in mine & the Optimist Creed which the shop had on a poster:

As you ramble on through life, brother, whatever may be your goal, keep your eye upon the donut- and not upon the hole.

I remember the feel of his face, the bristle of his stubble, the smell of his pipe.

And his smell. Yogis speak of Attar, a rose-like aroma that spiritual masters possess. I still have his scent in his clothes, some of which I wear and which I fear washing and losing that ineffable essence.

Even while in hospice, my pops was Always asking how you are doing and what's up with you. Gregarious, heartfelt, eager, he loved people, animals, and nature. He was positive to a fault- remarking on how delicious food was, how pleasant a place was, how amazing we were as kids and later as parents of our own kids.

He never relied on his intelligence as the connection point with people, it was always a tool to meet people where they were. Although he was whip smart, he wouldn't flaunt it- he wore it comfortably and naturally.

My dad had Jokes for every occasion

And death is the defining occasion we all share, and it is a cruel joke played on us by time, and we are the butt end of it.

In truth, baby & daddy got each other, we all have each other. Even when I'm alone I have all the people who made me what I am with me.

As a Boy at 7: I said "I know that"

Now: I don't know that.

What is that?

How did you leave us?

I don't know how to process this. I don't know what to do without my dad. I don't know how to be complete without him.

His jokes were long. As he got older they Meandered down scenic routes on their way to a punchline that seemed less important than the journey.

Interestingly, as he forgot the hundreds of jokes he carried around in his brain, his Poetry got better. The chipping away of ego and physical form revealed a more lean and poignant style.

He knew how lucky we were, how few have family they love, and beyond that- actually like. He knew how sad this world can be, and how happy and fortunate we were to have each other.

My father wrestled with anxiety and quiet dread of mortality for most of his life. Dementia seemed to slowly erase the nagging fear of death, and in my mind he gave more and more of himself over to the process of aging and to the possibilities of where his energy would go when he was done here.

His sweet enthusiastic nature stayed with him, it was his foundation. It filled the sails of our family, and his spirit will live on, in and through his loved ones, until we are all reunited beyond the divisions and separations of individualized existence.

Om Mani Padme Hum

THE FOURTH READING John 10:11-16

Read by John Miles, Friend

Our families have been friends for many years. Since Kendall was a toddler. Stan chose this passage in a memorial planning class he and Bobbi took here at St. Mark's in March.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd."

SOLO Spirit of Life Words & Music by Carolyn McDade

Jilian McGreen, soloist

REFLECTION

Whitney Pellegrino, Daughter

You spun them on command.
Birthday. Anniversary. Wedding.
But it's not that easy for the rest of us.
We wrestle to find words worthy of paper, of you.

Chapter 1. Things I remember.

We are in the ocean at Bethany – I can't be more than 4. I'm in the water with you.
A wave is cresting toward us. You can't see beyond this one. You say: tread water until I get to you. You toss me over and are knocked off your feet. My legs and arms swirling while my eyes scan, heart racing. I wasn't worried about me, out there by myself. I was worried about you. And then you appeared. Big and strong and safe.

In first grade, I put on a nice dress and looked at myself in your big mirror –
the one in pictures of you holding us as babies.

I asked for your business card and carefully crossed out "Stanley S."

Mom helped me write "Whitney M." very small in front of Smith.

"I'll need a briefcase."

When I got to school, there were firefighters, and astronauts, and princesses.

I offered the teacher my business card but she didn't understand. She couldn't see who I wanted to be.

"I'm going to work in Real Estate." I beamed. "That's what I want to do when I grow up."

She'd probably never heard of "new home sales."

The three of us, looking around at families falling apart.

And then there was you two.

Talking the entire way to Bethany, and then North Myrtle, and then Isle of Palms.

Longer and longer drives.

Like a test of our endurance: Can they talk for ten straight hours?

God help us.

Did they say we're opening a roof top dance hall?

Did Dad just say he invented something?

Ignore them. Let's try to think of the biggest words we know.

Whitney: "Windshieldwiper." Kendall: "I don't think that's one word."

Kendall: "Solitary." Whitney: "I don't think that's a real word."

I'm sure it started with book reports. You sitting next to me while I typed. Then history papers. Then college applications with essays about my first civil rights march for gay rights, at age 16. Then philosophy and politics by phone from Oberlin. Then my paralegal interview with the Antitrust Division (and your apt suggestion to look up the word "antitrust" in the World Book the night before the interview). Then Anatole France and the ironies of majestic equality for law school. Then my interview at Dickstein (before which I dyed my hair "plum," which I did not realize is another word for purple). Then you and mom leading a mock interview for DOJ over coffee on U Street. Then opportunities for new and expanding roles at work. When I couldn't articulate why I wanted more responsibility, you helped me find the words. I was almost 40. That's probably 25 years of doing my homework for me. I mean with me.

Nature. And nurture. And time.

A lot of nurture. A lot of time.

Chapter 2. What we know.

Here is what we know.

We know that you didn't expect us to be good kids,
but we do have to be good adults.

Trevor was allowed a late start on this point,
Mostly because of his undiagnosed ADHD.

We know if you get too much change, give it back.

If someone is doing a good job, tell their boss.

There is a way to work a lot, and have your kids remember it differently.

There's a difference between stepping on someone's toes in a crowded metro,
and stomping on someone's foot.

The perfect is the enemy of the good.

If you start from a place of genuine curiosity, you can transcend difference,
And of course, don't believe everything you think.

You two did what we all wish we could do,
for those who we love the most.

You found a way for us to know your love in life. We don't wonder. We don't worry.
We know.

You did what I hope I can do,

Be resilient in the face of challenges, follow my own moral compass, love courageously,
delight in the chaos, and raise Dominic to be a good adult.

Chapter 3. The underbelly.

I like you because you let us have dark thoughts.

You never made us push them down, out, under.
Like blisters, rubbing.
We could be funny, and happy, and dark.
Like you.

I called you one day from work, many years ago,
standing outside a government building.
Flags flapping.
One of those calls that mom usually gets,
where you can only hear the sobs.
I tried to muster out “I’m not hurt.”
And then, “I can’t imagine life without you.”

Spontaneous, drowning, sorrow.

So this is my darkness. My darkest. It feels like I’m walking out onto ice – from the solid ground of my life with you, to the inevitable fall. There’s no getting around this one. And it’s not just the loss. It’s that feeling of being under water, with ice over my head. And I can’t find the hole I fell through to climb back up. What if I can’t find my way back up?

It’s like I started preparing for this as soon as I knew a day would come when we might be separated. What did I say when I was three? That I wanted to be buried close to you so I could crawl underground to you? And you said you would crawl to me. Something like that. When the day comes, it will be my sands and your sands, my energy and your energy, finding their way to each other.

Chapter 4. Here we are.

I read my dad a version of this poem on every birthday for more than decade

At some point in the last few years, he heard it for the first time again; the words new and fleeting for a failing memory.

Each year, I would read him the end of the poem, which says:

“If there’s a time when you forget, or if I need you but can’t see you,

I’ll just keep telling you everything you need to know.

Everything I need you to know.

And I’ll believe that you will hear me,

if you believe it too.”

And every time, he would respond: “I believe it.” He said it to me even when he didn’t remember that he had heard the poem before.

Of all the hard parts about my dad losing his memory, it brought me such comfort that this response was so deeply felt that it didn’t require any memory; it just was. And he gave us the gift of knowing us, recognizing and delighting in each of us. And when it was time to go home, he always wanted to know when he would see us again.

If this doesn’t read like a poem,

Blame Stan.

The man whose Christmas poems spoke of the deep, dark, snowy abyss.

Of fear and disorder.

And of course,

hope in outstretched arms.

Here is the part he never heard:

In the final chapter,

We take turns crawling in bed with you.

When you can't stand on your own, your first born says: baby holds the daddy

When we didn't know where your thoughts were taking you,

your youngest asks: how does your soul feel?

And I'm in the middle, with buoys on either side.

I'm wearing your watch of borrowed time.

Can I keep it? The time? I don't want to give it back.

When it's my turn to snuggle, I crawl in and lay on my side. I send gratitude into the universe for the incredible bounty that is our love, our family. I put my hand on your warm and still strong arm. And I tell you what a good dad you are.

The people stand, as able.

Read together.

THE FIFTH READING Psalm 23

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.

HYMN Spirit of Life

Words & Music by Carolyn

McDade

All Sing.

Spi - rit of life, come un - to me. Sing in my heart all the

stir - rings of com - pas - sion. Blow in the wind, rise in the sea;

move in the hand, giv-ing life the shape of jus - tice. Roots hold me close;

wings set me free; Spi - rit of Life, come to me, come to me.

The people sit.

REFLECTION

Kendall Harvey, Daughter

Thank you all for being here.

This feels like an impossible task. Not just because my father was the paragon of fathers, but because he is the poet-philosopher, he is the writer who has reflected me, my entire life, with more clarity, grace, and beauty than I knew I had.

My father was such a unique human in his state of almost constant humor, a joke for every possible occasion, the desire to get a smile out of every passerby while simultaneously living with such depth, curiosity, and presence. You can feel it in all the poems, the tangle with our human existence, his ability to make the profound accessible. You all likely have been the recipient of my Dad's attention and willingness to listen, you, some more intimately than others, know how he walked in the world. Because you have that connection and awareness, today I share what he demonstrated to me that you do not yet know.

How to leave the material world gracefully or How to Die

Start by setting your life goal to create a healthy family system. Devote yourself to investing in your marriage and children in a way that makes them feel free and unconditionally loved. Tell them that your vision was always to be a father & a partner, write about it so they remember. Then, as the time approaches send out warning signals:

About 5 years before you die, begin to take up less space, become a quieter more internal version of yourself, this will help ease your departure for your loved ones. They will have a few years to adapt to you not being so Big, so commanding, such a wonderful force of nature, they will acknowledge that you are aging, and that although you seem well, and always look dapper, the dx reveal that death could really come at any moment.

Approximately two months before departing your body have a few physical episodes that alert the family they need to pay attention; they need to gather. The children that are far away will come home; they will bring their young children. You will have a week celebrating your 56th anniversary, your 87th birthday and all the love you have created. You will dance with your wife, a careful, holding on kind of dance, holding on because falling is not an option, and she is the one for you.

Go back in time, write a poem for your young son in 1981, when he is 7. Write this poem about how you miss his babyhood, and the game 'daddy's got the baby, baby's got the daddy.' Your youngest child will find this poem and share it with the family, that week that they are all home. In a few weeks this line, from this poem becomes a mantra.

You will go to your eldest daughter's house, the one who never could leave home, the one who managed to create a full life within reach of you, who has been at every surgery, every recovery, who wouldn't have it any other way, who likes to be matchy-matchy with you, and you will have a feast of take-out, chat with your adolescent grand-son, you will be shuffling to and fro and the family will surround you.

Then after the children that live in other places leave again. You will have a procedure. This procedure presents a problem. You are in hospital. Your wife is present, your daughter there. They will confer with the family; the people you trust most in the world will decide that dying in a hospital is not for you. They will get you home. You will arrive home on Friday, April 18th. Your son will drive through the night to be with you for the release from the hospital. Your daughter will meet the caretakers to setup for your return home. Your wife will always be by your side. Your youngest pup will fly back to DC and be there in the afternoon to celebrate your return. They will fill the atmosphere with their limitless love of you and family. Somehow your children will have found partners that understand how vitally important it is that they be with you, somehow, they all rise to the challenge of single parenting and running the households left behind, while your three pull themselves back into the family of origin fold.

No one knows for sure how long you will have. You know the least. No one knows it will be exactly two weeks. Every day you become more mobile, stronger, even seemingly clearer. You are breathing more easily than you have in years, but you have only one functioning lung, and the wound in the other is not healing, not as far as anyone can tell. Hospice will be kind, compassionate, and available, but they also do not have the answers. Your family will wonder, is he getting better? Is this the path to death? How soon? Today he walked more than he has any other day. What are we planning for?

You will shine your generous soul out all around your body. Every morning you greet them 'how you be sweetheart?' When your third child has to leave again, she will sob, she will tell her Mom it is like leaving your newborn baby, that there is nowhere else she should be. There will be music, poetry and tears from everyone. Except you. You do not cry. You pet them, and thank them, love them and want to be near them, but you do not cry. They are vulnerable, tired, concerned, and determined to be with you.

Two days later she returns. The five of you are under the same roof. It could be 30 years ago; it was 30 years ago that you all lived on Connecticut Avenue and those memories are so present for your people. They are swimming in nostalgia and a life well lived. The ‘baby’s got the daddy’ poem is a reference for every time you stand up. Because you cannot stand up independently. Your son has written sticky notes in all the important places that say ‘don’t stand up alone! Call for us!’ and when you do stand the kids say ‘baby’s got the daddy.’ They take turns getting the big hugs that result from your imbalance, they relish in the closeness and sweetness of this time.

The Mama Lady directs the show, she coordinates the help, she makes everything run, as she always has. And she misses you, as she has, and she is so thankful for the warmth of your love as it still exudes from your being. She is with you, by your side, within earshot. Now, your son has to leave. He has been gone from his own brood for quite a stretch and he has to return. He doesn’t want to go either. His pain is clear. He struggles and finally sets out for his drive and 15 minutes later returns to hug and kiss and cuddle your head one last time. He doesn’t want to go. He has to go.

Now you are in your final week. You are impossibly kind and curious about the day, delighted by sitting on the deck, and content to hear the birds. On your final full day in this body, you sit outside in peace. Your youngest child is so relieved to have found a position of comfort for you, to have carefully escorted you out, she kneels beside you, so pleased that you are safe, and you look to her saying “you are a wonder” she says “you made me!” and you reply “what a lucky guy I am.” It is an exchange you have had before, and it is glorious and heartwarming and filled with the appreciation you both feel for this moment. This brief moment of life together. The wink of an eye of 44 shared years.

She watches you with your eyes closed listening to the purple martins, smiling. She asks, “dad, what do you think happens when you die” you reply “when you die? Your soul goes to heaven” she asks “what is heaven” you say “a place where souls go” She laughs. Urges you to continue, you say something like “your soul goes there and is playing, gin rummy, or poker, and communicating with the other souls around the card table” she gets stuck on the card game part, she is stuck mistaking the finger pointing at the moon,

for the moon. The lesson you taught her years ago, that took decades and three years of graduate study at a Buddhist University to understand.

Do not mistake the finger pointing at the moon for the moon means do not get tripped up by the path, by the direction, do not let the words trying to describe enlightenment become a substitute for the experience. She chuckles about the card game. Only later, a few days, later after reading some of your writings does she recognize: souls, communicating without bodies, souls gathered together, let go of the card game, feel the lack of the body, feel the absence of the material world, of the career, money, house, nonsense of comparison, feel what is soul-soul communication, that is what he was saying.

That night your middle girl serves you bbq and cherry Garcia ice cream for dessert. The Mama Lady puts on “I will follow him” and dances behind you as you make your way to the sunroom hospital bed for sleep. It is a hard night; it is your last and yet in the morning, you still wake with relative humor “what a joke this is” you say as you open your eyes not knowing why you are sleeping where you are or why you can’t get yourself out of bed. You want to be oriented to the day, what is happening, where are the other kids, where, always, where is the ‘mama lady.’ There are a series of helpers in the morning and when they have done their work, mom makes her last request, and you recite from your heart the first three stanzas of T.S. Eliot’s the love song of J Alfred Prufrock. They clearly don’t know what it is, but you have an attentive audience, and they seem to be a bit in awe. Your youngest pup is curled next to you on the bed, she is concerned about her departure the next day. She doesn’t want to leave, but there is no way she can stay any longer. She tells you that 5 years ago she was scared you would die, and she would not be there because of the pandemic. At that time, you told her ‘there is no way for me to die without you with me.’ It eased her fears. She tells you this again, you say ‘it is true.’

It is time for you to rest. She is going upstairs to do her work on remote with a client. Mama lady is on the deck. All is well. Twenty minutes later, when the time comes for your last breaths the love your soul is tethered to, the one who has spent 58 years making life with you is rubbing your back, and your youngest, whose greatest fear was to be so far from you, too far to hold you, has her arms wrapped around you. You have given her

this last most generous gift. You are never alone. Even when your heart stops beating you are held by your daughters, your son on his way, your longtime devoted love is holding you. We are holding you. You stay with them. Overnight. One last night the five of you in a little condo, too close for most people's comfort, but doing it the Smith way, together.

The people stand, as able.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Led by Kira Smith, Daughter-In-Law;
Sayer Smith, Grandson; Finn Smith, Grandchild

At the rising and setting of the sun;
At the high and low tides of the sea;
May his memory be a blessing.

At the chill of the snowfall and the warmth of the fire;
At the telling of jokes and the sound of his laughter before the punch line;
May his memory be a blessing.

At the fresh green daffodil shoots in spring;
At the blue sky, the reliable beauty of clouds;
May his memory be a blessing.

At the beach for warm summer swims,
At the trees coming into leaf and letting go in the fall,
His name will come to mind.

When reading a poem for birthday and Christmas,
When we gather to close the year and celebrate joy,
When we feel happy and at peace,
As long as our family lives, he will also, as one of us.
May his memory be a blessing.

When we are weary and in need of strength;
When we are lost and sick at heart;
When we have hard decisions to make without him;
When we need support and shared excitement for our hopes and dreams;

May his memory be a blessing.

When we have a story or heartache to share;
When we have achievements he would have delighted in;
When we are filled with loving-kindness, when we smile at a stranger,
For as long as we live,
We will share his story.

The people sit.

THE SIXTH READING Excerpt from *The Firmament of Time* by Loren Eiseley*
Read by Jon Harvey, Son-in-Law

Since the first human eye saw a leaf in Devonian sandstone and a puzzled finger reached to touch it, sadness has lain over the heart of man. By this tenuous thread of living protoplasm, stretching backward into time, we are linked forever to lost beaches whose sands have long since hardened into stone. The stars that caught our blind amphibian stare have shifted far or vanished in their courses, but still that naked, glistening thread winds onward. No one knows the secret of its beginning or its end. Its forms are phantoms. The thread alone is real; the thread is life.

The people stand, as able.

PROCESSION TO THE COLUMBARIUM

Benedictus, from *Missa Luba**

Fr Guido Haazen

As recorded by Les Troubadours Du Roi Baudouin

As members of the family process to the Columbarium, the congregation remains in place, turning towards the high altar.

THE COMMENDATION

Genesis 3:19

“For you were made from dust, and to dust you will return.”

We are formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock. Receive him into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

Amen.

THE COMMITTAL

Genesis 28:14 KJV

The ashes are placed in the niche.

And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

We commend our brother Stan and we commit his body to this resting place. Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. O God, bless him and keep him, make your face to shine upon him and be gracious to him, lift up your countenance upon him and give him peace. **Amen.**

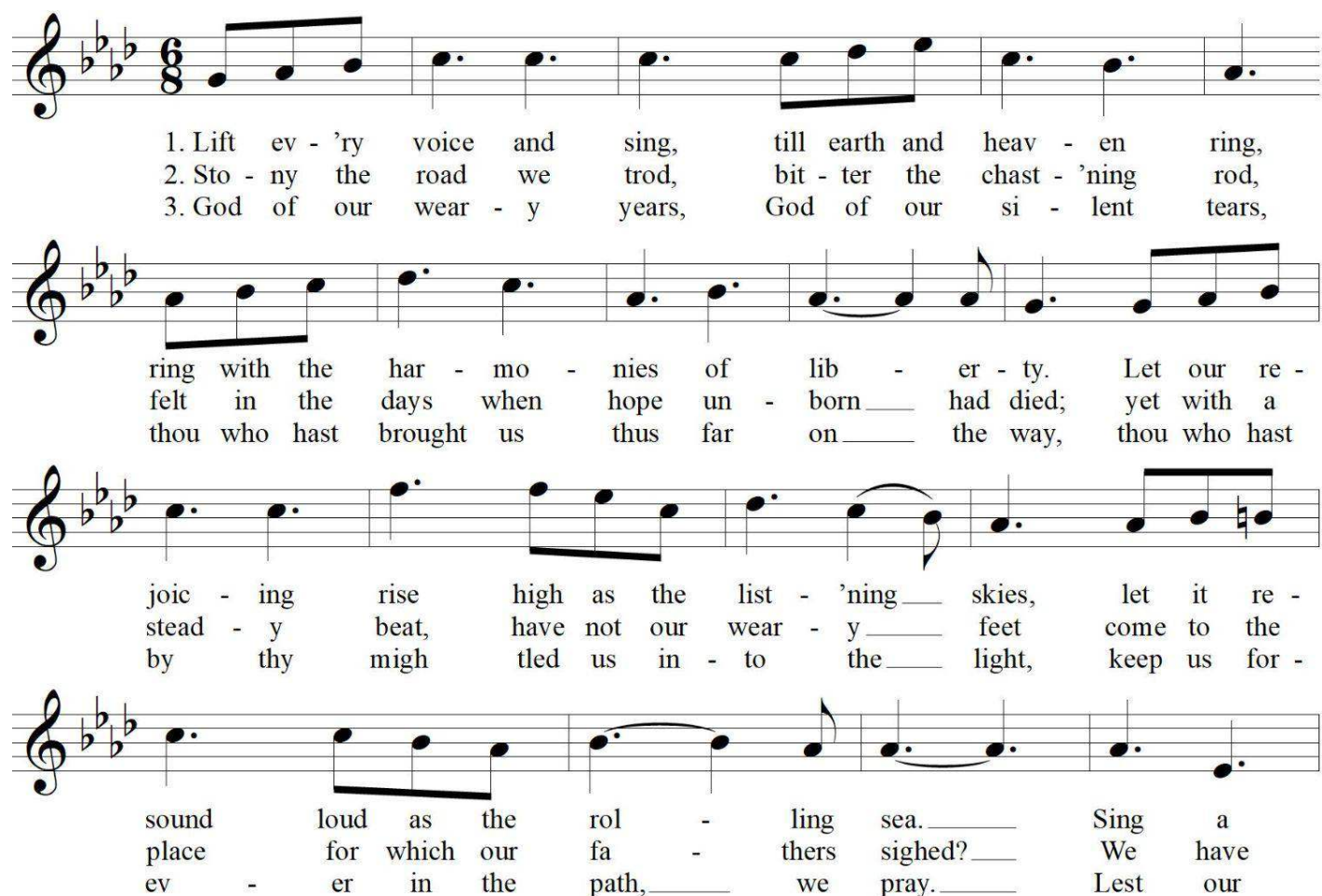
As the following hymn is sung, the family returns to their seats.

CLOSING HYMN Lift Every Voice and Sing
Johnson

Words by James Weldon

Music by J. Rosamond Johnson

All Sing Verses 1-2



1. Lift ev - 'ry voice and sing, till earth and heav - en ring,
2. Sto - ny the road we trod, bit - ter the chast - 'ning rod,
3. God of our wear - y years, God of our si - lent tears,
ring with the har - mo - nies of lib - er - ty. Let our re -
felt in the days when hope un - born had died; yet with a
thou who hast brought us thus far on the way, thou who hast
joic - ing rise high as the list - 'ning skies, let it re -
stead - y beat, have not our wear - y feet come to the
by thy migh tled us in - to the light, keep us for -
sound loud as the rol - ling sea. Sing a
place for which our fa - thers sighed? We have
ev - er in the path, we pray. Lest our

song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us. Sing a
come o - ver a - way that with tears has been wa - tered; We have
feet stray from the plac - es, our God, where we met thee; lest our

song full of the hope that the pres - ent has brought —
come, trea - ding our path through the blood of the slaugh -
hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we for - get —

us. Fac - ing the ri - ing sun of our new day be -
tered, out from the gloom - y past, till now we stand at —
thee; sha-dowed be - neath thy hand, may we for - ev - er —

gun, let us march on till vic - to - ry — is won.
last where the bright gleam of our bright star — is cast.
stand, true to our God, true to our na - tive land.

THE BLESSING

Life is short, and we do not have much time to gladden the hearts of those who make the journey with us. So be swift to love, and make haste to be kind. And the blessing of God, who made us, who loves us, and who travels with us, be with you now and forever.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Let us go forth with courage and compassion.

We go with open hearts.

POSTLUDE Spring, from *The Four Seasons***

Antonio Vivaldi



*All are invited to join the family in Baxter Hall
immediately following the service, for an OM Circle and reception.*

Music Footnotes

* The Missa Luba is a setting of the Latin Mass sung in styles traditional to the Democratic Republic of Congo. It was composed by Father Guido Haazen, a Franciscan friar from Belgium, and originally celebrated, performed, and recorded in 1958 by Les Troubadours du Roi Baudouin (King Baudoin's Troubadours), a choir of adults and children from the Congolese town of Kamina in Katanga Province. It would later become the partial basis for a Congolese sub-rite of the Roman Rite Mass, the Zaire Use. (Featured in the film "IF" and at the end of "The Singing Nun".)

** Vivaldi was played on a record player at our wedding, accompanied by our dear friend Ross Gelbspan on harmonica.

Stan's comments on SPRING:

"It is not enough that yearly, down this hill, April comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing flowers."

... perhaps the strongest, most fierce poetic lines I have ever read. So much about life, about our struggle with the reality of death, our anger at our helplessness to do a damn thing about those realities is packed into the poem, and then suddenly unwrapped to stare us into submission.

Her life was complicated, a reflection of herself. And much of her poetry is wonderful to read. I give **Spring** a room in my heart next to the room I have given to T. S. Eliot's **The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock**.

Stan's thoughts On Energy and Satori:

Energy, Universal Energy is always the Same – it doesn't become more or less – It manifests itself in a variety of ways, among these "different" ways is the phenomenon of LIFE in all its different forms

- Energy is Eternal

- Life is a manifestation of Energy
- Life is Eternal

All Religions are metaphoric descriptions of this Reality, shaped into Dramatic stories to help us understand it. Satori* experiences are the non-verbal experiential encounters with that verbal understanding – with that reality which is beyond verbal explanation or description – thus words are fingers pointing to the moon –Buddha, Moses, Mohammed and Jesus (and others) had these Satoric experiences.

*Loren Eiseley, author of *The Immense Journey*; *The Excavation of a Life*, *All the Strange Hours*; and other books. Professor of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania; accepted an invitation to speak at a Walden graduation. His core message to students was “Today’s problems were yesterday’s solutions.” <https://www.eiseley.org/biographical-note.pdf>

A note of remembrance from our friend, Howard Pressman, which struck a chord in our hearts and minds: “one of Stan’s many unique traits was that he was always present in 2 worlds - the moment of life he was in and his analysis and commentary of that moment. It was as if, for Stan, life was always a play in which he had 2 roles at the same time - as an actor and the narrator. This unusual, innate ability made him a great raconteur, jokester, psychodramatist, philosopher and poet.”

From Trevor:

EVENTUALLY IT TRANSFORMS EVERYONE

Meher Baba

Love has to spring spontaneously from within; it is in no way amenable to any form of inner or outer force. Love and coercion can never go together; but while love cannot be forced upon anyone, it can be awakened through love itself.

Love is essentially self-communicative; those who do not have it catch it from those who have it. Those who receive love from others cannot be its recipients without giving a response that, in itself, is the nature of love.

True love is unconquerable and irresistible. It goes on gathering power and spreading itself until eventually it transforms everyone it touches.

Humanity will attain a new mode of being and life through the free and unhampered interplay of pure love from heart to heart.

DISCOURSES, 7th ed, p. 8-9, 1987 © Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust

**Satori (Japanese: 悟り) is a Japanese Zen Buddhist term referring to a state of enlightenment or awakening, a profound, intuitive understanding of the true nature of reality. It's often used interchangeably with "kensho," which means "seeing into one's true nature." Satori is considered a central goal in Zen Buddhism, representing a complete reordering of the individual's relationship with the universe.*

Liturgical Leaders & Worship Participants

Presider	The Reverend Michele H. Morgan
Pianist & Organist	Jeff Kempskie
Soloist	Jilian McGreen
Readers & Tributes	Trevor Smith, Whitney Pellegrino, Kendall Harvey, Lee Pellegrino, Koda Smith, Kira Smith, Jon Harvey, Finn Smith, Sayer Smith, John Miles, Leonard Wartofsky
Verger	Josie Jordan
Crucifer	Betsy Athey
Ushers	Martha Connor-Donnelly, Rich Chefetz, Joe Tarantolo, Dominic Pellegrino, Milo and Hugo Harvey, Elizabeth Anthony
Video Director	David Deutsch
Technical Director	Charlie Rupp
Flowers	Penny Farley



