

Prayer

Offered at the Celebration of Dorothy Boelen's Life

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St. John's Episcopal Church
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In the spirit of quiet anticipation,
we come consciously into your Presence, Sacred Mystery of Being,
in Whom we live and move and have our being.
We would be still and know that you are God,
our Sustainer through this earthly pilgrimage and our eternal home.

Hidden from us in a cloud of unknowing,
yet so very present to us in life's Grace moments,
moments when Love becomes tangible
because embodied in another, in a face, a smile, a touch.
This one whose life we celebrate today
was such an instrument of your Love, a channel of your Grace.
What a gift we have shared!

Loss is proportionate to love;
pain is measured by what the one removed meant to us –
and this one, our Dorothy, meant so much.
There is no denying the loss.
Yet, O God, there is no denying the wonder as well,
wonder at the beauty of love she embodied,
wonder at grace amazing, simplicity, humility, authenticity,
indeed, an altogether lovely humanity.

We remember the way she was.
We remember and we give thanks that our lives were enriched
living in the circle of light that shone through her.
Good and Gracious God,
we have gathered in worship to remember and to give thanks –
to remember a wife, a mother, grandmother,
great grandmother, sister, aunt and friend.

We acknowledge our sadness as over the last years and months
we witnessed that brilliant mind closed even as her eyesight dimmed.
The strong and gracious presence was reduced to quiet desperation.
We were heartbroken that we lost her long before she breathed her last.

Gord's loving care, family's deep concern and love surrounded her.
But that vibrant one we loved and admired
was only a shadow of herself.

Yet, amazingly, O God, these are bittersweet moments.
There is no denying the loss
but there is no denying the wonder as well –
the wonder at the beauty of love, the meaning of life,
the sacredness of human bonding.

Things come into focus; we gain perspective,
We know in tangible experience what we thought we knew before,
but realize we didn't know as deeply –
That what really matters finally is the love we've known –
love given, love received.
Our hearts swell, eyes moisten as we contemplate it all –
the gift we've known in this one
who loved so deeply, so broadly.

And in such a time as this, in such a place as this,
Gracious God, we are grateful above all
that the end is not broken health and dreams unfulfilled,
swallowed up in death,
but rather the confidence that to live is to live unto the Lord,
and to die is to die unto the Lord,
so then whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

Sacred Mystery of our lives,
You are there to hear our borning cry,
You are there when we are old.
And when we shut our weary eyes you are there
with just one more surprise.
With such full faith we bid our loved one farewell,
trusting in full assurance that
All will be well,
All will be well,
All manner of things will be well.

O God, our hearts are full, quite overwhelmed.
We commend our loved one, full of love,
into the abyss of Your Love,
in the name of the Good Shepherd whose love she embodied,
Jesus Christ our Lord.