

John Rolph

MUSIC ON ENTERING THE CHAPEL

[**STAND**]

Wind Beneath My Wings

Bette Midler

WELCOME

[**SIT**]

Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, they will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'
(John 11:25-26)

'Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.'
(Matthew 5:4)

'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.'
(John 3:16)

Welcome to this service of thanksgiving and remembrance for the life of John Rolph.

We gather to say our final farewells and to remember John, before God our maker and redeemer, as a much-loved, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, uncle, cousin, neighbour, and friend.

John Rolph

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray. God our refuge and strength, close at hand in our distress; meet us in our sorrow and lift our eyes to the peace and light of your constant care.

Help us so to hear your word of grace that our fear will be dispelled by your love, our loneliness eased by your presence and our hope renewed by your promises through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN

On behalf of John's daughter, Karen, I would now like to bring you this tribute to John.

Our Dad. Our king was born on the 17th June 1932, second child to Jane and Edward, always known as Ted and Jean, in Hounslow.

John was born early and weighted 2lb and spent months sleeping in a drawer. They moved to Birch Crescent, Hornchurch, when John was 5 years old.

He met Beryl over the fields at the back when she was out with her sister, Joan, who was 10 years older.

John was sent to his mother's sister in Scotland when they were evacuated. When John returned John and Beryl were soon playing again.

John's Dad had an allotment over the back and that kept them well feed with vegetables, potatoes, and fruit along with the rabbits and chickens.

There's a picture of John and his Dad going to see Romford play football and what a difference, they wore shirt tie and jacket and cap.

John went in the army where he learnt to cook, sew and the ability to manage life skills. When he came back John and Beryl were married.

Karen was born in Streatham, they then moved back to Beryl's mum while they saved for the deposit to buy their first house in Carlton Road, Romford, where they lived for 66 years; Ian was born in that house.

John was a hard worker working his way up from 15 years old.

He worked for the Co-op Insurance Company until he was 18 when he joined the Army, becoming a Sergeant and serving in Germany.

John Rolph

On leaving the Army at 20 he joined Minster Insurance Company where he worked until his retirement.

Anyone that was lucky enough to meet John knew a lovely kind and giving man.

When he retired, he helped so many different people and organisations, He said he never knew how he had time to work.

They were lucky enough to have had brilliant neighbours and so many lovely friends, they went away a lot on holiday, to holiday camps with friends and on their own.

John taught us the meaning of life.

You didn't spend what you didn't have you never borrowed because you had to pay it back, and read everything before you sign it and if you weren't sure to ask.

You could tackle any job if you tried.

Dad did all the DIY; they were major life lessons. John loved his garden the flowers and the wildlife. He feed the birds that he loved to sit and watch.

John Rolph

John did many things including walking, he ran a ramble on Monday mornings until 2019, wood carving, canal painting and green bowls and played in a team until 2014.

He did the bingo at the fellowship that both he and Beryl attended. He liked to help people with their gardens and offered many a lift to different events.

Dad was in for a laugh and some of the people he dressed up for, for New Year parties still leaves me in stitches.

After losing his queen in March 2019 and going into lockdown John suffered with a broken heart.

He had gout in his leg and was finding it hard to cope with no queen and the onset of dementia.

He went into a care home for respite care to recharge his batteries without the worry of his beautiful garden and not being surrounded by all mum's treasures as everything he looked at brought memories and tears.

John decided to stay in the care home where he loved feeding the fish and doing a bit of gardening. He loved all the carers and pulled their legs.

John Rolph

He was a real card and made everyone laugh. Never a day went past when dad didn't say if you love me as much as you say, you would let me go and be with mum.

He said he had had a brilliant and mostly healthy 88 years and it was time for the king to be with his queen.

I said Happy New Year Dad and his reply was It will be for me but not you, I just laughed, little did I realise 10 days later our king would take his last breath and be back where he wanted to be with his Queen, his childhood sweetheart.

John was loved and loved by his children, his granddaughters, great granddaughters and his son in law, daughter in law, his grandson in law and his nieces and cousins.

As Vicar of All Saints Church, just round the corner from Birch Crescent, I knew John and Beryl for the best part of 13 years.

They were universally known as one of, if not, the nicest couples in Church.

Both are still very fondly remembered by many Church members, and their thoughts and prayers are with us today.

John Rolph

John contributed many hours to All Saint's especially to the All Saint's fellowship and Social Club.

He would always come early when the club held lunches to assist putting up the tables and placing the chairs.

John also was willing to give lifts to club meetings when members needed them, and he also introduced new members to the club.

He also was the 'caller' at afternoon Bingo meetings and supplied the prizes. He enjoyed volunteering to make scones with Hazel Higdon's help.

At the summer and Christmas church bazaars John and Beryl always had a stall selling plants and other items, and he always joined in the New Year parties.

When Rosemary and George Meakins held their 'Bring and Buy sales' in their garden, John would assist George in erecting the large marquee, in which afternoon tea would be served.

He was a skilled wood carver, and it was always a delight to the Fellowship members to hear how he spent many hours carving beautiful small animals from small pieces of wood and even more so when he brought samples for the club to see.

John Rolph

John had a wonderful sense of humour and used it when calling out the bingo numbers with lines such as, 'Number 33, time for the afternoon cup of tea'.

He looked after the lawn and hedges in the front of the church as he was a keen gardener.

His friendship and individual spirit will be greatly missed by All Saint's, both by club members and by the church in general.

Nothing seem to be too much to ask of John, very rarely have I met anyone so willing to help another Church member.

John's laidback manner made him easy to be with and it was always a pleasure to spend time with him in conversation, he had a great knowledge of the local area and if anyone wanted to know anything about gardening, then John was your man to ask.

One cannot count the hours that John spent on keeping the lawn and gardens neat and tidy at the Church.

Like you their family and friends, we at All Saints Church miss John and Beryl very much, but we also know that they are at peace and reunited in heaven.

John Rolph

Everyone at All Saints Church counts it as a pleasure and a privilege to have known them both and we thank God for the joy, the pleasure, the difference that they brought to so many people's lives.

In this service today we rightly focus our thoughts on John, to celebrate and give thanks for his life.

However, most of you will also know that over the past year Karen and Ian have not only lost their father, John, but also, their mother, Beryl.

Losing a loved one at any time of year is hard, but it is particularly hard during the days and weeks around Christmas; the COVID-19 restrictions over the past year only serving to heighten our sense of loss.

All of us gathered here today have our own personal, and treasured memories of John.

I hope that there will be an opportunity for you, John's family and friends, to get together in the not-too-distant future and share those memories of John with one another.

John Rolph

But for now, as we listen to, *All Things Bright And Beautiful*, sung by St Paul's Cathedral Choir, can I encourage you to recall your favourite memories of John, and how you would best like to remember him, as we slowly start to adjust to life without John around.

TIME FOR REFLECTION
All Things Bright And Beautiful
St Paul's Cathedral Choir

BIBLE READING
(order of service)
John 14:1-6

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me.

My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you?

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."

Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father except through me.

ADDRESS

In our reading from St. John's gospel, on predicting his own death and resurrection, Jesus comforts his disciples by assuring them that when the time is right, they will also join him in heaven.

But for me it says much more than that. For it touches our hopes and our desires to see again those, like John, whose death we mourn today.

There is something engaging and attractive in the Christian message that God has a place for each one of us in heaven – if only we can find the way.

Jesus makes it clear in our reading that he is the way, the one and only way, through whom we have any possible hope of spending eternity in heaven with the ones we love.

We know something of the qualities in life that God would want us to have, many of which I am sure John possessed in abundance.

We also know it is an impossible task to live up to them all the time and so we are called to trust God to be just, gracious, merciful, and forgiving in how we respond to the love that he shows us.

It is a love that comes through our reading when Jesus, responding to his disciples' anxiety, recognises that there will be a time of separation, when it will be painful and difficult for them to be physically apart from him.

A time when they will need to support and encourage one another in adjusting to life without him around.

In this difficult time Jesus encourages them to remain faithful, to continue to meet together, to remember and adhere to his teaching and to put their trust in God for the future.

Elsewhere in the bible Jesus said, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28).

Jesus' concern in our reading for his disciples, is the same concern that he has for all of us today.

That we can be assured that by our faith through and in Jesus Christ, he will take upon himself our cares and worries and in return we shall receive that peace and comfort only he can give.

As we mourn the death of John, we can be confident that the promises Jesus makes, are for each one of us today and everyday as they were for those, like John, who have gone before us, to be at rest in one of the many rooms in our Father God's house, waiting for us to join him when the time is right, if only we too can find the way.

PRAYERS

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, you have not made us for darkness and death, but for life with you for ever.

Without you we have nothing to hope for; with you we have nothing to fear. Speak to us now your words of eternal life.

Lift us from anxiety and guilt to the light and peace of your presence and set the glory of your love before us.

God our Father, we thank you that you have made each of us in your own image and given us gifts and talents with which to serve you.

We thank you now for John and what he meant to each of us; the years we shared with him, the good we saw in him, the love we received from him.

Now give us strength and courage to leave his in your care.

John Rolph

As we honour his memory, make us more aware that you are the one from whom comes every perfect gift, including the gift of eternal life.

Almighty God, you love everything you have made and judge us with infinite mercy and justice.

We rejoice in your promises of pardon, joy, and peace to all those who love you.

In your mercy turn the darkness of death into the dawn of new life, and the sorrow of parting into the joy of heaven.

Lord, we pray for those who mourn, Karen & Simon, Ian & Pat, Sarah, Lynn & Mark, Abie and Mia, John's extended family, John's friends, both near and far.

Be gentle with them in their grief. Show them the depths of your love, and a glimpse of the kingdom of heaven.

Father of all, by whose mercy and grace your saints remain in everlasting light and peace: we remember with thanksgiving those whom we love but see no longer; and we pray that in them your perfect will may be fulfilled.

Entrusting into your hands all that you have made and rejoicing in our communion with all your faithful people, we make our prayers through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

John Rolph

LORD'S PRAYER
(order of service)

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, the power, and the glory
Forever and ever. Amen.

POEM

The Moment That You Died
Read by Karen Bohannon

*The moment that you died
my heart was torn in two,
one side filled with heartache,
the other died with you.*

*I often lie awake at night,
when the world is fast asleep,
and take a walk down memory lane,
with tears upon my cheeks.*

John Rolph

*Remembering you is easy,
I do it every day,
but missing you is heartache
that never goes away.*

*I hold you tightly within my heart
and there you will remain.
Until the joyous day arrives,
that we will meet again.*

COMMENDATION

[**STAND**]

Amazing Grace

Royal Scots Dragoon Guards

Before we commit John's body to be cremated, we entrust him into God's safekeeping in the words of the commendation.

John, you shared your life with us: God give eternal life to you.

You gave your love to us: God give his deep love to you.

You gave your time to us: God give his eternity to you.

You gave your light to us: God give everlasting light to you.

John Rolph

Go upon your journey dear soul, to love, light and life eternal.

COMMITTAL

So, having entrusted John to God's mercy, we now commit his body to be cremated [~~CLOSE CURTAINS~~].
Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust: in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our frail bodies that they may be conformed to his glorious body, who died, was buried, and rose again for us.

To him be glory for ever. Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray. Support us, O Lord, all the day long of this troublous life, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over, and our work is done.

Then, Lord, in your mercy grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

John Rolph

BLESSING

May Christ the good shepherd enfold you with love,
fill you with peace and lead you in hope, to the end of
your days.

And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son,
and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you
always. Amen.

MUSIC ON LEAVING THE CHAPEL

Always Look On The Bright Side Of Life

Eric Idle