**Funeral Service for Elizabeth Pearl Jolly at Wendling Chapel**

**11am Monday 18th January 2021 followed by burial at Gressenhall Churchyard**

Music in: The Swan played by Celloist Sheku Kanneh-Mason

**Welcome:**

We meet in this solemn moment to worship God and to commend Elizabeth Pearl Jolly to God’s loving and faithful care.

We are few in number here, but joined by many online, all of whom have come together to remember Liz, to celebrate her life, and to pray for one another in our sadness.

The psalmist said: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

In the New Testament, we are reminded:

God cares for you, so cast all your anxiety on God (1Peter 5:7)

And these words of Jesus: Peace is my parting gift to you: my own peace, such as the world cannot give. Set your troubled hearts at rest, and banish your fears (John 14 :27)

We are here in sadness, but also with hope and confidence knowing that Jesus shared our human life and death, was raised again triumphant and lives for evermore. In him, his people find eternal life. Liz shared this faith and placed her hope in God. Let us do the same as we pray:

**Prayer:**

Enfold us, Lord, within your comforting arms.

Help us to feel at home, even though we are hurting.

Help us to know that we are not alone,

That we need have no fear of being human,

Of showing how we feel, for you know the pain of our loss.

Enfold us with courage,

Help us not to hold back the questions, the hurt, or confusion.

May we know that through your grace

We may rest within the circle of your love. Amen

**Bible reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

**Hymn:** *(sung by Jane Roberson)*

When our confidence is shaken

In beliefs we thought secure;

When the spirit in its sickness

Seeks but cannot find a cure:

God is active in the tensions

Of a faith not yet mature.

Solar systems, void of meaning,

Freeze the spirit into stone;

Always our researches lead us

To the ultimate Unknown:

Faith must die, or come full circle

To its source in God alone.

In the discipline of praying,

When it's hardest to believe;

In the drudgery of caring,

When it's not enough to grieve:

Faith maturing, learns acceptance

Of the insights we receive.

God is love; and he redeems us

In the Christ we crucify:

This is God's eternal answer

To the world's eternal why;

May we in this faith maturing

Be content to live and die.

F.Pratt Green (1903-2000)

**Bible reading: John 14:1-6, 27** *(read by Matt Duncan)*

**Address:**

Knowing Liz, you may have already gathered that she had a hand in planning her own funeral (Judging by the paper that the family found, Liz put thought into this service some time ago) and perhaps you have heard her voice through the choice of prayers, hymn and readings. Due to the ongoing pandemic, this is not the full service Liz thought about. We cannot sing the 3 hymns she chose – but we will do so when we can meet with all friends and family to celebrate her life at some future time.

The second chosen hymn was Who fathoms the eternal thought – by John Greenleaf Whittier – with instructions to use the MHB version as the words were better. I’ll just read a little for you:

Who fathoms the eternal thought?

Who talks of scheme and plan?

The Lord is God! He needeth not

The poor device of man.

Here in the maddening maze of things,

When tossed by storm and flood,

To one fixed ground my spirit clings!

I know that God is good!

I know not what the future hath

Of marvel or surprise,

Assured alone that life and death

His mercy underlies.

The rest of the words are also beautiful. They speak of great trust in God, and God’s faithfulness to us. I didn’t know Liz for very long, but I think this was at the core of her faith – that God held her and all creation in his hands. We don’t have to be able to understand everything. Our job is just to work with Him, to care for his creation and to use his gifts well.

Born on 24 February 1946, at Woodside in Gressenhall, Liz spent her first year living there with her grandparents, until her parents completed Teazel Patch and could move in. She went to the local primary school, and to her surprise, passed the 11+ and went to Dereham High School for Girls. It’s safe to say that even then, she made her mark and showed herself to be a born rebel. Being 9 years younger and following on, Deborah found the teachers remembered Liz well!

In the lower 6th, Liz left to be a pupil teacher at North Elmham Primary, before going to Southlands College to train to be a teacher, specialising in RE and PE. Her 3 years there built up strong friendships with her college “family”– in particular with Judith Sexton who has been a very special friend ever since. Her teaching career of just over 20 years started at Brondesbury Senior High School near Kilburn, then she moved to Great Cornard and taught in Sudbury, and after a few years moved to live in Great Dunham in Norfolk. From there she taught in various schools, and became acting head at Garvestone Primary for a while. Wherever she lived and worked, she became part of the local Methodist Church. She regularly ran holiday clubs, childrens’ activities and youth groups. She always had a very pastoral heart and made strong connections with people and kept in touch over the years. She had a campervan, which she loved and used for holidays and visiting. Her faith was hugely important. She had her own non-conventional approach to life and this was the same with her faith. She appreciated Celtic influences and enjoyed time at Iona, and Lindisfarne and the Greenbelt festival, always sharing her insights with friends and family.

She candidated for ordained ministry and after 2 years at Wesley House Cambridge, she was ordained in 1989.

She served first at Coningsby and Sleaford in Lincolnshire. Then she changed to non-stipendiary ministry and returned to teaching RE, at St Georges High School in Sleaford, until she retired. Staying in Lincolnshire, she was very active in the church and community in her own distinctive ways, until she decided to come back to Teazel Patch, in 2008, when her mum was finding it hard to manage on her own. Back on home ground, Liz didn’t just relax into a full retirement, but worked hard. She served the church by preaching regularly, putting huge amounts of care and attention into the services she led as always. She came back to part-time ministry and had pastoral charge of Swaffham and Sporle for a year, when the circuit was a minister down. She was hugely respected for her pastoral care and her support for colleagues.

She has always loved her home Chapel here at Wendling, and been its mainstay for the last few years. She was last here on Christmas Eve and played the organ for us – also giving out mince pies she’d baked the day before. She was a part of the community in Gressenhall and has touched so many lives there, including being part of the choir, which she loved.

Her other passion was of course the natural world – she loved her succession of rescue dogs and Siamese cats – lastly her greyhound Holly. She loved the chickens and provided eggs to many people. She loved her garden and was always the first to spot the birds nest. She enjoyed cooking and sharing with friends – totally generous and open-hearted, she will leave a huge gap in so many lives.

Our comfort is knowing that she sent and received cards from all her friends in December, and spoke with all her family on Christmas Day – and that now she is held within the care of God Almighty. One day, we will be together again.

Deborah is going to share some memories. **Personal Eulogy**

We listen to a **song from the Wild Goose Worship Group,**

‘There is one among us’, and as we listen, let us think of Liz resting in God’s peace, and allow God’s peace to rest in our hearts too.

*The peace of the earth be with you / the peace of the heavens too;*

*the peace of the rivers be with you / the peace of the oceans too. Deep peace falling over you / God’s peace growing in you. (Repeat)*

*Words: Guatemalan traditional Trans: Christine Carson Music: Guatemalan traditional
Arr: John L. Bell Trans & Arr © 1998 Christine Carson & WGRG, Iona Community, Scotland.*

**“ Remember”** *read by Rachel Birrell*

Remember me when I am gone away,

 Gone far away into the silent land;

 When you can no more hold me by the hand,

Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.

Remember me when no more day by day

 You tell me of our future that you planned:

 Only remember me; you understand

It will be late to counsel then or pray.

Yet if you should forget me for a while

 And afterwards remember, do not grieve:

 For if the darkness and corruption leave

 A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,

Better by far you should forget and smile

 Than that you should remember and be sad.

Christina Rossetti, (1830- 1894)

**Prayers:**

God of us all, a life we love has been torn from us. Expectations the years once held have vanished and the mystery of death has stricken us. O God, you know the lives we live and the deaths we die – woven so strangely of purpose and of chance, of reason and of the irrational, of strength and of frailty, of happiness and of pain.

On this sad day, we give thanks for Liz, for all that was good in her life, for times we shared, the love and friendship we knew.

Her death was such a shock for us, and none of us were able to say goodbye. As we honour her, we pray for ourselves. We pray for Deborah, for all the family, friends and neighbours, who already miss her so much. We pray for each of us here and later at the graveside, and each one who is watching online. We thank you that as we remember Liz, talk about her and laugh and cry at the memories, we carry her in our hearts and know she will never be completely gone from us. May your Spirit of peace and love be upon us, assuring us that love is never changed by death, but that in the ending, there is, with you, a new beginning. AMEN

**Commendation**

Now let us commend Liz to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer:

Into the freedom of wind and sunshine, we let you go.

Into the dance of the stars and planets, we let you go.

Into the wind’s breath and the hands of the star maker

we let you go. Go safely, go dancing, go running home

to the Saviour who redeemed you and the Spirit who breathed life into you, we let you go. AMEN

**Blessing**

The peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts in the knowledge and love of God, And may the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you, this day and forever more, AMEN

**Music out:** The Lord Bless you and Keep you, by John Rutter

**At the graveside:**

Welcome. Whether we have been together in the chapel or have just come to this graveside, we are all here from our shared love and respect for Liz.

**The Committal:**

In the chapel, we commended Liz to God’s care.

Now we commit her body too.

God our creator and redeemer, by your power Christ conquered death and entered into glory.

Confident of his victory and claiming his promises, we entrust Elizabeth Pearl Jolly to your mercy

**All       Amen.**

We now commit her body to be buried: earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust: in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died, was buried, and rose again for us. To him be glory forever.

**All       Amen.**

Go gently on your voyage, beloved.

Slip away with the ebb tide,

Rejoice in a new sunrise.

May the moon make a path across the sea for you,

The Son provides a welcome.

May the earth receive you

as you go with our love

into the presence of Love’s completeness.

Kate McIlhagga (slightly edited)

Father we pray for those we love but see no longer. Grant them your peace. May light perpetual shine on them, until we are all brought together into your eternal kingdom. Amen

Let’s pray together the Lords Prayer.

***All***   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,

for ever and ever.

Amen.

We finish with a blessing:

May the road rise to meet you.

May the wind be always at your back.

May the sun shine warm upon your face.

May the rains fall upon your fields.

And until we meet again,

May God hold you in the hollow of His hand.