THE PARISH OF
ST WILFRID
HARROGATE

The Order of Service for the Funeral of

Richard Jeffray Thomas

1939 – 2025

Thursday 28th August at 2pm

Welcome

A warm welcome to the parish church of St Wilfrid Harrogate. The death of a member of our family or a close friend is often a time of shock and numbness. When a life ends, ours must still continue, even though they will never be the same again. Life is changed, but it is not ended.

The Christian hope is that this is also true for those who have died: for them, life is changed, but not ended: they continue their journey, their pilgrimage to be with God, in heaven. Jesus promised, as we shall hear during this funeral liturgy, that he would prepare for us a place in heaven, where he would feed us just as he feeds us on earth in the sacrament of his body and blood: what we do here, day by day and Sunday by Sunday is a foretaste of the life of heaven. He accomplished that by his own death on the Cross, and by rising in glory on the first Easter day.

We pray for Richard, as he and we all continue our respective journeying. We ask God to free him from his sins and bring him into the fullness of his wonderful presence. In our offering of prayer and worship we aid that journey of Richard and are strengthened by God for the continuation of our own lives, until we come to meet him face to face.

All the things that you will see today reminds us of the faith that we profess and are symbols of that journey we undertake – that we are never alone, that we journey in the presence of God, the saints and angels.

Please join in all the parts that are marked **in bold print** to say together.

The Gathering

*As the coffin is brought into the church, please **Stand.***

✠ In the name of the Father
and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

We meet in the name of Jesus Christ who died
and was raised to the glory of God the Father.
Grace and mercy be with you.
And also with you.

The Priest introduces the service.

Prayers of Penitence

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, your word is a light to our path.
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, leading us into everlasting life.
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

May God our Father forgive us our sins
and bring us to the eternal joy of his kingdom,
where dust and ashes have no dominion.
Amen.

The Opening Prayer

Merciful Father, hear our prayers and comfort us;
renew our trust in your Son
whom you raised from the dead;
strengthen our faith that our brother Richard
and all who have died in the love of Christ will be freed from sin
and will share in his resurrection;
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

The Hymn

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but thee;
Yet possessing every blessing
If our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us,
All our weakness thou dost know;
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
Thou didst feel its keenest woe;
Self denying, death defying,
Thou to Calvary didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy;
Love with every passion blending,
Pleasure that can never cloy;
Thus provided, pardoned, guided,
Nothing can our peace destroy.

We sit for:

The Eulogy

The Poem

Written by Gregor Grant Jnr

The sun will rise
Again my friend
Have no fear
The start and end
Are on forever
Be free
Love life
Turn to the light
Lay down your strife
Hand in hand
We will march on
Never doubting
Where we belong.

The First Reading

A reading from the book of Ecclesiastes *Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8*

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace

The Hymn

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives thy service find,
In deeper reverence praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow thee.

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm!

We stand for:

The Gospel Reading. *John 14:1-6*

The Lord be with you
And also with you

✠ Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John
Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you, O Christ.

The Homily Sit

The Prayers Stand

Which end with:

As our Saviour taught and commanded, so we are bold to 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 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.

The Commendation and Farewell

Let us commend Richard to the mercy of God our maker and redeemer.

Into your hands, O merciful Saviour,
we commend your servant Richard
Acknowledge, we pray, a sheep of your own fold,
a lamb of your own flock,
a sinner of your own redeeming.
Enfold him in the arms of your mercy,
in the blessed rest of everlasting peace
and in the company of the saints in light.
Amen.

After the prayer of commendation and farewell, the coffin is sprinkled with Holy Water as a sign and reminder of Richard's baptism and honoured with incense as a sign of the holiness of our creation.

The Committal

We have entrusted our brother Richard to God's mercy,
and now we commit his body to be cremated
✠ 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 and ever.
Amen.

The Hymn

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart,
Be all else but naught to me, save that thou art,
Be thou my best thought in the day and the night,
Both waking and sleeping, thy presence my light.

Be thou my wisdom, be thou my true word
Be thou ever with me, and I with thee, Lord,
Be thou my great Father, and I thy true son,
Be thou in me dwelling, and I with thee one.

Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight,
Be thou my whole armour, be thou my true might,
Be thou my soul's shelter, be thou my strong tower,
O raise thou me heavenward, great Power of my power.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Be thou my inheritance now and always,
Be thou and thou only the first in my heart,
O Sovereign of heaven, my treasure thou art.

High King of heaven, thou heaven's bright Sun,
O grant me its joys after vict'ry is won,
Great Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be thou my vision, O Ruler of all.

The Blessing & Dismissal

The Lord be with you
And also with you

May Christ our resurrection and our hope
console you and gently wipe every tear from your eyes.
And may almighty God bless you:
✠ the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Go in the peace of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

'The supreme happiness of life is the conviction that one is loved'
Victor Hugo

Judith, Elizabeth and Edward thank everyone for their love and support and invite you to join them for Richard's favourite meal, afternoon tea, at the Old Swan Hotel, Swan Road, Harrogate, HG1 2SR.

A retiring collection in memory of Richard
is taken at the end of this service in aid of the work of
The Harrogate Competitive Festival for Music Speech and Drama
You can also make a donation to: hcfmsd.co.uk/Finances.html

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