

A Celebration of the Life  
of  
**Roger Milton Swagler**

April 12, 1941 - August 8, 2023



August 19, 2023  
11:00 AM  
St. Gregory the Great Episcopal Church  
Athens, GA

The Reverend Nikki Mathis, Celebrant  
Jonathan Klein, Organist

## The Rite of Christian Burial Roger Milton Swagler

### Opening Anthems

BCP 491

### The Collect

BCP 493

Celebrant: *The Lord be with you.*

People: **And also with you.**

Celebrant: *Let us pray.*

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you this day our brother, Roger. We thank you for giving him to us, his family and friends, to know and to love as a companion on our earthly pilgrimage. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see in death the gate of eternal life, so that in quiet confidence we may continue our course on earth, until, by your call, we are reunited with those who have gone before; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Most merciful God, whose wisdom is beyond our understanding: deal graciously with Roger's family in their grief. Surround them with your love, that they may not be overwhelmed by their loss, but have confidence in your goodness, and strength to meet the days to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### Opening Hymn 287

*For all the saints  
(vs 1-4)*

SINE NOMINE

## The Liturgy of the Word

### Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death for ever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

*Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
Thanks be to God.*

**Psalm 23** (*in unison*)

BCP 612

- 1 The Lord is my shepherd;\*  
I shall not be in want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures\*  
and leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He revives my soul \*  
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.
- 4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil;\*  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me;\*  
you have anointed my head with oil, and my cup is running over.
- 6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,\*  
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

**New Testament Reading**

Revelation 21:2-7

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

*Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.  
Thanks be to God.*

**The Gospel**

John 5:24-27

Celebrant: *The Holy Gospel of our Savior, Jesus Christ, according to John.*  
People: **Glory to you, O Christ.**

Jesus said, "Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life. Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man."

*The Gospel of the Lord.  
Praise to you, O Christ.*

**The Homily**

The Rev. Nikki Mathis

### **The Apostles' Creed**

BCP 496

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

### **The Prayers**

BCP 497

For our brother, Roger, let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ who said, "I am Resurrection and I am Life."

Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to us who mourn for Roger, and dry the tears of those who weep.

**Hear us, Lord.**

You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend; comfort us in our sorrow.

**Hear us, Lord.**

You raised the dead to life; give to our brother eternal life.

**Hear us, Lord.**

You promised paradise to the thief who repented; bring our brother to the joys of heaven.

**Hear us, Lord.**

Our brother was washed in Baptism and anointed with the Holy Spirit; give him fellowship with all your saints.

**Hear us, Lord.**

He was nourished with your Body and Blood; grant him a place at the table in your heavenly kingdom.

**Hear us, Lord.**

Comfort us in our sorrows at the death of our brother; let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope.

Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to you our brother Roger, who was reborn by water and the Spirit in Holy Baptism. Grant that his death may recall to us your victory over death, and be an occasion for us to renew our trust in your Father's love. Give us, we pray, the faith to follow where you have led the way; and where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, to the ages of ages. **Amen.**

### **The Peace**

Celebrant: *The peace of Christ be always with you.*

People: **And also with you.**

## Holy Communion

**Anthem**

*Come, Thou Fount*

Eric Nelson

Come, thou Fount of ev'ry blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;  
streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.  
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above;  
praise the mount, I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy redeeming love.  
Here I raise my Ebenezer, hither by thy help I'm come;  
and I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.  
Jesus sought me when a stranger wand'ring from the fold of God;  
he, to rescue me from danger, interposed his precious blood.  
O to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let that grace now, like a fetter, bind my wand'ring heart to Thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;  
here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING, EUCHARISTIC PRAYER B

BCP 367

*The Lord be with you.*

**And also with you.**

*Lift up your hearts.*

**We lift them to the Lord.**

*Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.*

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

*Celebrant and People*

***Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.***

***Hosanna in the highest.***

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

*Celebrant and People* ***We remember his death.  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory!***

*The Celebrant continues*

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with Mary and Gregory and all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. AMEN.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BCP 364

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

Celebrant: *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;*

People: **Therefore let us keep the feast.**

### **The Communion of the People**

*All are invited forward to receive the bread and wine and to participate in the sacrament of Holy Communion. If you would like to receive a blessing rather than the bread and wine, cross your arms over your chest when the priest comes to you in the communion circle.*

**Communion Hymn 325**

*Let us break bread together*

**LET US BREAK BREAD**

**The Post Communion Prayer**

BCP 498

Almighty God, we thank you that in your great love you have fed us with the spiritual food and drink of the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ, and have given us a foretaste of your heavenly banquet. Grant that this Sacrament may be to us a comfort in affliction, and a pledge of our inheritance in that kingdom where there is no death, neither sorrow nor crying, but the fullness of joy with all your saints; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

**Hymn 287**

*For all the saints  
(vs. 5-8)*

**SINE NOMINE**

**The Commendation**

Celebrant: *Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,*  
People: *where sorrow and pain are no more,  
neither sighing, but life everlasting.*

You only are immortal, the creator and maker of mankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return. For so did you ordain when you created me, saying, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Celebrant and People: *Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,  
where sorrow and pain are no more,  
neither sighing, but life everlasting.*

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Roger. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

**The Dismissal**

BCP 500

Celebrant: *Let us go forth in the name of Christ.*  
People: **Thanks be to God.**

*Please process to the Memorial Garden for the Committal, following the Priest and family.*

**Servers**

Celebrant: The Rev. Nikki Mathis  
Priest Associate: The Rev. Carol Schwenke  
Organist: Jonathan Klein  
Choir Director: Joe Napoli  
Eucharistic Ministers: June Ball, Karen Hankins  
Crucifers: David Stooksbury, Brad Hankins  
Torches: Richard Cooper, Jane Hudson  
Ushers: Lois Alworth, Katie Hein  
Flowers: Lane Norton  
Altar Guild: Barbara Dean, Carol Schwenke, Lin Kromhout

