

***Celebration of the Life of
Jane Moore-Baker***

May 12, 2008

Many occasions in life draw us together. Sometimes we gather in joy and celebration, and sometimes in sorrow and grief. Today we're here for both reasons. We're united in sorrow at the death of our friend and sister, Jane, but also here to remember and celebrate her life.

And to Jack, and Scott, and Bill, and the family, we want you all to know that our prayers are with you and our hearts go out to you. Jane was a good Christian woman, a loving wife, a caring mother, and a proud grandmother who courageously battled the disease that eventually took her from us. Her passing leaves large empty space in many lives.

And I would like to offer a few brief remarks now before Lisa Moore comes up to share her remembrances of Jane.

We might begin by recognizing that our passage through this world is relatively brief when we consider the countless generations that have gone before. In the Book of James, our Lord's brother tells us that we "are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes" (4:14).

But our short time in this world is not a sorrowful thing, for we also know that this world is not really our home. Our life here is merely a time of preparation for a greater life to come. We just heard some readings from Scripture that described this Christian hope.

Those readings tell us that while in this earthly life we all experience physical death, it really has no power over us. Death cannot hurt us because we merely leave this world for the greater glory of eternity. Death is not the closing of a door, but rather the opening of the heavenly gate. It's the beginning of the greatest and most wonderful adventure of all, actually returning to God.

But even though we know Jane is with our Lord, we still grieve at times like this. She has touched us all, and her memory touches us still. She lit up our lives when she was here, and now that she is gone our memories of her seem to shine even brighter in our hearts.

Jane's family will miss her. Her friends with whom she played bridge will miss her and they will remember her for her work in bringing so many people together in fellowship while they played. And we will miss Jane here at St. Thomas.

Toward the end of her struggle Jane and Jack attended our Wednesday Eucharist and Healing Services. And she never really asked to be cured. She wanted prayer to help her deal with her treatments, she wanted prayer that she would not be in pain, and most of all she wanted prayer for Jack as he put so much of himself into caring for her.

We share our tears at parting from Jane, but we also look forward to the joy of meeting her again. And for Jack and the rest of the family, we all pray that your grief can soon give way to thanksgiving for the wonderful times you had with her.

So, we grieve, but we grieve with hope. And with hope our grief about Jane will pass and be replaced by the comfort of knowing that she is safe with our Lord, and that she is waiting there for us. *Amen.*