

Religion

Jesus Feels Our Grief

“When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled.” - John 11:33

The darkness of grief affects even the Lord himself. Even though Jesus is working in the power of God and keeping everyone’s focus on the resurrection taking place, he still feels the emotion. Verse 36 makes note of what the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

In verse 38 at the tomb, Jesus was greatly disturbed. He told them to take away the stone. Then he prays. Then he tells Lazarus to come out of the grave.

From what we understand of this story, watching Jesus in action, he sees death differently than we do.

According to verse 4, the cause of decline, which for Lazarus was illness, is for God’s glory so that Jesus may be glorified through it. For believers who have placed their faith in Christ, illness doesn’t end in death. We go on living, only we do it in a different place. Each Christian life that has been redeemed from sin brings glory to God through the power of Jesus’ resurrection.

In verse 11, he says to the disciples, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going there to wake him up.” Jesus sees death as temporary, as nothing more than a child taking a nap. The time when the last breath is drawn is when the Christian falls asleep. He rests in peace, without any suffering, and then wakes

up in the presence of God. It’s a beautiful declaration from Jesus of how little of a threat death is to the Christian. As Psalm 23 states, we pass through the valley of the shadow of death. All it can ever do to us is cast its shadow over our souls, but once we’ve traveled through the valley, we arrive in a place of light, of wholeness, and of beauty, unharmed.

As we see in Jesus’ interaction with Mary, he entered into her grief. He stood there with her and felt it like she did. At those times of painful, shocking loss when there is nothing to say, we can remember that Jesus shares it with us. He enters into the sorrow and the sadness, offering himself as the source of comfort, and as the source of life.

Jesus’ love for Lazarus, for Mary and Martha, and for everyone who falls under the sentence of death stirs him deeply. The Bible says he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. This is the love that drew Lazarus from the grave. It’s the love that kept Jesus on the road to Jerusalem. It’s the love that held him on the cross for you and me.

The tomb of Lazarus is a scene of deep grief, of honest feeling, and of compassion tinged with frustration. The great destroyer, death, has snatched away from Mary and her sister someone they loved deeply. Jesus enters into their sorrow and identifies with it, weeping and groaning in his spirit. He feels the frustration too.

Death is the great interrupter to his father’s perfect design. His children, created in his image, were never meant for decay or separation from him. We were designed to love him, mirror and glorify him, and enjoy him like he enjoys us.

The sadness at Lazarus’s grave is far, far removed from God’s original intent. That’s why Jesus came, to restore our connection to God, and to eliminate the interruption of death to that intimate communion.

“I am the resurrection and the life,” Jesus declared to Martha. “The one who believes in me will live.”

Our part in restoring communion is to believe. That’s how it’s done. Jesus does everything else. He provides the complete escape from death through his own death on the cross. Through him, we live and enter into an unbroken relationship with the Father.

The story involving Lazarus took place on Jesus’ way to Jerusalem. When he arrived riding a donkey under the waving of palm branches, the events of Holy Week began to unfold. Jesus, the sacrificial lamb, the atonement for our sin, moved a little closer each day to the horrible yet necessary realities of crucifixion. He went through it for our sake. He dies in our place, giving his life so that we can live too. All we have to do is believe.

Michelle De Bruin is a chaplain at Pella Regional Health Center and an author of inspirational historical fiction.



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Obituaries

Joshua “Josh” Jackson Douglas



Joshua “Josh” Jackson Douglas, 43, of Knoxville, IA, passed away January 16, 2024, in Des Moines, IA, surrounded by his family.

A celebration of life will be held Wednesday, January 24, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. at the Knoxville First United Methodist Church. Family will receive friends prior to the service beginning at 9:00 a.m. A luncheon will be held immediately following the service at the church for a time of continued fellowship.

In honor of Josh’s memory, contributions can be made to his family and directed to his wife, Renae Douglas. May his soul rest in peace and may his loved ones find solace in the memories they shared with him. Josh will be forever missed and loved.

Josh was born May 17,

1980, in Pella, IA to Michael and Sherry (Douglas) Goff. Josh attended Knoxville schools for his primary education and went on to graduate from Pella High School in 1999. Josh met his wife, Renae, in April of 2001. The couple later wed on October 21, 2002, but had a bigger wedding on July 26, 2003. Josh and Renae have six beautiful children: James, Aldria, Emma, Cora, Briarleigh, and Micah. The couple also has 3 dogs: Saige, Coco, and Mocha and one cat, Gemini. Josh was a loving husband and a devoted father. Cora would routinely call him “the best dada ever”.

Iowa. After graduating high school he went to Barber School and lived in Virginia near one of his brothers. He eventually returned to Iowa and trained as an electrician and then began working for Weyerhaeuser in Cedar Rapids as a maintenance electrician for the paper/cardboard company. He worked there for 32 years retiring in the year 2000.

On February 4th, 1967, Shorty was married to the love of his life, Betty McCaughey. They were blessed with four

children and 57 years of marriage. After raising their children and retiring from Weyerhaeuser, Shorty moved to southern Iowa near Chariton where his dream was realized of owning a small farm that he filled with all kinds of animals. They included goats, llamas, ponies, chickens, ducks, pigs, cows, and sheep. He loved to go camping, canoeing, fishing, and playing cards with his family. They would often play 500, scat, rummy, hearts, and other games for

many hours with his siblings and their families. Yearly vacations for something the whole family looked forward too. Family gatherings were always looked forward too, and this past Christmas and Thanksgiving was very special being spent with his grandchildren and family.

Shorty passed away peacefully on January 16, 2024, at his home in Knoxville. He will be missed by his wife, Betty; children: Angie Dudley, Leann (Terry) Habram, Deann (Craig) Lemke, and Bobby

family Josh is survived by his wife, Renae (Jahner) Douglas and their six children: James, Aldria, Emma, Cora, Briarleigh, and Micah. His parents, Mike and Sherry (Douglas) Goff. Siblings: Sara (Rob) Anderson, Doug Goff, Ben Goff, Missy (Logan) Weldon, and Nate Goff. He is also survived by his aunt and uncles, Craig Douglas, Randy (Tracy) Douglas, Joe Moore, Mark (Lora) Goff, Lisa (Mark) Olson, Reuben (Val) Comer, and Gary (April) Comer. His mother-in-law, Anna (George) Shores, brothers-in-law, Bradley (Katy) Jahner and Levi Thompson. In addition to his immediate

family Josh is survived by his nieces: Madysen, Lainey, Chloe, Everest, Temperance, and Gwen. His nephews: Bob, Quinn, Marion, Elijah, and Rowan. Josh is also survived and loved by many cousins, extended family, and friends.

Josh was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Verna and Clarence Douglas, paternal grandparents, Marion and Gloria (Gaye) Goff. An aunt, Melinda Moore, a cousin, Arlo Goff. Maternal great-grandparents, Eva and Kermit Kincaid and Claude and Esther Douglas, and paternal great-grandparents, Jim and Juanita Goff.

Dudley; nine grandchildren: Karleena, Joshua, Hannah, Travis, Logan, Brooke, Ashley, Halle, and Braiden; great grandchildren: AnaBelle, Laciuss, Ruby Grace, Damian, Watson, Isaac, Ethan, Adalyn, and Rory; a sister, Maribelle Bennish; and many more relatives and friends.

Preceding him in death were his parents: Lowell and Alma; and siblings: Leland, Quentin, Elmer, Lavona, Rudolph, Maxine, Callie, and Kirk.

Lylburn “Shorty” Dudley



A celebration of life gathering for, Lylburn

Doris Joan Hyatt



Doris Joan Hyatt, 87, of Indianola, passed away Monday, January 15, 2024 in Des Moines. No services are planned and cremation has taken place. Inurnment of cremains will be in

the Saint Paul Cemetery, “Germantown” Melcher, Iowa at a later date.

Doris was a woman of many titles: daughter, sister, wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, great-great-grandmother, and friend. She was very proud of her many titles, especially that of great-great-grandmother, something that she was so delighted to check off her wish list.

She was a strong, brave, and independent woman who lived a full, busy, productive life. Her early marriage was spent traveling in the Army with Jackee and baby Pam. She went on to raise 7 children and 3 grandchildren as well as

to assist in lovingly raising many daycare children. Her hobbies included reading, sewing, and homemaking, as well as cleaning other people’s homes. Home and family were everything to her, and she took great pride in keeping a lovely, tidy, well-organized home fit for a Better Homes and Gardens Spread. Her children never lacked for anything. She was a wonderful cook and saw to all of our physical and emotional needs. In caring for our spiritual needs, she raised us within the Christian faith. She truly understood and graciously accepted the many sacrifices that came with parenthood.

In her later years, when things finally slowed down for her, Doris very much enjoyed visits from her family. She enjoyed reminiscing, often telling stories of her childhood as well as stories of our own childhoods. She enjoyed home-cooked meals from Pam, Melodee, and Valerie, shared Meals-On-Wheels with Lorrie during her visits, and often dined out and in with Sheila, also enjoying McDonalds meals with Sheila’s many grandchildren. She enjoyed many birthday hugs from Robert and loved the large family gatherings. A particular favorite was going to Chris and Brigitte’s as well as Jason and Tani’s

homes for the holidays. She received many visits from grandsons Chris and Mike. She enjoyed riding around looking at Christmas lights and just riding past her former homes to take a look.

Hers was a life well-lived with few setbacks until the day of her accident. Her wish has always been that her family members would all be good to each other and to frequently express our love for each other as not even one more day of life is guaranteed. We will miss her terribly but are grateful that her long, fatiguing journey on earth is over. She is with her Lord and Savior, and all of her tears have been wiped away.

Doris is survived by her children, Pam (Jerry) Fee, Melodee (Dennis) Kelley, Sheila Hyatt, Lorrie (Steve) Knutson, Robert Hyatt, and Valerie (Paul) Templeton; 20 grandchildren, 34 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild Miss Sylvia Violet. She was preceded in death by her husband, Jackee Lee Hyatt, parents, John and Hilda Becker; son, Ricky Lee Hyatt; granddaughters, Sarah Collins and Caroline Knutson; brother, Clifford Becker and special friend Robert “Bob” Alexander.

To sign an online condolence, visit our website at www.overtfunerals.com.

Librarians make requests

Library directors from Knoxville, Melcher-Dallas, Pleasantville and Pella shared their requests for funding from Marion County at Tuesday’s Board of Supervisors meeting.

Each year, the libraries seek funding from the county to help serve rural

residents. For instance, Knoxville Director Roslin Thompson said 31 percent of her library’s cards are held by rural residents, and Pella’s Mara Strickler said 21 percent of her library’s cardholders are rural residents.

Bussey, Pleasantville and

Melcher-Dallas libraries have lower circulation. However, each serves not only their municipal residents, but country residents as well.

No action was taken by the supervisors. Last year’s allocations to libraries were around \$95,000.

Change orders approved for Pella construction projects

The Pella School Board approved a series of change orders at Monday’s regular meeting.

They included \$24,000 for the Early Childhood Center and \$46,000 for playground fencing around the ECC.

Construction projects at the ECC and Jefferson/ Middle School remain within their contingency funds.

In other board action, a request for proposals for auditing services

was approved. The RFP is necessary because the district’s longtime independent auditor, Van Maanen and Associates, has opted to no longer perform audits of public entities.