

Our Savior Lutheran Church  Lakeland, FL USA
Christian Memorial Service for  Phillip Allen Griffith
August 29th, 2014 ✕ 4:00 pm

OBITUARY

Phillip Allen Griffith February 16, 1928 - August 22, 2014.

Phillip Griffith of Williston, VT and Lakeland, FL passed away Friday, August 22nd, 2014 in the Lakeland Regional Medical Center after a short illness. Phillip was born on February 16th, 1928 in Montpelier, VT to the late William H. and Margery (McIntyre) Griffith. His early education was in Moretown and Vergennes High School where he graduated as Valedictorian and earned a full scholarship to the University of Vermont, which he attended after a short time in the Army. He graduated in 1952 with a Bachelor of Science in education. He later received a Masters degree in teaching from St. Michael's College. He held early teaching positions in Enosburgh and Richmond. The remainder of his 38 years of teaching was spent at Lyman C. Hunt School, in Burlington. He served in many organizations, including as president of the Vermont Teachers Association.

Phillip and his family ran the Sure Luck Motor Court cabins on their property in Williston for many summers. He enjoyed the country life, and was an avid gardener. He played the piano and organ; his talents were welcomed by the various churches of which he was a member over the years.

He is survived by two sons, Peter A. and wife Cindy of Milton; Leslie F. and partner Melissa Moore of Ferrisburgh; daughter Martha (Griffith) Poirier and husband Serge of Williston and their two sons Nicolas and Ryan, also of Williston; and various nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his siblings Roger, twin sister Phyllis, Edith and Glenn.

The family would like to recognize the unwavering attention given to Dad by his great friend Otto Wunder, his friends and neighbors in May Manor, and Pastor Burmeister and the congregation of Our Savior Lutheran church of Lakeland.

Contributions in Phillip's memory can be made to Good Shepherd Hospice, 105 Arneson Avenue, Auburndale, FL 33823. A memorial service will be held at Our Savior Lutheran of Lakeland Friday, August 29th at 4pm.

Final arrangements are being handled by The Casket Store of Lakeland.

Blessed be his memory.



1. *Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.*

Alleluia!

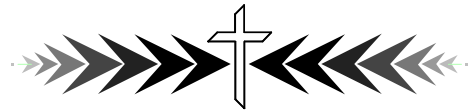


***He is arisen! Glorious Word!
Now reconciled is God, my Lord;
The gates of heav'n are open.
My Jesus did triumphant die,
And Satan's arrows broken lie,
Destroyed hell's direst weapon.
Oh, hear
What cheer!
Christ victorious
Riseth glorious,
Life He giveth -
He was dead, but see, He liveth!***

AUGUST 29, 2014

PRAYER FOR PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

O Lord, our Maker, Redeemer and Comforter, we are assembled in Your presence to hear Your Holy Word and to offer You our praise and worship. We pray, open our hearts by means of Your Holy Spirit so that through the preaching of Your Word we may be taught to repent of our sins, to believe on Jesus in life and in death, and to grow day by day in grace and holiness. Hear us for Jesus' sake. *Amen.*



Greeting and Prayer

Pastor: *In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Congregation: Amen.

Opening Hymn (552) Abide with Me! Fast Falls the Eventide

1. Abide with me! Fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!

2. Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see.
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me!

7. I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
Ills have no weight and tears no bitterness.
Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still if Thou abide with me.

8. Hold Thou Thy Cross before my closing eyes,
Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies.
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;
IN LIFE, IN DEATH, O LORD, ABIDE WITH ME!

In Loving Memory
Phillip Allen Griffith



Memorial Service

Friday, August 29, 2014 at 4:00 pm
Service held at Our Savior Lutheran of Lakeland, FL

Committal

Phillip's mortal remains will be transported to East Cemetery in Williston, VT.

Services Entrusted To
The Casket Store of Lakeland

SAFELY HOME

*I am home in Heaven, dear ones; O so happy and so bright!
There is perfect joy and beauty In this everlasting light.*

*All the pain and grief is over, Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever, Safely Home at last.*

*Did you wonder I so calmly Trod the valley of the shade?
Oh, but Jesus' love illumined Every dark and fearful glade.*

*And He came himself to meet me In that way so hard to tread;
And with Jesus' Arm to lean on, Could I have one doubt or dread?*

*Then you must not grieve so sorely, For I love you dearly still;
Try to look beyond earth's shadows, Pray to trust our Father's Will.*

*There is work still waiting for you, So you must not idly stand;
Do it now, while life remaineth, You shall rest in Jesus' land.*

*When that work is all completed, He will gently call you home;
Oh, the rapture of that meeting, Oh, the joy to see you come.*

P: Lord, You do not leave us without comfort but strengthen and care for us through Your Means of Grace. You also give us family, friends, and neighbors to help when there is loneliness now and in the days to come. Lord, brighten our future with a firm trust in Your loving promises and care.

C: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

P: Remove our fears, and make us bold to pray with confidence as our Savior has taught us . . .

C: 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 forever and ever. Amen.

The Benediction

P: The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
The Lord look on you with favor and give you his peace.

C: Amen.

Closing Hymn (660)

I'm But a Stranger Here

1. I'm but a stranger here, - Heav'n is my home;
Earth is a desert dread, - Heav'n is my home.
Danger and sorrow stand - Round me on every hand;
Heav'n is my fatherland, - Heav'n is my home.
2. What though the tempest rage, - Heav'n is my home;
Short is my pilgrimage, - Heav'n is my home;
And time's wild wintry blast - Soon shall be overpast;
I shall reach home at last, - Heav'n is my home.
3. There at my Savior's side - Heav'n is my home;
I shall be glorified, - Heav'n is my home;
There are the good and blest, - Those I love most and best;
And there I, too, shall rest, - Heav'n is my home.
4. Therefore I murmur not, - Heav'n is my home;
Whate'er my earthly lot, - Heav'n is my home;
And I shall surely stand - There at my Lord's right hand.
Heav'n is my fatherland, - Heav'n is my home.

After the Memorial Service, a meal will be served in the fellowship hall by the ladies of Our Savior. Please everyone join us for this.

***Blessed be the memory of Phil Griffith.
Blessed are those who die in the Lord.***

Officiant: Rev. Andrew Burmeister

Organist: Mrs. Janice Thomas

Pastor: Dear friends, God did not create Adam and Eve to die. But, after our first parents sinned, God said that death would come to all people. At a time like this, God speaks to our hearts. He says, *"For dust you are and to dust you will return."* His Scriptures also tell us that *"just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death came to all, because all sinned."* At this moment we sense deeply the fulfillment of God's words.

But God sent His one and only Son to become the Sacrifice for the sins of the world. Christ gave Himself freely into death and rose again, that all who look up to Him in faith will have eternal Life. In this way the Lord has had compassion on us all. *"For since death came through a man, the Resurrection of the dead also comes through a Man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive."* Therefore, death for the Christian is not the end of life but the beginning of eternal joy with Jesus in paradise.

Christ was raised from the dead and became the Firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. Now we know that when He returns *"we will not all sleep, but we will be changed - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, let us stand firm in the Lord and always be faithful to him in life and in death. Since all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, may He teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us, *"for none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to herself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord."*

Thanks be to God for the comfort of His Word!



Let Us Pray: (*Pastor*) With honor and affection we remember, O everlasting God, those who have gone before us, in particular today we remember our dear friend *Phil Griffith*. Keep us united with them through faith and love toward you, that hereafter we may enter into Your presence and be numbered with those who serve You and look on Your Face in glory everlasting, through Your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.

Congregation: Amen.

Hymn (533) Nearer, My God, to Thee

1. Nearer, my God to Thee, Nearer to Thee. E'en though it be a Cross
That raiseth me, Still all my song shall be. Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.
2. Though like the wanderer, The sun gone down, Darkness be over me,
My rest a stone, Yet in my dreams I'd be Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.
3. There let my way appear Steps unto heaven; All that Thou sendest me
In mercy given; Angels to beckon me Nearer, my God, to Thee,
Nearer, my God, to Thee, Nearer to Thee.

Scripture Lesson – Job 19:23-27

"Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, 24 that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! 25 I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth. 26 And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; 27 I myself will see Him with my own eyes - I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Hymn (200) I Know That My Redeemer Lives!

1. I know that my Redeemer lives;
What comfort this sweet sentence gives!
He lives, He lives, who once was dead;
He lives, my ever-living Head.
5. He lives to silence all my fears,
He lives to wipe away my tears
He lives to calm my troubled heart,
He lives all blessings to impart.
8. He lives, all glory to His Name!
He lives, my Jesus, still the same.
Oh, the sweet joy this sentence gives,
"I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES!"

Scripture Lesson – I Thessalonians 4:13-14,16-17

13 Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. 14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him. ... 16 For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.

Hymn (463) For All the Saints Who From Their Labors Rest

1. For all the saints who from their labors rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confess,
Thy Name, O Jesus, be forever blest,
Al---leluia! Al---leluia!
4. O blest communion, fellowship divine,
We feebly struggle, they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in Thee, for all are Thine.
Al---leluia! Al---leluia!
5. And when the fight is fierce, the warfare long,
Steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
And hearts are brave again, and arms are strong.
Al---leluia! Al---leluia!
6. But, lo, there breaks a yet more glorious day;
The saints triumphant rise in bright array;
The King of Glory passes on His way.
AL---LE-LU-IA! AL---LELU-IA!



A Christian Remembrance

Sermon – John 3:16 & I Thessalonians 4:13...17

A Promise Made; a Promise Kept.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting Life."

Prayer of the Day

P: Almighty God, we praise You for the great company of Saints who have finished their lives in faith and now rest from their labors. We remember especially our loved one, *Phillip Allen Griffith*, whom You have redeemed by the Blood of Your Son and received as Your dear child through Holy Baptism. We thank You for giving him to us as a companion on our earthly pilgrimage. However, since we miss his presence among us, Lord, in Your compassion, comfort all who mourn and are sad in this hour.

C: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

P: All merciful Lord, we praise You for Your love in Christ, which sustains us in life and in death. In our earthly sorrows, help us find strength in the fellowship of the church, joy in the forgiveness of sins, and Hope in the Resurrection to eternal Life.

C: Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

FUNERAL John 3:16 "PROMISE MADE – PROMISE KEPT" 08.29.14 OSL

In the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, dear Christian friends,

(INTRODUCTION) A little girl whose baby brother had just died asked her mother, “**Where did my brother go?**” Her mother replied, “**He’s in heaven, with Jesus.**”

A few days later, while she was talking with her friend, the mum said, “**I’m so sad. I’ve lost my baby.**”

The little girl heard what her mother had said to her friend and, remembering what her mother had told her, asked her mum, “**Mommy, is something lost when you know where it is?**”

Her mother replied, “**No, of course not.**”

The little girl replied back to her mother, “**Well, then, how can my brother be lost when we know he is with Jesus?**” (What *faith* displayed...)

(THEME) **A PROMISE MADE; A PROMISE KEPT**

I. With the Lord Today we are gathered together to praise our Lord for keeping a Promise. (That promise was first made in **Genesis** in the **Garden of Eden**, then it was stated in our text of **John 3:16**) And Jesus made the Promise in John 14:3... (“I am going there to prepare a place for you.) **3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.**

Jesus has **kept that promise to Phil**. And now, just as Jesus has Promised, He has taken Phil to be with Himself in everlasting life. - No, Phil is **not lost**. He’s with Jesus (where he always wanted to be). That means he’s in the presence of Jesus, of God, experiencing and enjoying everything Jesus won for him: eternal life, the glory of God, perfection, sinlessness. **No, he’s definitely not lost; he’s (found) with the Lord, in Heaven.**

But, as Jesus said (as another promise), He needed to come back and take Phil to be with Him. Why did he take Phil from here? Because **this isn’t heaven**. Sometimes I wonder if we at times think this life is so good it **is heaven**. It’s not. God indeed gives us many blessing, as He gave Phil. Phil was **Baptized** and carried that blessing on in His life. He was blessed with (three) children and grandchildren, nephews and nieces. The Lord blessed Phil with teaching and musical gifts, which He used in service to the Lord and to others. The Lord also blessed Phil with a very sharing, giving and social personality, which Phil “used” his entire life by helping, befriending and sharing socially with so many people. Phil was able to do things he enjoyed, such as growing things in gardens and enjoying country life. And he was blessed with a **wonderfully long life** on this earth.

But still, all of this is still this side of heaven. And **Phil knew that**. He realized that earthly blessings are **not** ultimately the top priority – and they are not what he lived for. Because, this side of heaven what we **all** experience is: **sin, temptation, trouble, sickness, pain, disease, suffering, death**. This side of heaven is just a mere shadow of what **our sins have earned for ourselves**. Ultimately, we should experience eternal death and separation from God. **WHY?** Because of **our own sinfulness**. Our sins have justly earned God’s anger

against us and the punishment for sin – meaning death **in all its senses** – **physical, spiritual, and eternal** – a **complete separation** from God. This is the “promise” we all deserve. No, this **is NOT (at all) heaven**. And Phil knew this. He knew he was a sinner and in need of saving. And he knew where that salvation came from.

In His mercy for us (as John 3:16 tells us) **God gave us a Promise we don’t deserve. He sent His Son Jesus to rescue us** from sin and all its effects, even death. For Jesus’ sake and because of His perfect work of Salvation, the Lord has declared Phil and us innocent of all sin and worthy of all the blessings of heaven. So, Jesus then gave us the Promise to take us to be with Him to enjoy these blessings of heaven – forever, without end, never to be separated from Him. And Jesus has now kept His **Promise made to Phil first in his Baptism; He’s taken him to be with Him.**

II. A Great Reunion The Apostle Paul wasn’t just using a picture of sleep in that **I Thessalonians** lesson we read to make a sad situation better by speaking of death in some rosy terms. He was actually **describing what death is really like** for a believer who has died in the Lord.

We aren’t afraid, no matter what age we are, **to put our heads down on our pillow** at night and go to sleep. We know we will wake to a new day. That’s how death is for the believer, **for Phil**. Last Thursday night, he went to sleep in the Lord, and last Friday morning he didn’t wake up here. That morning, Phil opened his eyes to a new day in a new place, a better place, the place Phil had looked forward to all of his wonderful long life ... in heaven. Now only his remains are resting and awaiting the Great Day of Resurrection.

And, you see, in His mercy, **Jesus also gained this same hope for us too**. Not only did Jesus live a perfect life for us, He gave up His life as the Ransom for our sins, for our imperfect lives. But in addition He was raised to Life and that proves that **we also, like Phil, will rise and live with our Lord.**

Jesus’ Easter Resurrection proved that our bodies will not remain in the grave, but will awaken to Eternal Life. Our body and soul will be rejoined and we will be awakened in a glorified, perfect body that can never be affected by sin again, and thus be ready to live in heaven with Jesus forever.

Phil, along with all those who have fallen asleep or will fall asleep in the Lord, have this wonderful blessing to look forward to. And in addition to this, the Great Reunion in heaven and the blessing to be with Jesus both spiritually and physically, forever. **That is the promise God made to Phil**; the promise Jesus won for Phil, and He’s made and kept that same promise for you!

CONCLUSION Yes, the Lord has taken Phil out of this world, but Phil is **not lost**. By no means. **He’s with his Lord Jesus!** The journey started at his Baptism is now brought to completion in perfection. He is with the Lord in perfection... **forever!** What a **blessing** for Phil; what a **comfort** for us. Until that time when the Lord returns to take us to be with Him, may He keep **our** faith firmly fixed on Him and comfort us with His Promises of **Victory, Resurrection, and Love**. He **is** coming back for us too, that we might be with Him - and Phil - **forever**. Amen.