

Celebration of the Life of  
Debra K. Christenson  
July 17, 1956 – March 7, 2021



March 20, 2021  
Lord of Love Lutheran Church  
10405 Fort Street  
Omaha, NE 68134

Prelude: “*God of Ages*”, by Pepper Choplin performed by Lord of Love Choir  
“*Borning Cry*” Arr. Lynette Maynard

P: Welcome in the name of Jesus the Savior, who died and was raised to new life by the grace of God. We are gathered here to worship, to proclaim Christ crucified and risen, to remember before God our sister Deb, to give thanks for her life, to commend her to our merciful redeemer, and to comfort one another in our grief.

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Eternal God, maker of heaven and earth, who formed us from the dust of the earth, who by your breath gave us life, we glorify you.

**We Glorify You.**

Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, who suffered death for all humanity, who rose from the grave to open the way to eternal life, we praise you.

**We praise you.**

Holy Spirit, author and giver of life, the comforter of all who sorrow, our sure confidence and everlasting hope, we worship you.

**We worship you.**

To you, O blessed Trinity, be glory and honor, forever and ever.

**Amen.**

Hymn: “*Holy and Mighty*”, by Pepper Choplin performed by Lord of Love Choir

P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C: And also with you.**

P: Let us pray.

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today our sister in Christ, Deb. We thank you for giving her to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Illumine our lives, so we may see in death the gate to eternal life, that we may continue our course on earth in confidence until, by your call, we are reunited with those who have gone before us; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## Reading of Scripture:

### 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.

### Psalm 23

The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;  
he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff —  
they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD  
my whole life long.

## Romans 8:35-39

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long;  
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## John 14:1-6, 27

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."

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

**Homily:** Rev. Becky Sells

## Hymn: "On Eagle's Wings"



1 You who dwell in the shel-ter of the Lord, who a-bide in this shad-ow for life,



say to the Lord: "My ref - uge, my rock in whom I trust!"



And he will raise you up on ea-gle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,



make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand.

Leader or All

2 The snare of the fowl-er will nev-er cap-ture you, and fam-ine will bring you no

fear; un-der God's wings your ref-uge, with faith-ful-ness your shield.

Leader or All

3 You need not fear the ter-ror of the night, nor the ar-row that flies by

day; thou-sands fall a - bout you, near you it shall not come.

Leader or All

4 For to the an-gels God's giv-en a com-mand to

guard you in all of your ways; up - on their hands they will

bear you up, lest you dash your foot a - gainst a stone.

Final refrain  
All

And he will raise you up on ea-gle's wings, bear you on the breath of dawn,

make you to shine like the sun, and hold you in the palm of his hand.

And hold you, hold you in the palm of his hand.

## ***The Apostle's Creed***

L: Let us confess the faith of our baptism in the words of the Apostles Creed.

**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 into hell.**

**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.**

## ***Intercessions***

P: Let us pray.

Almighty God, in holy baptism you have knit your chosen people together into one communion of saints in the body of Christ. Give to your whole church in heaven and on earth your light and your peace.

God of mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to share the new life in Christ.

God of mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

Give courage and faith to all who mourn, and a sure and certain hope in your loving care, that casting all their sorrow on you, they may have strength for the days ahead.

God of mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that, where this world groans in grief and pain, your Holy Spirit may lead us to bear witness to your light and life.

God of mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

Help us, in the midst of things we cannot understand, to believe and trust in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection to life everlasting. God of mercy,

**C: Hear our prayer.**

God of all grace, we give you thanks because by his death our Savior Jesus Christ destroyed the power of death and by his resurrection opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Make us certain that because he lives we shall live also, and that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come shall be able to separate us from your love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### ***Lord's Prayer***

Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray:

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

### ***Commendation***

P: Let us commend Deb to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer.

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

Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: your word has been fulfilled. My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

***Hymn "Going Home"***, by Mary McDonald performed by Lord of Love Choir

### ***Sending***

P: Let us go forth in peace.

**C: In the name of Christ. Amen.**

### ***Postlude***

**Officiant:** Rev. Becky Sells  
**Organist:** Carol Novak  
**Technical Director:** Chris Rich

Text: Michael Joncas, b. 1957  
Music: ON EAGLE'S WINGS, Michael Joncas  
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Deb was preceded in death by parents, Floyd & Nina Schmiesing; brothers George, Jon, Marcus and Timothy Schmiesing and sister MaryBeth Egesdal. Survived by husband, Paul; daughter, Carissa (Josh) Combes; son, Brandon; grandchildren, Jayden Christenson, Payton Combes; sisters, Pam (Bob) Schultz, Priscilla (Jeff) London and a host of loving nieces, nephews, other family and friends.

Deb grew up in the Hanska, Madelia, New Ulm, MN area. She graduated from New Ulm HS in 1974 and later attended Golden Valley College in MN.

Deb and Paul met at a youth convention in 1972, Married in 1978 and resided in Omaha, NE.