

Thanksgiving for the life of
Janice Marian Fisher-White
26 March 1938 — 16 October 2021

Tuesday 26 October 2021, 10.30am at St James the Less Anglican Church, Mt Eliza
Priest: The Reverend Jennie Savage. Pianist: Mrs Wendy Leaver.

Greeting

Grace and peace from the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

We have come together to thank God for the life of Janice Marian Fisher-White, to mourn and honour her, to lay to rest her mortal body, and to support one another in grief. We face the certainty of our own death and judgement. Yet Christians believe that those who die in Christ share eternal life with him. Therefore in faith and hope we turn to God, who created and sustains us all.

Introduction and Sentence of Scripture

Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life.
Those who believe in me, even though they die, yet will they live.'

John 11.25

Hymn: When I survey the wondrous cross

*When I survey the wondrous cross
on which the Prince of glory died,
my richest gain I count but loss,
and pour contempt on all my pride.*

*See from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down;
did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
or thorns compose so rich a crown?*

*Were the whole realm of nature mine,
that were a present far too small:
love so amazing, so divine
demands my soul, my life, my all.*

Isaac Watts 1674–1748
Together In Song 342

Opening Prayer

*Loving God, you alone are the source of life.
May your life-giving Spirit flow through us,
and fill us with compassion, one for another.
In our sorrow give us the calm of your peace.
Kindle our hope, and let our grief give way to joy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Eulogy by Rosemarie Wakefield

Janice Fisher-White

Janice was born in Bournemouth England in 1938.

If you can imagine a gawky looking 4-year-old sitting at a piano and trying to play. That was Janice. Many years later Janice was still at a piano. In this time Janice had improved although not to the standard she would have liked to have achieved.

Janice survived bombing in the second world war with a bomb landing at the next-door neighbor over the road. She was 7 years old by the end of the war.

Janice started ballet lessons when she was six, and her dreams were of becoming a ballerina and dancing in Swan Lake. That was not to be for at the age of eleven after having passed her exams up to the elementary stage and now ready to dance on her toes, she was told that her feet were not strong enough. So alas she had to give up ballet.

At school, Janice was punished for writing left-handed, but she stuck to it.

Janice continued to have piano lessons until she was thirteen having had four teachers in this time. Like most children she hated practicing especially scales and so it rather amused Janice when the teacher said she had improved from the week before, and she smiled to herself knowing that she had not practiced at all during that week.

At thirteen Janice joined a girls' choir and spent the next couple of years singing at concerts and at various functions, including singing at a Film Premier and seeing some famous film stars. She also had the opportunity to sing on radio several times, and one other memorable occasion was when the choir was asked to sing on television.

When Janice was fifteen, she started ballroom dancing lessons and found that she did not have time to belong to the choir. It was while at ballroom dancing that she met Paul her husband to be.

It was a couple of years later that Janice went along to join the Wessex Opera company because a friend suggested it would be nice to join. She could remember standing on the stage for the audition and her knees would not stop shaking while she was singing. She thought that everyone would notice. Janice was pleased when she was accepted for the chorus and sang in three operas with this company. In this time, she had got married and had a baby, and Paul and Janice decided to come to Australia for two years.

Janice worked in England as a dressmaker which she carried on in Australia making costumes for shows, curtains for the home, bridesmaid dresses and a wedding dress for Rosemarie.

She had a son Jeremy by the end of 1958.

In 1960 she immigrated to Australia as a ten-pound Pom and settled in Melbourne to where her sister-in-law, Anita and her mother-in-law Murette, lived. Her daughter Rosemarie was born in April 1960. Her son Michael was born in 1962.

It did not take Janice long to get back into singing as her sister-in-law belonged to the Gilbert & Sullivan Opera company, so she quickly took the opportunity to join them. In the six years that she was with them they diversified from Gilbert & Sullivan and became the Victorian Opera company. They put the operas on at the Russell Street Theatre, Palais Theatre-St.Kilda, and Union Theatre at Melbourne University, and at different country towns. Of course, they could not take scenery with them and had to make do with whatever they had. On one occasion for a duet, where two principals were on a bare stage it was arranged that

two chorus girls would each bring a chair on from either side. However, one forgot and then in a panic rushed on stage forgetting her chair and taking off the other chair that had been brought on by the other girl just as a principal was about to sit on it. This resulted in a big laugh that should have been a dramatic moment.

In 1968 Janice and family moved down to a new house down the Peninsula at Mt.Eliza. Therefore, it was too far to go to the opera company which rehearsed at Camberwell but as Janice derived so much pleasure from music, she had to find some musical group on the Peninsula. She had heard about a group in Mornington who put on musical shows. So once again Janice joined a musical group. Shows the group put on included Chu Chin Chow, The Mikado, Pirates of Penzance, Arcadians Gypsy Love and many others. Janice also belonged to the Mornington Peninsula Chorale where they sang more classical music.

One of the silliest things that Janice did, was to sleep on a mattress all night outside Her Majesty's Theatre just to get standing tickets to see Joan Sutherland sing. This was on the last night of the opera season, but what a truly wonderful experience they had, seeing one of the best opera singers in the world.

Janice thought that through all the years of music she learnt to appreciate all the different aspects of it. Music to Janice was life and she could not do without it.

She also sang in her local church choir (St. James the Less) for many years. She was able to read music and she practiced each week. She sang as an alto. She was unable to go to church in the last year which she missed. She was blessed by God working through Libby from St.James the Less who visited her hours before she died. She was prayed for and blessed by God through her family for many years.

Janice was a stay-at-home Mum, and it wasn't till later after her children had grown up that she got a job as a market researcher with McNair Anderson. She did a lot of surveys with people around the area.

Janice got her driver's license when she was in her 40's. She bought an old Holden Torana that was blue with a white roof. She bought a Mazda car with money she got from her Mum and then a Honda car later in life.

Janice had lessons on how to play golf but didn't play it very much. I think she caddied for Paul who loved golf.

The family loved camping holidays every summer usually at the seaside and then later going to Eildon where Colin would take his boat every year to go waterskiing.

Janice and Paul enjoyed many trips overseas travelling to lots of countries around the world, such as Egypt, North and South America, Europe, Asia, Canada and Alaska and the Pacific Islands. They made frequent trips back to England catching up with family and friends and travelling around the UK.

In 2001 they purchased a caravan and 4WD and travelled to far North Queensland, Northern Territory and South Australia. More trips were planned but due to Paul's ailing health these didn't happen.

After Paul passed away in 2009 Janice travelled back to England a couple of times.

Janice set up trust accounts for her grandchildren-Emma, Jayde, Kimberley, Rachel, David, Mark and Sirinya. They received the money once they turned 18.

In her final years Janice loved her great-grandchildren Kaley, Harley and Lachlan. She loved it when she saw them.

Janice had Parkinson's disease, but was otherwise healthy. In December last year she lost her mobility and we got her a wheelchair. She never complained but stayed positive.

Thank you all for coming.

Photo Memories

Readings by Lois Truett

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—
from where will my help come?
My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot be moved;
he who keeps you will not slumber.
He who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is your keeper;
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.
The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.
The Lord will keep you from all evil;
he will keep your life.
The Lord will keep
your going out and your coming in
from this time on and for evermore.

Romans 6:3-9

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

Reflection by Rev Jennie Savage

One journey common to us all is the journey of life, and though common, for each of us it is also unique.

I have been able to observe Janice's journey for the past five years, the last five of a long and good life, that, although frail, did not diminish the light that was within her.

Janice had a great faith, a great spirit.

She loved to come to church to worship with the community here, and enjoyed joining in the fellowship afterward.

We all know of her love of music and involvement in the choirs and we are thankful particularly to Jeremy, and to Lois, who would transport her to and from church for the services and choir practices.

Our first reading, Psalm 121, is a song, and a song that sung on a journey by pilgrims who are on their way to the Temple in Jerusalem.

While they are on a literal journey, their words are about their journey of life, about their journeying under the eyes of their God.

Their God, the maker of heaven and earth, is a God who responds when they call, they only need to lift their eyes and remember the God they can call on for help.

Not only that, they are assured that God watches over them, is never absent, never asleep – what comfort they find in their God.

God keeps them.

Julian of Norwich, an English saint in the 1300s, had a vision where God showed her something small, no bigger than a hazelnut in the palm of her hand, and she was made to understand three things, that God made it, that God loved it, and that God keeps (as in preserves) it.

And Julian understood that is what we are all to God, God's creation, God's beloved and God's protected.

This does not mean that any of us live in a bubble, impervious to pain and suffering, but for those who have faith, they know they are never lost along their journey of life.

Janice had such faith and it gave her great comfort. This means faith is something to hold onto, something that gives you strength, something that sustains you, even through death.

I know that Janice did not fear death.

The second reading explains why.

Belonging to Christ, being united with him assures us of being resurrected like him, as sure as he suffered a death like ours.

He is the one who holds onto to us, through life and through death.

Later we will sing Psalm 23 which speaks of God, the Good Shepherd, who is always by our side, especially through the valley of death.

The gift of faith is a grace, given by God, revealed through Jesus Christ who in his life walked among the people demonstrating God's love and compassion.

His revelation confirms that God is always near and attentive as the Psalms and readings testify, not only to the end of our lives, but beyond.

Faith stretches further, beyond what we can see, beyond what we can know.

We give thanks that Janice had such faith.

And let us celebrate this by standing and singing Psalm 23, *The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want.*

Hymn: The Lord's my Shepherd

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.

*He makes me down to lie
in pastures green, he leadeth me
the quiet waters by.*

*My soul he doth restore again;
and me to walk doth make
within the paths of righteousness,
ev'n for his own name's sake.*

*Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,
yet will I fear no ill:
for thou art with me; and thy rod
and staff me comfort still.*

*My table thou hast furnishèd
in presence of my foes;
my head thou dost with oil anoint,
and my cup overflows.*

*Goodness and mercy all my life
shall surely follow me:
and in God's house for evermore
my dwelling-place shall be.*

Scottish Psalter 1650. Together In Song 10. Reproduced with permission

Prayers and The Lord's Prayer led by Mrs Libby Paterson

Let us pray with confidence to God our Father,
who raised Jesus Christ from the dead for the salvation of all.

God of all that lives and dies, you sent Jesus to share our earthly life.
Christ facing death on the cross gives us courage; Christ rising from the dead brings us hope.
Because Jesus lives, nothing can separate us from your love, which unites us now with those
we mourn.

The dawn breaks and gives us light for the new day.
Help us to share his victory, and give us the hope to look forward again.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer

We give thanks to you, O God, for the gift of life, for your gracious promise
to all your servants, living and departed, that we shall be made one again
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer

God our Comforter,
you are a refuge and a strength for us, a helper close at hand in times of distress,
look graciously, we pray, on those who mourn especially Janice's children: Jeremy,
Rosemarie, and Michael, and their families. Casting all their cares on you, may they know
the consolation of your love. May your Holy Spirit lift all of us above our natural sorrow, to
the peace and light of your constant love.
Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer

Gracious God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
we thank you that you received Janice by baptism into the family of your Church on earth,
and granted *her* the gift of eternal life.
She ate with us the bread of life and drank from the cup of salvation.

We give thanks for the witness of your faithful people in every generation.
We especially giving thanks for all by which Janice is remembered: her joy and her light, her
positive spirit, her ways of encouragement, and her great faith; for all that she was to those
who loved her; and for everything in her life that reflected your mercy and love.

We give thanks that Janice was our dear friend, a friend who listened and laughed with us, who in her gentleness was kind and always gracious.

We give thanks for her long loving service to this church and, in particular, we give thanks for her gift of music and singing which gave exaltation and praise to God, and which uplifted and gifted us, her brothers and sisters in Christ.

We thank you that for her sickness and sorrow are no more and that she is at rest with you.

Now give us strength and courage to leave Janice in your care, confident in your promise of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For these and all the prayers on our hearts, let us give them unto God as we pray together The Lord's prayer:

*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.*

The Prayer of Farewell

Let us entrust our sister Janice to the mercy of God.

Holy and loving Father,
by your mighty power you gave us life,
and in your love you have given us new life
in Christ Jesus.

We entrust Janice Marian Fisher-White to your merciful keeping:
in the faith of Jesus Christ,
who died and rose again to save us,
and now lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit
in glory for ever. Amen.

The minister says

The Lord bless you and keep you;
The Lord make his face to shine upon you,
and be gracious to you.
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you,
and give you peace. Amen.

Hymn: And can it be?

*And can it be that I should gain
an interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died he for me, who caused his pain —
for me, who him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me!
Amazing love! how can it be
that thou, my God, shouldst die for me!*

*'Tis mystery all! The immortal dies:
who can explore this strange design?
In vain the first-born seraph tries
to sound the depths of love divine.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,
let angel minds inquire no more.
'Tis mercy all! Let earth adore,
let angel minds inquire no more.*

*No condemnation now I dread:
Jesus, and all in him, is mine!
Alive in him, my living Head,
and clothed in righteousness divine,
bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.
bold I approach the eternal throne,
and claim the crown, through Christ, my own.*

Charles Wesley 1707–88 alt.
Arrangement© Australian Hymn Book Co
Together In Song 209. Reproduced with permission

Recession out to the hearse.

Lord now 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.

Luke 2.29–32

*The service will continue with the Committal at 12pm at
Mornington Cemetery, 40 Craigie Road, Mount Martha*

The Committal

Grace and peace from the Lord be with you.
And also with you.

For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again,
even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him
those who have fallen asleep.

1 Thessalonians 4.14

The minister prays,
In the midst of life we are in death.
We blossom like a flower, and wither.
We pass like a shadow, and do not stay.
From whom may we seek for help,
but from you, Lord God,
though you are justly grieved on account of our sins.
Holy and loving Saviour,
deliver us from the bitterness of eternal death.
Keep us, at our last hour, lest we fall from you.

You, O Lord, are full of compassion and mercy:
slow to anger and of great goodness.
As a father cares for his children:
so is your care, O Lord, for those who fear you.

For you know of what we are made:
you remember that we are but dust.
Our days are like the grass:
we flourish like a flower of the field;
When the wind goes over it, it is gone:
and its place will know it no more.
But your loving-kindness, O Lord
endures for ever and ever
on those that fear you:
and your righteousness on their children's children.

Facing the coffin, and at a burial while earth is cast upon it, the minister says,

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
you have given us a sure and certain hope
of the resurrection to eternal life.
In your keeping are all who have departed in Christ.
We here commit the body of our dear sister, Janice
to be buried in the ground,
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who died, and was buried, and rose again for us,
and who shall change our mortal body
that it may be like his glorious body.

The congregation may join with the minister
Thanks be to God who gives us the victory
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen!

The Prayers

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord,
for they rest from their labours.

As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,

*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.*

God of all consolation,
in your unending love and mercy for us
you turn the darkness of death
into the dawn of new life.
Be our refuge and strength in sorrow.

As your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ,
by dying for us conquered death,
and by rising again restored us to life,
so may we go forward in faith to meet him,
and after our life on earth
be united with our dear brothers and sisters in Christ
where every tear will be wiped away,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Now to him who is able to keep you from falling,
and to make you stand without blemish
in the presence of his glory with rejoicing,
to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
be glory, majesty, power and authority,
before all time and now and for ever. Amen.

Jude 24-25

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all. Amen.

2 Corinthians 13.14

Dismissal
Go in peace in the name of Christ. *Amen.*