

LECTIONS & SERMON FOR THE CHRISTIAN BURIAL OF JOHN HANNIGAN, ★ 3.IX.1918 † 14.IX.2006
VISITATION & FUNERAL: HEFFNER-OLEWEILER FUNERAL HOME / RED LION, PENNSYLVANIA, 10/11:00 A.M., 18.IX.2006
COMMITTAL & BURIAL: SAINT JAMES THE APOSTLE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CEMETERY / BROQUE, PENNSYLVANIA
PSALM 23, JOHN 10:27-29, ROMANS 16:1-16

J. J. !

Grace to you and peace from God Our Father and from Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. ☩ Amen.

Hear these words of Scripture as God's own gracious Word to you for your comfort and strength:

The 23rd Psalm:

1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. 3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. 5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Our Lord's words to His first disciples and to us in John 10:27-29:

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; 28 and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

And from the concluding, 16th Chapter of Saint Paul the Apostle's Epistle to the Church at Rome:

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church at Cen'chre-ae, *2* that you may receive her in the Lord as befits the saints, and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a helper of many and of myself as well. *3* Greet Prisca and Aq'uila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, *4* who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I but also all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks; *5* greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epae'netus, who was the first convert in Asia for Christ. *6* Greet Mary, who has worked hard among you. *7* Greet Androni'cus and Ju'nias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners; they are men of note among the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. *8* Greet Amplia'tus, my beloved in the Lord. *9* Greet Urba'nus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. *10* Greet Apel'les, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobu'lus. *11* Greet my kinsman Hero'dion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcis'sus. *12* Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphae'na and Trypho'sa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. *13* Greet Rufus, eminent in the Lord, also his mother and mine. *14* Greet Asyn'critus, Phlegon, Hermes, Pat'robas, Hermas, and the brethren who are with them. *15* Greet Philol'ogus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olym'pas, and all the saints who are with them. *16* Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Names are important, not only as a way to address the living but also as a way to remember the dead. The Apostle Paul immortalized the names of these and others to or about whom he wrote. In some cases, ancient Christian sources identify this or that Christian named by Paul as an important leader in the

Early Church, or as a witness to Christ unto death. To Saint Paul's long list of those among whom, for whom and alongside whom he worked in the Apostolic Ministry may now be added forever the name of John Hannigan. For all the decades that they were able, John and Erdeen enjoyed their work with the Sunday School of Saint James Lutheran Church in Brogue. Though that service to the Lord Jesus and His Church was with other pastors, many of my very many predecessors at Saint James, it is my privilege to say 'Thank you, and thanks be to God for you!' on behalf of all who have come before me and on behalf of those rising generations of children and youth whom John and Erdeen helped to find their way in this life and their path as followers of Christ and soldiers of the Cross.

Not all of those baptized into Christ Jesus learn this joy and its satisfaction. Some are brought to the font of God's grace only to please and put at ease one or both sets of grandparents. Others complete the

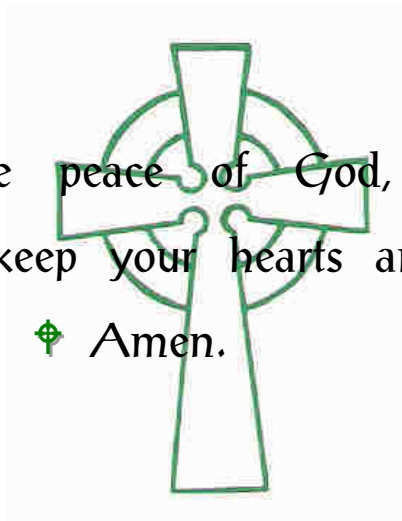
minimum requirements for confirmed Church membership, but then never commit themselves to the life and work of the Church, to the discipline of living in God's love and mercy and to the mission of making that compassion known to others. Still others worship and receive the Means of Grace—for which thanks be to God!—bringing the Gospel to their workplace and into the circle of their family and friends, but they do not take part in that great work of the Holy Spirit in the teaching and nurturing Church.

John, with Erdeen, participated in *all* of these facets of Christian discipleship, missing out on none of the inheritance of Holy Baptism. They enjoyed their time in that service, just as much as they so evidently found joy and contentment in each other's companionship, the part of their Christian life together which it has been my own joy to witness these past four years.

As hard and as bitter a blow as the passing of any loved one is, at any age and under any

circumstances, that passage from just yesterday to today is made easier, I hope and pray for you, Erdeen and Joan, by the knowledge that John is now as much a part of the Church Triumphant in Heaven as he was of the Church Militant on earth, our Church in which he will be remembered. Those who receive him with Christ his Risen Lord into that glorious Church that has endured every trial and every assault of the Evil One will receive him, as the Apostle writes, with that same holy kiss with which we now commend him to God, Whose essence and love is Triune and everlasting. ✚ Amen.

Now may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus Our Lord. ✚ Amen.



S. D. G. !