

John Seaton



Introduction

At St James we were saddened at the news of John's passing. We extend our sincere condolences to his family and his many friends. We hope that this service can be of some comfort to you all.

The Service

Gathering/ Call

The Lord, our God says: "Blessed are those who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours and their works will follow them". We have come together in this sad hour to take our leave of John Gray Seaton, to remember his life with sadness and with thanksgiving for a life well lived, to commend John to God's grace. Not all who would like to be here today can give John their farewell in person, but we know that their thoughts are with us and we can be sure that God is with them as He is with us.

Prayer

Loving God,

You are our fortress and our rock, our strength in times of trouble and sorrow, you have promised not to leave us or forsake us. And so, we bring our grief before you as we also remember John with a thankful heart, as we remember who he was to us who have known and loved him.

We give you thanks for a man who cared for his family, who cared for his friends, who was happiest when giving a helping hand to others, to employ the gifts you have given him in service to those he cared about.

We give you thanks for a man who loved and was loved in return, who made friends easily and enjoyed life, we give you thanks for a life lived to the fullest.

We give you thanks for your son Jesus Christ who died for us, so we can live in you, live a life where pain and suffering give way to joy and peace. In this time of sorrow let us remember your promise of eternal life for John and for us all.

Loving God,

We entrust John and ourselves to you in this difficult time, when the grief and pain are raw, when we feel the gap in our lives, that cannot be replaced. May we be able to find comfort in you and in each other in this time of sorrow.

And we pray all this through Jesus Christ, the first to have risen from the dead. AMEN

Music: Abide with me

Readings:

Psalm 91, 1-5

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust." He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

John 6, 35.37-40

Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.'

Eulogy

It causes us pain, that we cannot say goodbye to John as we would do in different times, that many who would like to be here, cannot take their leave in person, but we will take the time to honour John's life and to remember who he was to us. Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid", (John 14, 27) and so let me share with you my firm belief that John is now at peace with God as we all will be.

John Gray Seaton was born on 8 April 1931 in a farm cottage just outside Patna to William Seaton, a shepherd, and his wife Agnes, who looked after a large family. With his stepbrothers and -sisters Robert, William, Andrew, Jenny, Peggy and Annie and his siblings Jim, Sidney and Millie, John was never short of company and indeed, he was close to his whole family and shared a special bond with his brother Jim, closest to him in age. Music was a dominant factor in John's family with two brothers playing the violin and John himself enriched a brass band with his cornet. It was a harmonious and friendly family John grew up in, but they were not unfamiliar with grief, as his stepbrother William passed at a very young age and John had to witness the funerals of all his family during his life.

John was never interested in following in his father's footsteps and taking on shepherding and so he moved from Patna to Dalrymple, where he stayed for several years, until he came to Ayr to be closer both to work and family. His career was long and varied: He went down the coalmines for a short time after school, trained as a motor mechanic with the army after

the war and served in the RAF, which he had to give up for health reasons. He must have been one of the last stokers in Britain, before steam trains were replaced for good and worked for Scottish Aviation, British Aerospace and BAE Systems for the last 25 years of his working life. (This is all the same company by the way, it is not John, who changed jobs, but the firm that changed names). John enjoyed his work and worked hard and so it is no surprise that he rose from progress chaser to production controller.

But work, of course was not the only defining factor in John's life. There was most importantly his love to his wife Jessie, who he met at her workplace at Hollybush House, then a hotel, now run by the charity combat stress. John and Jessie would have been married for 64 years next month, a lifetime shared with each other. They had many friends together and so it may not have been coincidence that Jessie's pal Sadie married John's best friend, another John. The two couples enjoyed many a caravan holiday together, wherever there was entertainment or a swimming pool for the children – those were big occasions for children and adults alike although Blackpool was the furthest afield, they ever ventured. John was a sociable man; he was actively involved with the Masonic Lodge in Patna and he enjoyed the odd party and the occasional dram. It was, all in all a good life, a contented life.

John's hobby and passion was joinery work, making things. He would buy tools and read books about it and although some projects were never realized, this hobby brought John's unselfish and helpful side to the fore. He turned his gift to good use for his friends and for everyone in his large family. He would install sink units and the like, make it nice and neat and

build a cart or a dog kennel for his granddaughters. John loved the two girls, spoilt them and protected them. After his retirement he became the taxi service for them and for the whole family, he did the school runs and occasionally picked up his son from the pub, when the latter was no longer fit for driving, a fact that John minutely recorded in his diary every day, together with the weather and what he had for breakfast.

In his final days John became more and more poorly and so it is my sincere hope that all who cared for John can take comfort in the fact that modern medicine could make him as comfortable as he could be, that pain was kept at bay and that in the end he passed away peacefully in his own home as was his wish with his family around him. And I would like to share at this moment my sincere hope and believe that John is now with God, where pain and suffering give way to joy and peace. AMEN

Committal

Jesus said: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

John is committed to God's grace in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ who died was buried and rose again for us and is alive and reigns for evermore

Prayer

Loving God,

We give you thanks for the privilege to have known John, to call him husband, father, grandfather, friend. We give you thanks for a life of cheerfulness and contentment, a life of friendship and of love and in giving thanks for everything John was to us we remember in our prayer those who were closest to him.

We pray for Jessie, who shared her life with John each day, shared the ups and downs, shared friendship and love, was his companion through thick and thin.

We pray for Jim, Ian and Caroline, who were closest to John, grew up with him, were his family and will miss the gap he leaves. We pray for Laura and Alison who share their parents' pain. May they all find comfort in you and in each other. And we include in our prayer all who made John's life comfortable, the nurse who came to John's house, the NHS who works tirelessly for us all, who deserve our thanks for their commitment.

As we now go from this place, return to our lives of work and leisure, we know that life will not be the same, that John leaves a gap, that cannot be filled and we pray that we may all allow ourselves time to grieve and the strength to acknowledge our

loss. We pray that when the time is right, we can let go and remember John with smiles and not with tears.

May you grant us all your love and your peace.

For this we pray in Jesus name. AMEN

Benediction

And now may God comfort you with the assurance of His love. And the God who is higher than all our understanding, God the father, son and holy spirit be with us all now and forever. AMEN

A prayer for the home

Loving God,

You know our hearts, you know our pain, you know how much we long to be with John's family now, how much we long to say good bye to a man we loved and respected, a man who shaped us all in different ways.

We thank you that we had the privilege to have known him, that our lives were richer because he was part of it, however big or small that part was.

We thank you that we were able to accompany John on a part of life's journey and we thank you for the time we can now set apart for John.

Gracious God,

You know our thoughts, you know that as a thousand years are but a day before you, so a thousand miles are just a step, you know that while we must be apart from John and from those he loved, that we cannot offer the comfort of a handshake or a hug, our hearts are with them and our sorrow is sincere.

Grant us all the comfort of your presence, we pray, grant us the assurance of eternal life.

For this we pray in Jesus name. AMEN

