

Ronald (Ronnie) Richmond



Introduction

At St James we share the pain of loss with Ronnie's family and friends and would like to extend our condolences to you all. Ronnie was a well-loved member of our church family and will be sorely missed. We hope that these words bring comfort to all, whether they can take their leave in person, or are prevented from doing so in these difficult times.

The Service

Gathering/ Call

The grace and the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all

The apostle Paul says: "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive" We have come to this place to say good bye to Ronald John Richmond, to remember his life with sadness for a life lost and with gratitude for a man who was important to all who are here and to commend him to God's grace. Not all who would like to be here today will be able to come during these difficult times, but we know that they remember Ronnie, wherever they are and that their thoughts are with us today as God is with us here and now.

Prayer

Loving God,

You are our fortress and our strength a comfort in all our afflictions. And so, we bring our sadness and our loss to you as we also remember Ronnie with thanks that we were able to share his life.

We give you thanks for a man who with his talents and personality gained the love and admiration of many who knew him, for a man who brightened up the lives of many.

We give you thanks for a life well lived, a life of many talents and interests, for a man who brought joy to many in performance and music, for a man whose life experiences were rich and varied.

We give you thanks for your son Jesus Christ who loved us so much, he gave his life, so we all may live, a life without pain, a life without suffering in your presence. In this time of grief let us all remember that you sent your son so nothing can separate us from your love, let us live in the trust, that Ronnie is now at peace with you, as we all will be.

Loving God,

We entrust Ronnie and ourselves to you in this challenging time, when we cannot grieve as we used to, cannot celebrate a life with all who were close to Ronnie. Grant us the gift of grief, the mercy of faith and the joy of hope and of loving memories, we pray.

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

Reading: Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?

2 My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber;

4 indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD watches over you— the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

6 the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life;

8 the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

John 6, 35-40

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.

37 All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

39 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.

40 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 is a cause for sadness and grief that we cannot take our leave of Ronnie as we would do in less challenging times, but we will still take some time to honour his life and to remember who Ronnie was. The Bible says: "My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth". and so, let me share with you my firm belief that God is with us now in this difficult hour as a helper and a comfort in this trust let us share the memories of who Ronnie was

Ronald John Richmond was born on 12 January 1947 in Prestwick as the eldest son of Jack Richmond an electrical engineer at Gray's factory and his wife Agnes. He was a local boy and attended Newton and Newtonhead Primary schools and Newton Park Junior Secondary school and grew up with his younger brother Alan in the family home of Alexandra Terrace, just opposite Gray's factory. Ronnie did move to his first independent flat in York Street close to Ayr harbour, but it was not long before he returned to the family home, which he occupied for 66 years.

From a very young age and throughout his life had a strong connection to his local church St James and he was a member of their Lifeboys and Boys Brigade, where he served as an officer to the Junior Section later on and where he enjoyed the camps and outdoor activities the organization offered. Ronnie was also an elder at St James and many will remember him playing the organ for the congregation.

Ronnie's work life was interesting and varied. He started out in the cashier department of Lockhardts solicitors in Ayr and moved on from there to the admin section of Ailsa Hospital, before changing to work in the travel industry. It is probably fair to say that Ronnie found his vocation as bookings manager of Butlins on the Heads of Ayr where he also assisted the entertainment director with musical arrangements for the weekly variety shows. It is here that he made many lifelong friends, such as Anne and Derek McNaughton, although Derek went under the name of Brandon back then, who would be close to Ronnie through thick and thin.

Music was Ronnie's talent and his passion. From music theory and piano lessons, for which he studied alongside his brother Alan and in which he excelled and was commended on his "impressive improvisation talent" by the examiner and composer of the piece himself, to keyboard harmony and counterpoint, Ronnie learned his skills from local and national authorities of the field and proved to be an adept student, who was a prizewinner of the Ivy Benson Orchestra Summer show in his youth.

His talent was not only an end in itself, but Ronnie also understood how to put it to good use for the enjoyment and education of others. Whether it was as repetiteur at Montgomery and Clifford schools of dance, as rehearsal pianist and accompanist for the Ayr Amateur Opera Company or St James concert party, or as producer of the Young Farmers Show or the Christmas Pantomime of the Burgh at the Civic theatre, whether he entertained the diners of Turnberry hotel or was organist and choirmaster at St Leonard's and other local churches, Ronnie was a sought after pianist and organist with amateurs and professionals alike.

Arguably one of his greater triumphs was Ronnie's journey to Canada on a Burns Tour with professional actors and singers in 1974 to mark the 150th anniversary of the foundation of Ayr, Ontario, where he was joined by such illustrious performers as piper Jimmy McCallum.

When Ronnie lost the hearing in one of his ears and also his balance due to ill health, this greatly impeded his musical practice, but not his love for music. He was a Friend of the Gaiety Theatre and the Scottish Opera and after he supported the renovation of the Theatre Royal his name was affixed to one of the seats in the circle.

But Ronnie also had a quieter side, a caring side and so he dedicated much of his life to looking after his mother Agnes 24/7 in her later years and showed his affection to his family not only through photographs in his house but also through affectionate nicknames such as "Lord Ollie and Lady Amy " for his nephew and niece, "Junior for his younger brother and "Mother Superior" or "the Principal" for his sister in law, although there was no escaping Ronnie's keen sense of humour and sharp wit or his outspoken nature and intelligent perception.

For the last five years or so Ronnie visited station 9 of Ayr hospital more and more often and became more and more reliant on the help of friends or professional carers and was grateful to Kenny and Anne for their care and especially to Derek and Anne for their support throughout Ronnie's life. Despite his failing health he took a keen interest in the life surrounding him and always asked for news from the church.

Ronnie met his end in a calm and positive way. In the end it was him, who requested and received palliative care at Ayr Hospice and so it may be a comfort to all who are here, that Ronnie died in peace and that he is now as I firmly believe at peace at God's side. AMEN

Committal

Jesus said: Blessed are those who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours and their works will follow them

Ronald John Richmond is committed into the hands of God 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 the privilege to have known Ronnie, to have been part of his life, to have been able to share a part of life's journey, for the memories that remain with us and in giving thanks for all this we remember in prayer all who were closest Ronnie.

We pray for Alan and June, who shared part of his life, who were at his side as his closest family, who can look back on years spent in Ronnie's company. Grant them the strength to grieve and the courage to let go.

We pray for David and Fiona, for Gillian and Russ who have lost an uncle who was there as a fact of life from their childhood, who was a certain presence in their adult life and we remember Amy and Ollie, who share their parents pain. May they all find support and comfort in you and in each other.

We remember Anne and all Ronnie's friends, who lost a companion on life's journey, may they find comfort in the thought that Ronnie is now no longer in pain, freed from all suffering

And we include in our prayer Anne and Kenny and all the key workers who care for others, the doctors and nurses of station 9 and the staff at Ayrshire hospice, who give all their strength to patients like Ronnie .

As we now return to our daily lives, as we have committed Ronnie's body to the grace of God, as we take up our daily lives again, we pray for ourselves, that we may find peace of mind and the time and strength to grieve. We pray for the comfort that our grief will turn to smiles when we remember and celebrate a life well lived

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 Ronnie's friends and family now, how much we long to say good bye to him, 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 Ronnie on a part of life's journey and we thank you for the time we can now set apart for Ronnie.

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 Ronnie and from those close to him, 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