

Memorial Service for Marianna V. Burdett Matlega: May 8, 2010
Born: January 29, 1925; Died: May 5, 2010

Opening:

“Fear nothing, for I am with you; be not afraid, for I am your God. I strengthen you, I help you, I support you with my victorious right hand.” **Isaiah 40:10.**

Invocation Prayer: Eternal God, in Whom we live and move and have our being, and who by Your mighty power raised Jesus Christ from the dead, give us the light and life of your presence. Help us to put our trust in Your wisdom and to open ourselves to the ministry of your love. Open our hearts to hear Your words of encouragement from Scripture. Grant us Your peaceful presence as we remember our friend, our loved one, Marianna Matlega. Grant us the sure knowledge that You have won the victory over death in the resurrection of Jesus Christ! **Amen.**

Pastor Childs: Scripture Reading: Romans 8:28-30.

“[the Spirit] pleads for God’s people in God’s own way; and in everything, as we know, he co-operates for good with those who love God and are called according to his purpose. For God knew his own before ever they were, and also ordained that they should be shaped to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the eldest among a large family; and it is these, so fore-ordained, whom he has also called. And those whom he called he justified, and to those whom he justified he has also given his splendor.”

Pastor Childs: We are gathered here today to hear God’s word of hope as we commemorate with thanksgiving the life of Marianna V. Burdett Matlega.

Hear these words as printed in the Hornell Tribune paper: [Obituary]

Remembering Marianna:

Robin Burdett, her neice sharing poems and thoughts.

Pastor Childs:

I did not know Marianna personally. I understand from talking with her siblings that she had a difficult life. She was one of eight children in the Burdett home, and one of two girls. She and Margaret were very different, but very close as sisters.

She graduated from Alfred-Almond High School and went right to work in the silk mills, as a silk weaver. She was always very artistic and loved to draw. She especially loved nature: animals, flowers, landscapes as the focus of her artwork. She drew and painted all her life, and usually gave these away as presents to those she loved.

Marianna loved frilly dresses, and kept herself well groomed. All her life she wore make-up, and loved to keep her hair nice—and without any gray. When Margaret or Jim would visit she may comment to them about their hair—how it needed color, or was not as yellow as it you used to be.

She had a gentle, happy spirit. This was challenged by her marriage, which was decidedly unhappy. After a short time, she had a breakdown due to abuse. She would end up going to the Willard Sanitarium for treatment. Unfortunately, in those days, the treatment was often not a cure—and perhaps did more harm than good. She would never recover after that.

She lived for many years in Dundee, and was satisfied there. A few years ago, she fell and ended up in the Nursing home in Montaur Falls. Then, in 2004 the family moved her here to Hornell, to the Hornell Gardens, where she would spend her last days. She was closer so they could visit often. She seemed happy there.

Often, she would join in singing, if someone sang a tune she liked. It was like the music in her heart, in her soul, could shine out on occasion.

Marianna was a quiet person. She made doll clothes for Robin, her niece, when Robin was little. And Robin felt a kindred spirit with her aunt.

Marianna could be feisty, and caring, and generous. She was very smart in school, and liked her sweets very well. She thought Jim's wife, Anna, was the "best baker going."

Jim and Anna had been gone for about a month. Last week, Marianna took a turn, and caught pneumonia. She slipped downward. Jim and Anna arrived back last Tuesday from their trip.

On Wednesday, all the family gathered there. Jim said that when he spoke to her, Marianna's eyes blinked at him. It was her only means of communicating. She could hear and understand them as they gathered around. I'm sure she was glad for the family's presence. They would depart about 4:30 pm, not realizing that she would slip away that night.

Sometime around 9 pm, that beautiful angel came for Marianna. I imagine the angel resting a hand upon her shoulder and asking, "Marianna, are you ready for the final trip home? We have a place all ready for you." I imagine at that point Marianna in her spirit was saying, "Yes, yes. I would like that!" And she grabbed the hand to cross the barrier between life and eternal life.

Imagine her joy in heaven. Imagine Marianna surrounded by friends and family who have long waited her arrival. Imagine her greeting Jesus, our Lord and Savior, and getting engulfed in a warm, welcoming hug. Imagine Marianna no longer frail, but with her new resurrection body, she is vibrant, alive, happy. She has now come home.

Scriptures of Comfort:

I Corinthians 15: 40-44; 50, 52-57.

"There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies; and the splendor of the heavenly bodies is one thing, the splendor of the earthly, another. The sun has a splendor of its own, the moon another splendor, and the stars another, for star differs from star in brightness. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown in the earth as a perishable thing is raised imperishable. Sown in humiliation, it is raised in glory; sown in weakness, it is raised in power; sown as an animal body, it is raised as a spiritual body. What I mean, my brothers (and sisters), is this: flesh and blood can never possess the Kingdom of God, and the perishable cannot

possess immortality. This perishable being must be clothed with the imperishable, and what is mortal must be clothed with immortality. And when our mortality has been clothed with immortality, then the saying of Scripture will come true: 'Death is swallowed up; victory is won!' 'O Death, where is your victory? O Death, where is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and sin gains its power from the law; but, God be praised, he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

John 14:1-6.

"Set your troubled hearts at rest. Trust in God always; trust also in me. There are many dwelling-places in my Father's house; if it were not so I should have told you; for I am going there on purpose to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I shall come again and receive you unto myself, so that where I am you may be also; and my way there is known to you.' Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus replied, 'I am the way; I am the truth and I am life; no one comes to the Father except by me.'"

I Peter 1:3-5.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us new birth into a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead! The inheritance to which we are born is one that nothing can destroy or spoil or wither. It is kept for you in heaven, and you, because you put your faith in God, are under the protection of his power until salvation comes—the salvation which is even now in readiness and will be revealed at the end of time."

Prayer of Comfort:

God of all grace and glory, who sent Jesus Christ to bring life and immortality to light, we give you thanks that by His death He destroyed the power of death. By His resurrection He gave assurance that because He lives we too shall live, and that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from Your love, which we have seen and experienced in Jesus Christ. Help us as we remember with affection Marianna Matlega who has departed this life, to spend eternal life with You. She was with us for 85 years. We are never ready to lose one we love. Help us God, to comfort one another as we remember Marianna's life among us, and give us peace that surpasses human understanding. In the name and person of Christ we pray, Amen.

[Concludes the Funeral Service.]

Committal Service for Marianna Matlega May 8th, 2010-

Revelation 21:3-4.

"I heard a loud voice proclaiming from the throne: 'Now at last God has his dwelling among men! He will dwell among them and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes; there shall be an end to death, and to mourning and crying and pain; for the old order has passed away!'"

Psalm 23

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.
 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures,
 He leadeth me beside still waters; He restoreth my soul.
 He guideth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
 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.
 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies.
 Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over.
 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
 and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forevermore."

Words of Committal:

Eternal God whose loving care is over all, we commit the earthly remains of Marianna Matlega to the earth. Ashes to ashes and dust to dust, for we believe that her spirit is with You for now and forever. To know You is the assurance of life eternal. Amen.

Prayer

***Benediction:**

Go in peace, and may the blessing of God the Creator, Christ the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, be with you, and remain with you now and forever! Amen.

Pastor Childs:

You may now pay your final respects to Marianna.