

Homily for the Celebration of Life of Margaret A. Jokinen Tyrie

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St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Hanover, MA

December 7, 2025, 2pm

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father and Mother, and from Jesus Christ, our companion in grief and joy and for every step of our shared earthly journey. Amen.

What a gift and honor it is to celebrate the beautifully lived life of Margaret Amy Jokinen Tyrie, to reflect on her impact and legacy in this sanctuary that she occupied as a younger woman, as a widow and as an incredibly engaged and connected Mum.

We gather this afternoon and join together to honor Margee in our Christian tradition of holding both grief and gratitude at the same time. We grieve because Margee was so important for so long to soooo many. And we give thanks because her life was a gift—one that shaped each of you in ways that will continue to unfold for the rest of your lives.

This afternoon we seek solace from scriptures that were important to Margee and offer the comfort of reminder that God has prepared a place for each of us and that nothing—not even death—can separate us from the love of Christ. That we must not “grieve as others who have no hope,” as Thessalonians reminds us because hope is stronger than grief.

Hope is a thread woven throughout each of Marg-ee's 86 earthly years. And it is with hope and confidence that we commend her into God's loving arms for joy in her eternal life.

Together, we have proclaimed with hope recorded in the psalm, *“Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”*

Our time together this afternoon offers the opportunity to remember the details and share the gifts of Margee's life story – as told and experienced by each of you assembled today who collectively offer comfort through shared

memories and stories of Margee's fierce convictions, laughter, love of hummingbirds, scratch tickets and ambrosia.

Among the myriad attributes that made your Mum so special—and so deeply faithful was her capacity for love that lasts, love that adapts, love that welcomes, and love that keeps showing up. Whether as wife, mother, Grammy, GG, sister, aunt, neighbor, or friend, Margie offered a steady, uncomplicated gift: *she was there*. Fully there. Present in the ways that matter most.

She kept track of you and was generous in sharing your joys, your whereabouts and could offer illustrative stories in loving ways, balancing details with humor, balancing family with friends. Her love of and attention to the hummingbirds in your yard might be a perfect metaphor for Margee. She delighted in simple things, and took joy in your hummingbirds, those tiny miracles of persistence and beauty. Hummingbirds are small, but fierce. Delicate, but sturdy. Simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary. They are constantly in motion, and yet they somehow convey peace. Isn't that a pretty terrific description of Margee?

Cheri and David, you so generously created a beautiful and loving home where Margee could age safely and continue to be her fullest self to her very last day, in her very last breath. She clearly loved being surrounded by family—children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, with Baby Ray still on the way. And those visits and calls, those cards and drop-ins mattered. Even in these last weeks, which were not clearly defined as approaching the end of her earthly life, though her strength may have been slipping, her consciousness- her sharp wit and memory did not. She was held—literally and spiritually—by the love of your family she had raised and shaped for decades. That is holy ground. You created a holy and affirming space. Thank you!

Jesus preaches, "*Do not let your hearts be troubled... In my Father's house there are many dwelling places.*" That promise isn't simply poetic comfort—it is the architecture of eternity. A real, prepared place. A home to return to. And Margee now rests in her heavenly home, reunited with Charlie and James, with Carol, with her brothers Jerry, Edwin, and David, and with all those she loved who have gone before her.

While Margee has transitioned into God's holy light, her love is the legacy that continues to work its way through your lives. It will continue in the stories you share after this service in the Parish Hall. It will be evident when you carve pumpkins next fall, or when a hummingbird hovers unexpectedly in the yard.

You will notice it when a cribbage board appears. The gift of Margee's loving example will continue in each act of kindness, each laugh, each moment you choose family, or joy, or simple presence—because those moments are Margee-shaped.

As a Christian community this day offers the opportunity to speak in grief and in gratitude, with tears and laughter, with shared memories to be opened, examined and offered to each other as gifts. God bless you as you go about the work of unwrapping these stories and affirming Margee's legacy. This community stands with you to hold you and support you, today and always.

We give thanks for the echoes of Margee's presence in this sanctuary, in this parish and in the community that surrounds us. Please know that your shared sorrows and joys, your uncertainties, and all of the complexity that is grief, is welcome and expected here. May St. Andrew's offer the same sort of safe and loving holy ground that you created and surrounded Margee with, and may this be the on-going gathering spot for her legacy, and your lives as you continue to grow – both as a family in numbers and strength but also grounded in the sure and certain knowledge of Christ's love and delight for each of you.

As your grief and this part of YOUR earthly journeys continue to unfold, please bring your questions, your heartbreaks, your love of Margie and your missing of this marvelous woman to this sanctuary. We are here for you, as Margee was here for us, and for you, making this world a brighter and more loving place.

What a consistent and extraordinary gift. Amen+