



Grace Episcopal Church

871 Merrimon Avenue
Asheville, NC 28804

A Service in Celebration and Thanksgiving

for the life of

Edward James “Ed” Woeckener

Friday, May 8, 2026

11:00 a.m.

*Ed Woekener,
who received the gift of earthly life on December 22, 1934,
and who received the gift of a new life on May 2, 2026*

At the tolling of the tower bell, the congregation is asked to stand.

Celebrant I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.

Whoever has faith in me shall have life,
even though he die.

And everyone who has life,
and has committed himself to me in faith,
shall not die for ever.

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth.

After my awaking, he will raise me up;
and in my body I shall see God.

I myself shall see, and my eyes behold him
who is my friend and not a stranger.

For none of us has life in himself,
and none becomes his own master when he dies.

For if we have life, we are alive in the Lord,
and if we die, we die in the Lord.

So, then, whether we live or die,
we are the Lord's possession.

Happy from now on are those who die in the Lord!
So it is, says the Spirit, for they rest from their labors.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you this day our brother,

Ed. We thank you for giving him to us, his family and friends, to know and to love as a companion on our earthly pilgrimage. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see in death the gate of eternal life, so that in quiet confidence we may continue our course on earth, until, by your call, we are reunited with those who have gone before; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Most merciful God, whose wisdom is beyond our understanding: deal graciously with Ed's family in their grief. Surround them with your love, that they may not be overwhelmed by their loss, but have confidence in your goodness, and strength to meet the days to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn: *Christ, for the world we sing*
The people sit.

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THE WORD OF GOD

The First Lesson: Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Katie Woeckener

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal,
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn and a time to dance;
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 23 (*Read responsively by whole verse, led by priest*)

The LORD *is* my shepherd;

I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:

he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul:

he leadeth 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 will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

The Second Lesson: Revelation 21:1-7

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them as their God;
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them;
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Hymn: *Abide with me: fast falls the eventide*

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Celebrant The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

The Gospel: John 3:4-21

Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or

where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can these things be?’ Jesus answered him, ‘Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?’

‘Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

‘Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.’

Celebrant The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Family Reflections

Zachary Woechener

Rick Woeckener

Mike Woeckener

The Homily

The people stand.

The Reverend Timothy McRee

BCP 496

The Apostles' Creed

In assurance of eternal life given at Baptism,
let us proclaim our faith and say,

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

The Prayers of the People

For our brother Ed, let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ who said, "I am Resurrection and I am Life."

Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to us who mourn for Ed, and dry the tears of those who weep. *Hear us, Lord.*

You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend; comfort us in our sorrow. *Hear us, Lord.*

You raised the dead to life; give to our brother eternal life. *Hear us, Lord.*

You promised paradise to the thief who repented; bring our brother to the joys of heaven. *Hear us, Lord.*

Our brother Ed was washed in Baptism and anointed with the Holy Spirit; give him fellowship with all your saints. *Hear us, Lord.*

He was nourished with your Body and Blood; grant him a place at the table in your heavenly kingdom. *Hear us, Lord.*

Comfort us in our sorrows at the death of our brother Ed; let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope.

Celebrant Father of all, we pray to you for Ed and for all those whom we love but see no longer. Grant to them eternal rest. Let light perpetual shine upon them. May his soul and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

The Peace

Celebrant The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People **And also with you.**

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Anthem: *My Way*

Soloist Rick Woeckener; accompanist Phil Woeckener

The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer A

BCP 361

The people stand.

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And also with you.**

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People **We lift them to the Lord.**

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

Celebrant It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord; who rose victorious from the dead, and comforts us with the blessed hope of everlasting life. For to your faithful people, O Lord, life is changed, not ended; and when our mortal body lies in death, there is prepared for us a dwelling place eternal in the heavens.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The people stand or kneel.

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

**And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

People **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

Communion Hymn: *Come, thou fount of every blessing*

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Post Communion Prayer

BCP 498

Celebrant Let us pray.

All **Almighty God, we thank you that in your great love you have fed us with the spiritual food and drink of the Body and Blood**

of your Son Jesus Christ, and have given us a foretaste of your heavenly banquet. Grant that this Sacrament may be to us a comfort in affliction, and a pledge of our inheritance in that kingdom where there is no death, neither sorrow nor crying, but the fullness of joy with all your saints; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

The Commendation

BCP 499

Celebrant Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,
People **where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting.**

Celebrant You only are immortal, the creator and maker of mankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return. For so did you ordain when you created me, saying, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

People **Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting.**

The Celebrant then says

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Ed. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

The Blessing

Closing Hymn: *Christ for the world we sing!*

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The Dismissal

Officiant Alleluia, Alleluia. Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People **Thanks be to God. Alleluia, Alleluia.**



Clergy: The Reverend Robert Hartmans

The Reverend Timothy McRee

Organist: J. Philip Dettra

Crucifer: Steve Birkhofer

Chalicer: Jack Frue



Edward James “Ed” Woeckener

Edward James Woeckener of Asheville, NC, passed away on Saturday, May 2, 2026. He was 91 years old. Ed is survived by his beloved wife of 67 years, Marla Jane (nee Green), his son-in-law, Richard Brown, his three sons, Michael, Phillip and Richard, along with 12 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren.

Ed was born in Clifton, NJ on December 22, 1934 to Edward and Catherine (nee Williams) Woeckener. Ed received a Bachelors Degree in Business from the University of Colorado, where he met Marla. He served two years in the 82nd Airborne Division of the US Army. He then spent five years with United Airlines in Denver before moving to New York and then later to Miami, Florida working for Trans World Airlines (TWA), all working in Sales and Marketing. He also spent 8 years with Marriott In-Flight Services out of Miami International Airport.

Beyond his family and career, Ed’s greatest passion was the game of golf, which he passed on to his sons and grandsons. It was this love of golf that eventually drew him and Marla to retire to Asheville, where he spent many years as a member of the Country Club of Asheville.

Ed will be remembered as someone who made friends easily and delighted in a good drink and the conversation that went with it.

