

Funeral service for

# David Robert Essington Lewis

in thanksgiving for his life



**Born 10<sup>th</sup> May 1946**

**Died 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

**The Anglican Parish of Holy Trinity Kew**

**Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019 at 11.00 am**







## Welcome

We come together today to give thanks for the life of David, to mourn and honour him, to lay to rest his mortal body, and to support one another in grief.

We face the certainty of our own death. Yet Christians believe that those who die in Christ share eternal life with him. Therefore in faith and hope we turn to God, to celebrate all that David meant to us.

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

What does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy  
and to walk humbly with your God.

## Hymn ~ Abide with me

Abide with me, fast falls the eventide;  
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide!  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;  
change and decay in all around I see;  
O thou who changest not, abide with me.

Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes;  
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies:  
Heaven's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee;  
In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

We say together:

**Loving God, you alone are the source of life.  
May your life-giving Spirit flow through us,  
and fill us with compassion, one for another.  
In our sorrow give us the calm of your peace.  
Kindle our hope, and let our grief give way to joy;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

**Memories of David**    *(Please sit)*

Trish Parker

Anton Lucas

**Organ solo: Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring JS Bach**

Campbell Fitzpatrick

**Hymn ~ Jerusalem**

And did those feet in ancient time  
walk upon England's mountain green?  
And was the holy Lamb of God  
on England's pleasant pastures seen?  
And did the countenance divine  
shine forth upon our clouded hills?  
And was Jerusalem builded here  
among those dark satanic mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!  
Bring me my arrows of desire!  
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!  
Bring me my chariot of fire!  
I will not cease from mental fight,  
nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,  
till we have built Jerusalem  
in England's green and pleasant land.

**The Readings**    *(Please sit)*

**Riverbend** *from The Song of the Wounded River by Brian Wattchow, 2010*

*read by Margie Richardson*

Shouldering the River  
The mountain dons  
A eucalyptus cap of green,  
Pierced everywhere by morning sun.

The River's depth of flood reveals,  
Carved on a face of bone and quartzite flesh,  
A wrinkled lichen skin that peels  
Above the River's violence.

From the belly of the range,  
Verdant, fecund and moist with life,  
A river bends in memory and  
Curls in time.

Rock shelving into wave, like a shipwreck  
Beached and leaning on her gunwales.  
Quiet histories are told here,  
But who stays to listen?

Distance folds the mountain stream  
Both friend and fiend to all who dream,  
Where a final spur will shunt unseen,  
The River vanishing

Into the next bend.

### **Psalm 121** *sung by the choir*

### **Romans 12. 9 – 13** *read by Kirsty Angus*

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

### **A Homily**

### **The Prayers** *read by David Richardson*

#### **A prayer of thanksgiving**

Gracious God, as we gather today from diverse parts of David's world, we mourn his sudden death, and yet we celebrate his life and give thanks for all he has meant to us.

Deirdre gives thanks for David's unwavering love for her and the children, and for making her laugh every day for more than 28 years.

Izzy remembers his love of nature and adventurous spirit.

Jack is grateful for everything David taught him, and for being a father he could look up to.

His workmates speak glowingly of David's work as ministerial advisor and public servant - in the old-fashioned meaning of that term; and of his skill in developing policy and putting it into practice.

We give thanks for what lay beneath those achievements: his intelligence and curiosity, his collaboration with talented colleagues, an ability to listen to those affected by change and gain their trust, a gift for distilling complex issues into simple stories, and underpinning it all, his integrity and humanity.

All of us who are here today also give thanks for David's extraordinary capacity to connect with people. We loved him for his gentleness and humility; his quirky take on things, his inimitable laugh and occasionally acerbic wit; his depth of thought and passion for justice and the environment.

Above all we celebrate his ability to be himself in all circumstances, a sweet, funny, thoughtful and honourable man.

Grant him peace, through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

### **A prayer for those who mourn**

Merciful God,  
we pray for David's family and friends,  
remembering especially Deirdre, Isabel and Jack,  
David's three sisters and extended family  
whose sense of loss is so keen.  
When we cannot understand the things that happen,  
and are weighed down by grief and loneliness,  
uphold us in your love.  
Give us the assurance of your constant care,  
that we may have courage for the days ahead.  
through Jesus Christ our friend. **Amen.**

### **A Prayer of St Francis** *(Sung by all; please stay seated)*

Make me a channel of your peace.  
Where there is hatred let me bring your love;  
where there is injury, your pardon, Lord;  
and where there's doubt, true faith in you.

*Refrain: O Master, grant that I may never seek  
so much to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of your peace.  
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;  
where there is darkness, let me bring your light;  
and where there's sadness, ever joy.

*Refrain*

Make me a channel of your peace.  
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
in giving of ourselves that we receive,  
and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

## **The Farewell**

Bring us, O Lord God, at our last awakening  
into the house and gate of heaven,  
to enter into that gate and dwell in that house,  
where there shall be no darkness nor dazzling, but one equal light;  
no noise nor silence, but one equal music;  
no fears nor hopes, but one equal possession;  
no ends nor beginnings, but one equal eternity;  
in the habitations of thy glory and dominion, world without end.  
Amen.

*John Donne*

## **Anthem**

The Lord bless you and keep you      *John Rutter*  
*Sung by the choir*

## **The Committal** *(Please stand)*

Since the earthly life of David has come to an end,  
we commit his body to be cremated  
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust  
in the sure and certain hope  
of the resurrection to eternal life  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.      **Amen.**

## **Hymn ~ The Day Thou Gavest**

The day Thou gavest, Lord, is ended,  
The darkness falls at Thy behest;  
To Thee our morning hymns ascended,  
Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

We thank Thee that Thy church, unsleeping,  
While earth rolls onward into light,  
Through all the world her watch is keeping,  
And rests not now by day or night.

As over each continent and island  
The dawn leads on another day,  
The voice of prayer is never silent,  
Nor dies the strain of praise away.

The sun that bids us rest is waking  
Our brethren 'neath the western sky,  
And hour by hour fresh lips are making  
Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

So be it, Lord; Thy throne shall never  
Like earth's proud empires, pass away:  
Thy kingdom stands, and grows forever,  
Till all Thy creatures own Thy sway.

### **The Blessing**

Go forth into the world in peace;  
be of good courage;  
hold fast that which is good;  
render to no one evil for evil;  
strengthen the fainthearted;  
support the weak;  
help the afflicted;  
give honour to all;  
love and serve the Lord,  
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit;  
and the blessing of God almighty  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always. *Amen*

### **Funeral Procession**

Tune and Air *Henry Purcell*

Pallbearers ~  
Isabel Lewis, Jack Lewis, Diana Todd,  
David Richardson, John Todd, Richard Parker

Officiant ~ The Reverend Ron Browning  
Vicar (locum tenens) ~ The Reverend Robert Holland  
Organist ~ Stephen Kerr

## David's Life



### Introduction

When David's daughter, Isabel, was ten years old, her schoolteacher asked the class to interview someone they admired and write a biography of the person's life.

Isabel chose to interview her father. Her biography, reproduced below, describes some of the events of David's life from his birth in May 1946 to February 2004, when Isabel wrote the story.

Following Isabel's story, there is a brief account of David's life from 2004 to his death in September 2019.

### **David's life between 1946 and 2004**      *by Isabel Lewis, February 2004*

In 1946, David's life began at the Memorial Hospital in Adelaide. Already he had one older sister. A few years later, two more kids were born. David's eldest sister was called Diana. If we were to zoom forward in time we would see that she is now a successful woman of almost 60 years, with two beautiful kids and one newborn grandchild. David's other two sisters both have teenage and grown kids. Back in time though, they were just two little kids named Trish and Margie.

David and his sisters' parents were called Bob and Betty. They were a devoted couple till the day of their death (though that hasn't happened yet). It just so happened that Bob's real name was Robert Lewis, and he was the son of the great Essington Lewis, a most famous man. In World War Two, Essington was the minister responsible for weapons and he also ran Australia's biggest company, BHP.

David's other grandfather was Sir Archie Price. He was knighted by the Queen for running a great school and studying Aborigines. He took little

David to explore the inlets and waters of the Murray Mouth. They found Aboriginal artifacts and went fishing together.

When David was little he shared a dog with his sisters. It was a naughty little mongrel, always running away. Once everyone was watching cricket on TV when they noticed the commentators exclaim that there was a dog on the oval. Peering closer, they realised that it was their dog!

David was a skinny chap with tanned skin and nearly white hair. One of his favourite holidays, apart from Essie's farm, was The Shack. The Shack is a little place nestled in-between Victor Harbor and Port Elliot on the South Australian Coast. David's Grandad Price had seen an ad in the paper saying that it was a five bedroom house, and he bought it (for fifty pounds) without seeing it. The ad wasn't entirely true. It actually had two bedrooms, a tiny living room, one bathroom and a dusty old shed. Later on a proper kitchen was built. There were no other houses in the area apart from three. One day when David was only eight he drove the family car back from Port Elliot on his own with no adults present.

David went to school for nine years in Adelaide and made some really great friends. When he shifted to a boarding school in Geelong he had to make new friends. The only bad thing about his new school was that the principal insisted on cold morning showers! David's best year at school was spent up on the mountains. He and his friends (who he still sees to this day) stayed on Mount Timbertop, near the Howqua River. At one point they went for a long walk to a hidden valley.

David studied history, psychology and philosophy at Adelaide University. During his studies he had many interesting journeys. He travelled to New Guinea, and to Indonesia where he lived as a local for a whole year. When he stayed in New Guinea he lived on a houseboat, with cockroaches  $\frac{3}{4}$  the length of your hand. After University, David got a job as a high school teacher. He taught history and social studies.

In the 1960s it was the hippy age. David was a young man and decided to be a hippy too. He floated around and stayed on a communal farm with other hippies. They grew their own food.

One day when David was having lunch at Florentino Bistro in Bourke Street Melbourne, he started chatting to a lovely young girl. Some weeks later they met at a party. David thought she looked quite beautiful so he asked her and her friend to come sailing with him. Although the sailing wasn't quite what Deirdre and her friend had expected (they expected to be sun baking on the deck in their bikinis), Deirdre and David got on well. After two years of dating they got married and now have two lovely children called Isabel and Jack. *The End.*

### **David's life between 2004 and 2013**

In his speech for David's retirement (in 2013) from the Water Group in the Victorian Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, his good friend and colleague, Tim Cummins, said:

*Those years embraced many trials and tribulations for David, and for his wife Deirdre who had a similarly demanding job. Many parent teacher nights were attended, many meals were prepared and eaten, many childhood illnesses nursed, and much love and care was invested in two beautiful children.*

*And many, many nights were spent in front of computers – often well into the early morning. Many false horizons also came and went; many punishing hours were spent on a series of things that each looked likely to be the last big change, the last body of work requiring superhuman effort. Until, now, at last, we see David's last public-service masterpiece, the Victorian water register.*

The last few years of David's working life were, on the whole, very happy. He enjoyed managing a team of super-performers, as he called them, and loved working with Tim, Campbell Fitzpatrick and many other people in the department, and with farmers and others concerned with river health and sustainability.

### **David's life from 2013 - 2019**

After he retired, David retained an active interest in water management. Early on, he consulted to the Chinese Government on its water management practice, even attempting to learn Mandarin to help with relationships! He stayed in touch with two translators, Jun Wang and Wenxiu, from one of his China trips and helped Jun when she came to Melbourne to complete a doctorate. In the acknowledgements for her thesis, she wrote, "I would like to thank my friend Mr. David Lewis, who introduced me to the local culture and encouraged me..." David occasionally lectured on water issues at the University of Melbourne and had published one academic and two media articles in the last couple of years. David was also involved in the North Carlton Branch of the Australian Labor Party, working on political donations and 'truth in political communications' policies.

David was in good form the day he died. He set out early with his beloved dog, Benji, and talked with some of his friends who congregate regularly in Edinburgh Gardens to walk their dogs. He came home, said goodbye to Deirdre, and headed off to his regular gym session with Emma, his friend and personal trainer. Later, he'd planned to put the finishing touches on a paper he was writing and check on the renovations being made to a house he'd helped Isabel buy. He was looking forward to catching up on an episode of Poldark with Deirdre when she came home from work, and was hoping she'd mend the hole in his favourite jumper.

David's life ended suddenly about 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday 10 September.







**Deirdre, Isabel and Jack, together with David's extended family, thank you for your presence here today and for your expressions of love and support.**

**Please join us afterwards for refreshments in the Holy Trinity Church Hall.**

