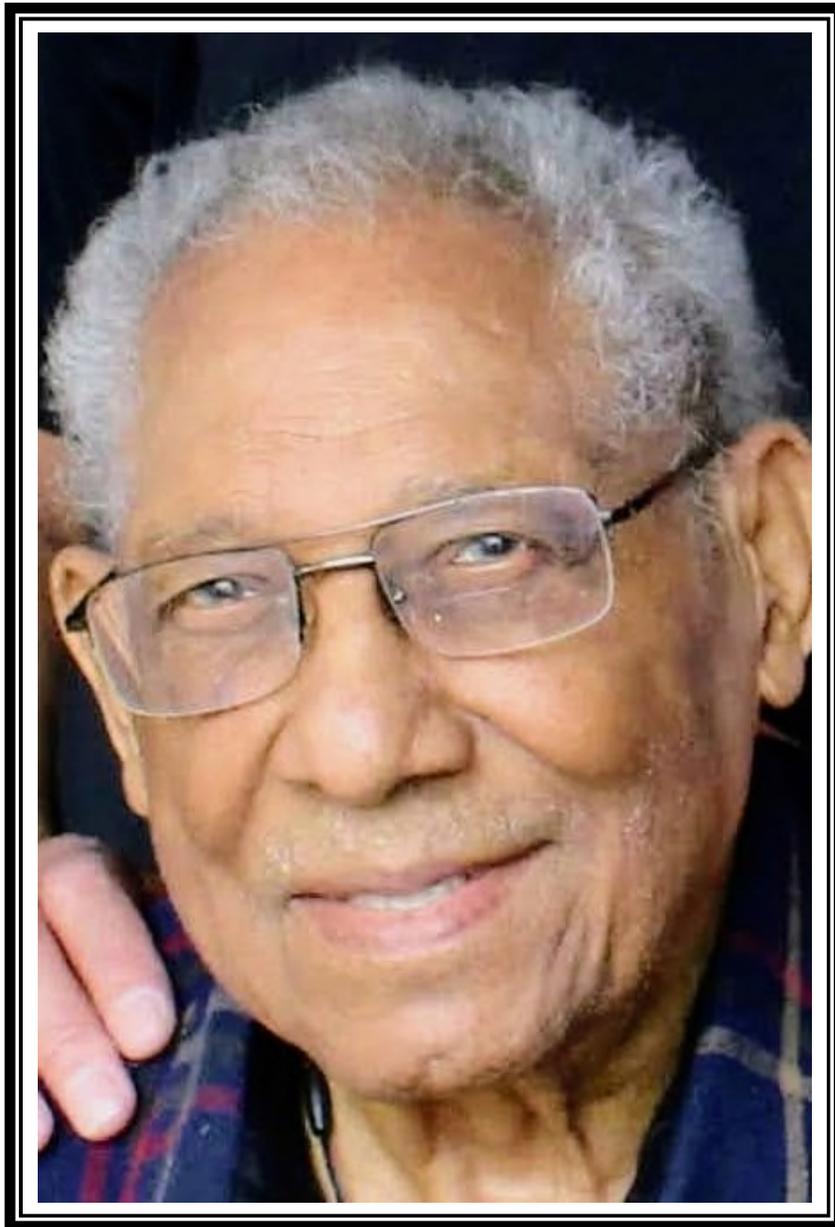


A Celebration of Life



Homer Kerr

October 09, 1921 – July 6, 2022

Saint George's Episcopal Church

30 North Ferry St., Schenectady, NY 12305

The Liturgy for the Dead

The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

This joy, however, does not make human grief un-Christian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.

Book of Common Prayer, pg 507



ST. GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

in the heart of the historic Stockade District
A Celebration of the Life of Homer Kerr— 23 July 2022

11:00am

The Reverend Peter Schofield, *Celebrant*

THE RECEPTION OF THE BODY

With faith in Jesus Christ, we receive the body of our brother Homer for burial. Let us pray with confidence to God, the Giver of life, that he will raise him to perfection in the company of the saints.

Silence may be kept; after which the Celebrant says

Deliver your servant, Homer, O Sovereign Lord Christ, from all evil, and set him free from every bond; that he may rest with all your saints in the eternal habitations; where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Let us also pray for all who mourn, that they may cast their care on God, and know the consolation of his love.

Silence may be kept; after which the Celebrant says

Almighty God, look with pity upon the sorrows of your servants for whom we pray. Remember them, Lord, in mercy; nourish them with patience; comfort them with a sense of your goodness; lift up your countenance upon them; and give them peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OPENING ANTHEM

people stand

I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord;
he that believeth in me, though he were dead,
yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and
believeth in me shall never die.
I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he
shall stand at the latter day upon the earth;
and though this body be destroyed, yet shall
I see God; whom I shall see for myself and

mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger.
For none of us liveth to himself, and no man
dieth to himself.
For if we live, we live unto the Lord.
and if we die, we die unto the Lord.
Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the
Lord's.
Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord;
even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from
their labors.

THE INTROIT **R**est eternal grant unto them, O Lord; and may light perpetual shine upon them. Thou, O God, art praised in Zion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed in Jerusalem; thou that hearest the prayer; unto thee shall all flesh come. Rest eternal grant unto them, O Lord; and may light perpetual shine upon them.

THE COLLECT

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant: Let us pray.

O God, whose mercies cannot be numbered; accept our prayers on behalf of thy servant Homer, and grant him entrance into the land of light and joy, in the fellowship of thy saints; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

THE FIRST LESSON • Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

read by Teresa Cheeks

Lector: A reading from Ecclesiastes

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 keep, and a time to throw away; 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.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 121 *Levavi oculos*

said by all, in unison

- 1 **I lift up my eyes to the hills; ***
from where is my help to come?
- 2 **My help comes from the LORD, ***
the maker of heaven and earth.
- 3 **He will not let your foot be moved ***
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.
- 4 **Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel ***
shall neither slumber nor sleep;
- 5 **The LORD himself watches over you; ***
the LORD is your shade at your right hand,
- 6 **So that the sun shall not strike you by day, ***
nor the moon by night.
- 7 **The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; ***
it is he who shall keep you safe.
- 8 **The LORD shall watch over your going out and your coming in, ***
from this time forth for evermore.

THE EPISTLE • 1 John 3:1-2

read by Teresa Cheeks

Lector: A reading from the First Epistle of St. John

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

- 1 **The LORD is my shepherd; ***
I shall not want.
- 2 **He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; ***
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
- 3 **He restoreth my soul; ***
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake.
- 4 **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.
- 5 **Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; ***
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
- 6 **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, ***
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever

THE HOLY GOSPEL • John 11:21-27*people stand**Celebrant:* The Lord be with you.*People:* **And with thy spirit.***Celebrant:* The ✠ Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to St. John.*People:* **Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother, Lazarus, would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

Celebrant: The Gospel of the Lord.*People:* **Praise be to thee, O Christ.****HOMILY**

The Reverend Peter Schofield

HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW*sung by Georgia Jones**Piano Accompaniment: Azzaam Hameed***THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Leader: **I**n peace, let us pray to the Lord. Almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord: Grant, we beseech thee, to thy whole Church in paradise and on earth, thy light and thy peace.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to newness of life, and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass with him to our joyful resurrection.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that thy Holy Spirit may lead us in holiness and righteousness all our days.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Grant to thy faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Grant to all who mourn a sure confidence in thy fatherly care, that, casting all their grief on thee, they may know the consolation of thy love.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Give courage and faith to those who are bereaved, that they may have strength to meet the days ahead in the comfort of a reasonable and holy hope, in the joyful expectation of eternal life with those they love.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Help us, we pray, in the midst of things we cannot understand, to believe and trust in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection to life everlasting.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Grant us grace to entrust Homer to thy never-failing love; receive her into the arms of thy mercy, and remember her according to the favor which thou bearest unto thy people.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Grant that, increasing in knowledge and love of thee, she may go from strength to strength in the life of perfect service in thy heavenly kingdom.

People: **Amen.**

Leader: Grant us, with all who have died in the hope of the ✠ resurrection, to have our consummation and bliss in thy eternal and everlasting glory, and with all thy saints, to receive the crown of life which thou dost promise to all who share in the victory of thy Son Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

People: **Amen.**

Celebrant: The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And with thy Spirit**

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

AMAZING GRACE

sung by Leroy Twiggs
Piano Accompaniment: Azzaam Hameed

REMEMBRANCES OF HOMER KERR

Kevin Kerr	Son
Larry Gravett	Son-in-law
Richard Harris	Beloved Friend

The Priest gives a blessing

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Celebrant: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

THE COMMENDATION

The Celebrant and other ministers take their place at the body

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

Thou only art immortal, the creator and maker of mankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and unto earth shall we return. For so thou didst ordain when thou createdst me, saying, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

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

The Celebrant, facing the body and says the following, during which the coffin may be censed and sprinkled with Holy Water

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

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
Thanks be to God.

As the body is borne from the church, these anthems may be sung or said

CLOSING SENTENCES

Christ is risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and giving life to those in the tomb.

The Sun of Righteousness is gloriously risen, giving light to those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death.

The Lord will guide our feet into the way of peace, having taken away the sin of the world.

Christ will open the kingdom of heaven to all who believe in his Name, saying, Come, O blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you.

THE COMMITTAL

After arrival at the grave, the following is said

In the midst of life we are in death; of whom may we seek for succor,
but of thee, O Lord, who for our sins art justly displeased?

Yet, O Lord God most holy, O Lord most mighty, O holy and most merciful Savior,
deliver us not into the bitter pains of eternal death.

Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts; shut not thy merciful ears to our prayer;
but spare us, Lord most holy, O God most mighty, O holy and merciful Savior,
thou most worthy Judge eternal. Suffer us not, at our last hour, through any pains of death, to fall from
thee.

and this

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

He that raised up Jesus from the dead will also give life to our mortal bodies,
by his Spirit that dwelleth in us.

Wherefore my heart is glad, and my spirit rejoiceth; my flesh also shall rest in hope.

Thou shalt show me the path of life; in thy presence is the fullness of joy, and at thy right hand there is
pleasure for evermore.

Then, while earth is cast upon the coffin and sprinkled with Holy Water, the Celebrant says these words

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to
Almighty God our brother Homer; and we commit his body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes,
dust to dust. The Lord bless him and keep him, the Lord make his face to shine upon him and be gracious
unto him, the Lord lift up his countenance upon him and give him peace. **Amen.**

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People **And with thy spirit.**

Celebrant Let us pray.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Celebrant and People

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.**

Then the Celebrant may say

O Almighty God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, who by a voice from heaven didst proclaim, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord: Multiply, we beseech thee, to those who rest in Jesus the manifold blessings of thy love, that the good work which thou didst begin in them may be made perfect unto the day of Jesus Christ. And of thy mercy, O heavenly Father, grant that we, who now serve thee on earth, may at last, together with them, be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; for the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

In addition to this prayer, the Celebrant may use any Additional Prayers.

Into thy hands, O Lord, we commend thy servant Homer, our dear brother, as into the hands of a faithful Creator and most merciful Savior, beseeching thee that he may be precious in thy sight. Wash him, we pray thee, in the blood of that immaculate Lamb that was slain to take away the sins of the world; that, whatsoever defilements he may have contracted in the midst of this earthly life being purged and done away, he may be presented pure and without spot before thee; through the merits of Jesus Christ thine only Son our Lord. **Amen.**

Then may be said

Rest eternal grant to him, O Lord:
And let light perpetual shine upon him.

✠ **M**ay his soul, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

THE DISMISSAL

The Celebrant dismisses the people with these words

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant: Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

Celebrant and Preacher: The Rev. Peter Schofield
Assisting Minister: David G. Kennison, Sr. Warden of St. George's Church
Lector: Teresa Cheeks
First Hymn: Georgia Jones
Second Hymn: Leroy Twiggs
Accompanist: Azzaam Hameed

A Biography of Homer Kerr

Homer Kerr was born October 9, 1921 in Mobile, Alabama to William Kerr and Beatrice King. He was raised in Pensacola, FL by his mother where he attended and graduated from Booker T Washington High School.

Beatrice later married Albert Cushon. Albert had five children, Albert Jr, Woodrow, (John) Winston, Delores and Delmar. Beatrice and Albert had one child together, Veronica, who of course was Homer's half-sister. Homer was also accepted and loved by the Cushon family. He was often referred to as the "Big Brother" of the family because he was the eldest of the Cushon children and they often sought his advice. Homer maintained a close relationship with Veronica, Albert, Woodrow and Winston over the years until their deaths.

Homer joined the US Army Air Corps (predecessor to the Air Force) in 1942. This decision allowed him to travel both domestically and abroad. He did Basic Training at Fort Crowder in Missouri, Signal Corps Training in Biloxi, MS and additional training at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, VA. Homer was attached to the 224 and 226 Battalions but ultimately served in World War II where he was deployed to Cherbourg, Belgium and Reims, France as well as England and Luxemburg. Homer was honorably discharged in 1945.

After World War II, he joined his father, William Kerr, in Schenectady, New York where he would spend the next 77 years. He was trained in the military to be a telephone lineman but New York telephone didn't hire Negroes to be linemen at the time. He was told these jobs were strictly reserved for whites.

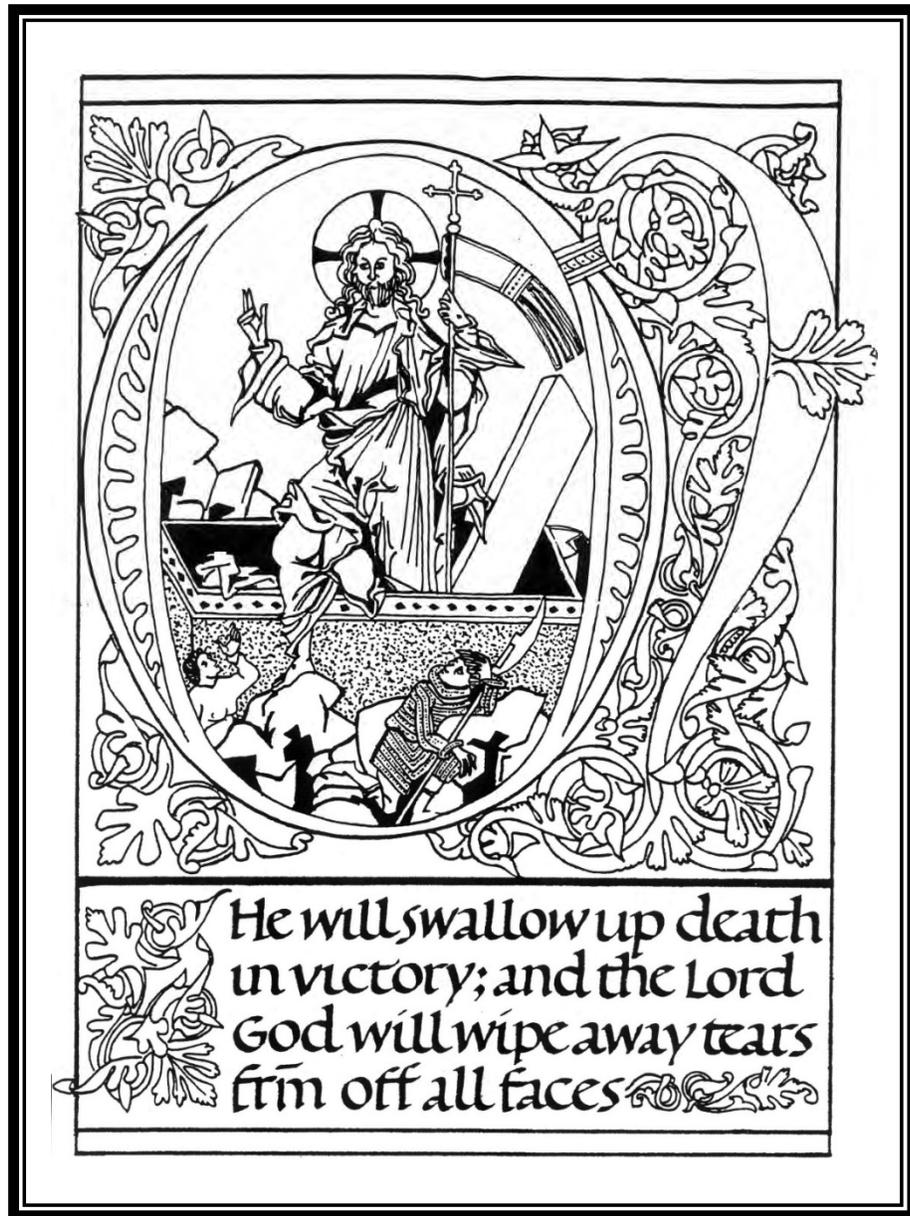
He learned that General Electric hired skilled craftsmen without regard for race. He then pursued training as a welder. At his own cost, he took welding courses and became a certified welder. GE hired him and he was employed there for 32 years until he retired.

On a personal level, Homer met the love of his life, Shirley (Claretha) Tindall through an introduction from his good friend McCalvin Freeman. Homer and Shirley were married September 4, 1954 at Duryee AME Zion Church in Schenectady. From this union, two children were born, Kevin and Belinda.

Homer was a long- time member of St George's Episcopal Church and was a past member of the church's Vestry. He was known as a kind, warm, friendly and generous man as well as a great husband, father, grandfather, and friend to all who knew him.

Homer is survived by his wife, Shirley; his daughter Belinda and Larry Gravett (Latham NY), his grandson, Adam Gravett (Boston, MA); his son Kevin and Vanecia Kerr (Aurora, CO); his grandson, Kristoff Kerr (Aurora, CO); his cousins Michele Freeman (Pawleys, Island SC), Adrienne Freeman (Guilderland, NY), cousin McCalvin & Laurie Freeman (Airmont NY), LaTonya and John Dillard (Miami, FL), sister in law Marion Cushon (Pensacola, FL); his nephews Norman Cushon (West Palm Beach, FL) and his brother-in-law William and Carolyn Haymon (Clinton, MD), nephew Albert K Cushon (Seattle, WA), niece Juwana Delaney (Pensacola, FL) and a host of family and friends.

By Kevin Kerr



Following the service, all are invited for
Repast/luncheon at the home of
Belinda and Larry Gravett,
5 Red Oaks Drive, Latham, NY 12110.

The family will join the repast
after the interment at
Memory Gardens
983 Watervliet-Shaker Rd, Albany, NY 12205