



*In Loving*

MEMORY OF

RUTH MAXSON



SEPTEMBER 26, 1924 - JANUARY 17, 2026

"Let not your heart be troubled...  
I go to prepare a place for you."

JOHN 14:1-2

*In sure and certain hope in the resurrection to eternal life:  
A Celebration of Life for Ruth Swartley Maxson*

**Prelude**        “O Jesus, Thou Art Standing”  
                      “Nearer My God to Thee”

**Welcome**

**Thanksgiving for Baptism**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of all mercy and the God of all consolation, who comforts us in all our sorrows so that we can comfort others in their sorrows with the consolation we ourselves have received from God.

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Eternal God, maker of heaven and earth, who formed us from the dust of the earth, who by your breath gave us life, we glorify you.

**We glorify you.**

Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, who suffered death for all humanity, who rose from the grave to open the way to eternal life, we praise you.

**We praise you.**

Holy Spirit, author and giver of life, the comforter of all who sorrow, our sure confidence and everlasting hope, we worship you.

**We worship you.**

To you, O blessed Trinity, be glory and honor, forever and ever. **Amen.**

- 1 Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
let me hide myself in thee;  
let the water and the blood,  
from thy riven side which flowed,  
be of sin the double cure;  
cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r.
  
- 2 Not the labors of my hands  
can fulfill thy law's demands;  
could my zeal no respite know,  
could my tears forever flow,  
all for sin could not atone;  
thou must save, and thou alone.
  
- 3 Nothing in my hand I bring;  
simply to thy cross I cling.  
Naked, come to thee for dress;  
helpless, look to thee for grace;  
foul, I to the fountain fly;  
wash me, Savior, or I die.
  
- 4 While I draw this fleeting breath,  
when mine eyelids close in death,  
when I soar to worlds unknown,  
see thee on thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
let me hide myself in thee.

### Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

## Prayer of the Day

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you today our sister, Ruth. We thank you for giving her to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may live in confidence and hope until, by your call, we are gathered to our heavenly home in the company of all your saints; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

## First Reading

## Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

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

<sup>2</sup> a time to be born and a time to die;

a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted;

<sup>3</sup> a time to kill and a time to heal;

a time to break down and a time to build up;

<sup>4</sup> a time to weep and a time to laugh;

a time to mourn and a time to dance;

<sup>5</sup> a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;

<sup>6</sup> a time to seek and a time to lose;

a time to keep and a time to throw away;

<sup>7</sup> a time to tear and a time to sew;

a time to keep silent and a time to speak;

<sup>8</sup> a time to love and a time to hate;

a time for war and a time for peace.

<sup>9</sup> What gain have the workers from their toil? <sup>10</sup> I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. <sup>11</sup> He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

## Hymn

## "Abide With Me"

ELW 629

1 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, oh, abide with me.

- 2 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.
- 3 I need thy presence ev'ry passing hour;  
 what but thy grace can foil the tempter's pow'r?  
 Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?  
 Through cloud and sunshine, oh, abide with me.
- 4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;  
 ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.  
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy victory?  
 I triumph still, if thou abide with me!
- 5 Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes,  
 shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;  
 heav'n's morning breaks,  
 and earth's vain shadows flee;  
 in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.

## Second Reading

## Psalm 23

<sup>1</sup>The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
 he leads me beside still waters;

<sup>3</sup>he restores my soul.  
 He leads me in right paths  
 for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
 I fear no evil,  
 for you are with me;  
 your rod and your staff,  
 they comfort me.

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me  
 in the presence of my enemies;  
 you anoint my head with oil;  
 my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup> Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
my whole life long.

**Hymn**            **"In the Garden"**

**1**            I come to the garden alone,  
While the dew is still on the roses;  
And the voice I hear, falling on my ear,  
The Son of God discloses.

*Refrain*            And He walks with me, and He talks with me,  
And He tells me I am His own,  
And the joy we share as we tarry there,  
None other has ever known.

**2**            He speaks, and the sound of His voice  
Is so sweet the birds hush their singing;  
And the melody that He gave to me  
Within my heart is ringing.

*Refrain*

**3**            I'd stay in the garden with Him  
Tho' the night around me be falling;  
But He bids me go; thro' the voice of woe,  
His voice to me is calling.

*Refrain*

**Gospel Reading**

**John 14:1-3**

<sup>1</sup> "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

Message

The Rev. Keith Anderson

Hymn "Softly and Tenderly" ELW 608

1 Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling,  
calling for you and for me.  
See, on the portals he's waiting and watching,  
watching for you and for me.

*Refrain* "Come home, (Come home,  
come home! (come home!)  
You who are weary, come home."  
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,  
calling, "O sinner, come home!"

2 Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading,  
pleading for you and for me?  
Why should we linger and heed not his mercies,  
mercies for you and for me? *Refrain*

3 Oh, for the wonderful love he has promised,  
promised for you and for me!  
Though we have sinned, he has mercy and pardon,  
pardon for you and for me. *Refrain*

Sharing Time

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
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,  
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come 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

Almighty God, in holy baptism you have knit your chosen people together into one communion of saints in the body of Christ. Give to your whole church in heaven and on earth your light and your peace. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to share the new life in Christ. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Give courage and faith to all who mourn,  
and a sure and certain hope in your loving care,  
that, casting all their sorrow on you,  
they may have strength for the days ahead. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that, where this world groans in grief and pain, your Holy Spirit may lead us to bear witness to your light and life. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**

Help us, 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. God of mercy,  
**hear our prayer.**



Hymn "How Great Thou Art" ELW 856

1 O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder  
consider all the works thy hand hath made,  
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,  
thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed;

*Refrain* Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,  
how great thou art! How great thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee,  
how great thou art! How great thou art!

2 When through the woods and forest glades I wander,  
I hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
when I look down from lofty mountain grandeur  
and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze; *Refrain*

3 But when I think that God, his Son not sparing,  
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,  
that on the cross my burden gladly bearing  
he bled and died to take away my sin; *Refrain*

4 When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation,  
and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration  
and there proclaim, "My God, how great thou art!" *Refrain*

Dismissal

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

Special Music "The Lord Bless You and Keep You"

Postlude "Just As I Am Without One Plea"  
"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"

### **Worship Leaders**

Pastor Keith Anderson, Preacher and Presider

Vicar Brynn Anderson, Assisting Minister

Carol Evans, Organist

Morris Redding, Sexton

Tad Matsuura, A/V Engineer

### **Choral Scholars**

Seana Benz, Anna Potson, Kyle Ryan, and Jack Sullivan

**Everyone is invited to join us for a luncheon following the service in Upper  
Dublin Lutheran Church's Steffens Room.**

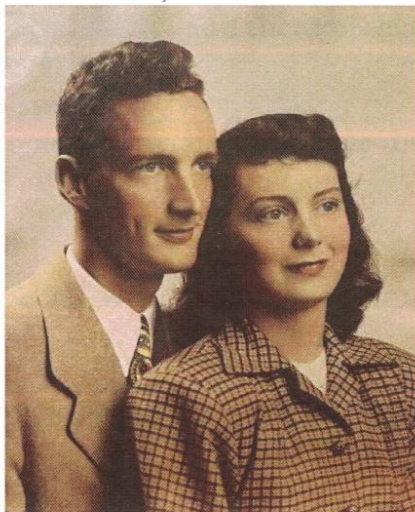
## Obituary

Ruth Swartley Maxson, a perennial optimist and lifelong community volunteer who refused to let a century of life slow her down, said her final goodbyes on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2026. She passed away peacefully from congestive heart failure at the impressive age of 101. Her mind was sharp and all her five children were able to spend time with her during her last days.

Ruth was born in 1924 in Abington, Pennsylvania, to Grant Clymer Swartley and Mabel Worth Swartley. The family were lifelong members of Upper Dublin Lutheran Church, where Ruth was baptized, and where she told her children she was first introduced to the Bible's three special sisters – Shirley, Goodness and Mercy.

Ruth grew up in Abington, took up the violin when she was young, and the piano later in life. She enjoyed playing with the neighbor boys because “they were more fun.” She attended Abington Senior High School, graduating in 1942. She stayed involved with the school, even spearheading the organization of her class's 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion. Throughout her life she enjoyed a wealth of friendships from high school, college, church and her many activity groups.

In 1944 Ruth married John F. (“Jack”) Gellert, also from Abington, after he enlisted in the Army. She was young but, as she said, it was wartime. Tragically, Jack was killed in Germany in 1945 as his division advanced toward Berlin. Ruth continued her studies in biology and chemistry at Beaver College, now Arcadia University, and remained extremely active with her graduating Class of 1946.



Ruth remarried in March 1947, to William R. (“Bill”) Maxson, who had taken notice of her at Upper Dublin Lutheran Church when they were younger, and who had even invited her to a dance at the Virginia Military Institute before the war. From a brief previous marriage, Bill already had a daughter, Mimi (now deceased), who was raised by her maternal grandparents. After Bill's posting with the Army Air Corps during the Korean War in Newfoundland, he and Ruth returned with their two children to their house in Hartsville (Warminster), where three more children arrived until, as Bill loved to say, they found out what was causing so many kids. She loved her garden and delighted in the many species of birds that would feed just outside the window at her dining table.

After miraculously surviving lymphosarcoma in his early 30's, Bill recovered and lived to the age of 79. Ruth is survived by her five children: Wayne (Lianne), Peter (Leona), Holly (David), Glen (Becki), and Craig (Claudia); her eleven grandchildren; five step-grandchildren; thirteen great-grandchildren; and her elder sister, Carol Miller. Together with devoted friends and neighbors, the family would frequently spend time with Ruth after Bill's passing.

Bill spent his career with the telephone company. Meanwhile, in addition to her considerable family obligations, Ruth became a fixture of the Hartsville community and was widely known for her community service. Her unique combination of personality traits was invaluable. She was a seasoned organizer, sociable, a fount of goodness and positive energy, tech-savvy, a lover of games (and not averse to a touch of gambling), sporty, competitive, and so much more. She listened well and would easily connect with people she had not previously met. Store clerks and restaurant hostesses would greet her by her first name. Strangers would often pay for her meals. Her favorite Meadowlark Bakery & Cafe would slip an extra bun or dessert into her order.

Ruth's intellectual curiosity and competitive spirit were infectious, living on through her family. She was an avid reader, a stickler for proper English usage, and she and Bill would often challenge each other with the spelling of unusual words like "eleemosynary." She loved to travel. She was a lifetime subscriber to *The Intelligencer* (the print version, of course) and couldn't wait for its local news and crossword puzzles. Even in her later years, she embraced technology to follow her stock portfolio, to stay connected with friends, and to sign in to family Zoom calls that were often the highlight of her week. Ruth loved games and played tennis for many years. She also somehow seemed to win 80% of her cribbage games, to the dismay of her opponents, who were often her children. After Tiger Woods burst onto the scene, she became an avid golf fan, also following the Eagles and Phillies teams on TV.

While she was active in *The Questers* (a nationwide women's group that focused on preservation activities) for some years, Ruth also spent countless hours volunteering at the Doylestown Hospital, the Mercer Museum, the Red Cross, the Cancer Drive, and other charities for which she received some well-deserved recognition. For example, in 2020, her name was put on a plaque on the door of a Patient Recovery Room in the new Center for Cardiac and Vascular Care at Doylestown Hospital / Penn Health. In 2021, the annual Ruth Maxson History Day Internships at the Bucks County Historical Society were endowed. For many years Ruth supported the Choral Scholars Program at Upper Dublin Lutheran Church, and more recently she contributed to building the pavilion that will shelter parishioners waiting to be picked up at the East Entrance. She even has an

endowed bench in the park below the Moland House, an historic property managed by the Warwick Township Historical Society.

Ruth Swartley Maxson is sorely missed by all who knew her. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests charitable donations in her honor to the Mercer Museum (c/o Bucks County Historical Society), or the Moland House (c/o Warwick Township Historical Society), two of the institutions so representative of her commitment to the community she loved and embraced.

The Maxson family appreciates the love that friends and neighbors have shared with Ruth throughout her life.

