

Good morning and thank you for attending today.

Thank you for coming to celebrate the life of Ellery Baldwin.

We've come here today in honor of Ellery.

Ellery was an extraordinary lady.

She was a hundred years old when she died.

Her birthday was yesterday.

She would have been 101.

As grief surely is present with us today, we will still celebrate her wonderful life.

Please bow as we pray.

Eternal Father, we've come here today to celebrate the life of Ellery Baldwin, to mourn her death, and to say goodbye.

We ask that you bless us with your presence,

as we give our utmost respect and honor to Ellery with this service.

I believe Ellery would insist that we first and foremost bring glory and honor to your holy name.

God of all comfort, we ask for your comforting hand to hold us and for your love to sustain us at this time.

In Christ's name I pray, Amen.

The 23rd Psalms.

The Lord is my shepherd there is nothing that I lack.

He lets me lie down in green pastures, and He leads me beside the quiet water.

He renews my life.

He leads me along the right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I go through the darkest valley, I will fear no danger, for you are with me.

Your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

You anoint my head with oil, and my cup overflows.

Only goodness and faithful love will pursue me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord as long as I shall live.

I love you, Lord.

your mercy never fails me.

All my days, I've been held in your hand.

From the moment that I wake up until I lay my head, well, I will sing of the goodness of God.

And all my life you have been faithful.

And all my life you have been so, good.

With every breath that I am able, well, I will sing of the goodness of God.

I love your voice.

You have led me through the fire.

In darkest nights, you are close like no other.

Well, I've known you as a father.

I've known you as a friend.

And I have lived in the goodness

God.

And all my life you have been faithful.

And all my life you have been so, so good with every breath that I have made good.

Well, I will sing of the goodness

gone.

Your goodness is running after, it's running after me.

Your goodness is running after, it's running after me with

my life laid down I'm surrendered now I give you everything Your goodness is running after It's running after me All my life you have been faithful And all my life you have been so

So good with every breath that I am able.

Well, I will sing of the goodness of God.

I will sing of the goodness of God.

All my life you

I've been faithful.

And all my life you have been so, good.

With every breath that I am able, I will sing of the goodness of God.

So are you ready for this?

You're going to hear me okay?

Okay.

I've never spoken in front of people before, so this is my first time other than reading scripture.

So I know the subject matter pretty well.

First of all, I want to thank everybody for being here.

It would have meant so much to mom.

And so instead of just reading the obituary, I thought I would tell her story.

She was a very private person, so I don't think everybody knew kind of who she was, maybe.

She grew up on a little farm.

She was a little farm girl, and she was the youngest of six children, just outside of Stanbury, Missouri.

Her parents were sharecroppers who worked 280 acres of land for 35 years, and they never owned their own property.

During those 35 years, her dad shared in paying half of the expenses, and he received half of the profits from the gentleman that they rented from.

There was no signed contract, only a handshake.

Mom often spoke of how proud she was of her father and how he was respected in the community as an honest, hardworking, soft-spoken, kind and gentle man.

And she was so proud to be his daughter.

Her mother was equally hardworking who raised their six children, plus four nieces and nephews who had needed some care when their father passed away.

early.

And so she did the laundry on a washboard and she hung the clothes to dry on outside lines, summer and winter.

They heated and cooked with wood.

They chopped themselves.

They did not have indoor plumbing, so they had to go to the outhouse summer and winter.

Mom talked about how in the winter she was not unusual to wake up with snow on her blankets or on her pillows that was coming in around the spaces of the window.

Their food consisted of what they produced.

They smoked their own meat.

They had chickens and plenty of eggs, fresh milk from the cows, and cream and butter, which they churned themselves.

They were gardeners and they canned and stored their fruits, vegetables, potatoes, et cetera, in the cellar to be used throughout the year.

They were very self-sustaining people.

Her mother sewed their clothes and cut their hair.

And in addition to doing her daily chores, her mother cooked a midday meal for the field hands as they helped with the harvest.

So they lived and worked on their land.

Her mother was probably tough as nails.

And that's how I saw our mom.

Tough yet gentle.

Tough like her mom and gentle like her dad.

She was the youngest of six children.

Evie, her oldest sister, was 20 years old and working in Kansas City when mom was born.

Her brothers were Roy and Jay, sisters Vivian and Wanda, and then four years later they surprised the family with baby Ellery.

She had no middle name, just Ellery.

Those were the days when things were kept pretty private, so her young siblings had no idea that they would wake up one morning to find a baby sister in a blanket basket in the kitchen.

Mom loved to talk about her life on the farm, and it was very evident that those experiences shaped her into the person we loved and called our mom.

Mom described herself in those early years as being a tomboy type.

who loved to work out, who loved to be outdoors except for the critters.

She didn't really enjoy cooking or cleaning or household duties, although she always did her share.

She walked or rode her horse, Old Dan, to her one-room schoolhouse for grades one through 8, a distance about 1 1/2 miles.

Could I get a tissue?

I feel it coming on.

She loved to talk about the huge deep snows they often had in the winter and how in the end of the school day, she would walk to the barn, untie old Dan, and lead him to the school, thank you, to the schoolhouse steps so that she could get on him.

He was so big and tall, she couldn't even get on her horse without help.

After mom graduated from high school, she went to Kansas City and spent a semester at UMKC.

But her heart soon brought her back home.

She said her dad was having trouble finding anyone to help with the farm due to the war.

And while he had never before let his girls work the fields, she talked him into letting her come home, which she did to help.

And she did that 1944 through September of 1945.

That's when she buried our dad.

Dad was stationed in Del Rio, Texas at the time, so she took a train to San Antonio where Dad had rented a room in a private home.

He picked her up at the train station, took her by streetcar to the room where she changed into a nice

white dress, street dress, with navy accessories.

He was in his uniform and they took another streetcar and went straight to the Baptist church, which dad had previously made arrangements and they were married with two church members as witnesses.

He was soon discharged and they eventually moved to Kansas City where they made their home and mom became a dedicated housewife.

In many ways, what made her unique was she continued to work

like a little farm girl, only in the city.

When we were children, we remember how she painted our homes, inside and out, stained the woodwork, put up wallpaper.

There was no household repair that she would not attempt to do.

She sewed our clothes for many years.

She cut our hair.

We remember that.

She even spray painted two cars.

One of which was later sold to a church member here at Nall.

We won't say who.

Nothing was too hard for mom to tackle.

She taught herself to a poster furniture and taught ceramic classes in her basement for many years, which many of these members, church member ladies attended.

In her spare time, she enjoyed volunteering for Meals on Wheels.

Mom was always busy.

She recycled things before it was a popular thing to do.

I remember how she bundled up newspapers and sold them to the veterinarians around the city.

She saved cans, aluminum foil, glass bottles, whatever she found that she thought could be

recycled.

She was definitely ahead of her time in that.

She loved to work with her hands and loved to build things like rabbit cages, dog pens, dog houses, and even a big playhouse with a wooden floor for us kids.

It had little storm windows that dad had as samples when he sold storm windows.

He even had little awnings over those two windows, which were samples from when he sold awnings.

Most of mom's activities were done without my dad's participation, except I think when they built the playhouse he helped.

It was decided it would be a good idea to build it in the garage where they were sheltered from the weather, but when it was all finished, guess what?

It was too heavy to move.

So they had to drag it around using the car somehow.

I don't know how they did it, but eventually they got it into the backyard where we loved to play in it for many years.

Dad had not grown up on a farm, so that physical work

ethic was mom's, not his.

He worked hard, but it was not physical.

He used to say he would let mom do whatever she wanted to do.

He would just provide her with the best equipment so that he could afford for her to do it.

Mom was more about work than play.

My siblings and I laughed today about how mom would only let us do one fun thing a day.

Some of us

Some of us think it was more like one fun thing a week.

So instead of letting us go to the swimming pool as much as we would like, we got to blow bubbles in the sink.

But we thought it was kind of fun.

At least it was something to do other than just watch mom work.

Sundays were different.

That was mom's day to rest.

We attended Sunday school and church in the morning and also in the evenings.

Her life definitely revolved around her faith, her church, and her family's needs.

Mom developed rheumatoid arthritis in her 60s and had severe eye problems in her late 70s and early 80s, which eventually resulted in her blindness.

Many people did not realize what was going on with her as she was very private and never complained.

Many of us kids, including myself, were busy with our own lives

And we didn't realize all that she was managing on her own after dad died.

She just did what mom always did.

She just continued to work.

So as she was grieving the loss of her husband or dad, she took on the task of building a fence to replace the old 40-year-old hedge that had ran along her property.

After digging out the hedge all by herself, she dug the post holes

strung the wire to build the new fence, and at this time she was in her mid-70s.

Also about that time she decided to put in a new ceiling in her basement.

All this by herself and without even telling us about it.

As she became aware of her oncoming blindness, she decided to rebuild the stairwell going to the basement.

She wanted to add paneled walls,

So she had to take off each step, shave it down to accommodate the smaller width.

Then she carpeted the stairs and added a big white strip of white tape on the end of each step so she could see them better.

So she was preparing for her blindness.

She busied herself for quite a while making accommodations around her house to eventually go blind and also to help her function around the house with her arthritic hands.

She mowed and cared for her own yard until she was almost totally blind.

She once chuckled how someone stopped by to the front of her house as she was working in the yard, and he yelled out and said, How old are you?

They couldn't believe she was doing what she was doing, and she just laughed and thought it was so funny.

I remember several...

I remember several years after dad died, his dog Teddy got sick and died.

I called mom that afternoon from work to see how she was doing and she said that Teddy had died.

He was a big golden retriever and very heavy.

So I told her how sorry I was and said, Joan, I'll be over as soon as we can to help you get him to the vets.

She proceeded to tell me not to worry.

She had already dug a big hole in the backyard and buried him.

She had realized he was dying, and she just started digging.

I could go on and on with the stories that she shared, like how her mother, along with her siblings, disassembled a neighbor's wagon and reassembled it on the rooftop of their barn as a prank on Halloween.

So those people worked hard, but they also knew how to have fun.

I also remember laughing a few months ago as mom shared a childhood memory of how 20 to 30 of her friends, men, women, and children, had all ridden down to, ridden some 100 miles to Kansas City to spend a day at Fairyland Park.

They had all piled into a big hay truck, sat on bundles of hay, and hired someone to drive them down.

Even her big sister, who was working at a bank in Kansas City, met up with them at the park and joined in the fun.

I still giggle when I envision how that all would have looked.

And they just were such down-to-earth good people just having a day of fun.

Then they all piled back in the truck and went home.

So in summary, mom was always a little farm girl at heart.

She worked hard, but she loved to laugh.

I'm so thankful for the many years I had getting to know her, not as my mom, but as a wonderful person that she was.

And growing up, I was always a daddy's girl.

He was funny, easygoing, left most of the discipline to mom.

He was just fun.

I remember the joy of seeing him walk into a room.

I just gravitated towards him.

But mom was different.

She was mostly serious.

So I thank God for the years that I've had with my mom, particularly after dad died.

We lived life together for many years, and as she aged and needed assistance, it just became a natural progression to care for her.

Not long ago, she said to me, she said, it's like I'm becoming your little girl and you are my mom.

Many times I got glimpses of how she must have been as a child.

She was very childlike in many ways as she grew older, always very sweet, but she remained tough at the same time.

She was afraid of storms, probably because she'd experienced at least one tornado on the farm, and they had to use an axe to get out of the cellar, and there had been extensive damage.

She was afraid of water.

She and one of her sisters tried to swim,

tried to take swimming lessons as adults, but neither of them could even float ever.

So I guess as young farm girls, the only water around they had was the river water, and that didn't

appeal to them.

So as she got older, she didn't even like shower water in her face.

She was very frugal, as she knew what it was like to do without or to have little.

She lived through the Dust Bowl, the Great Depression,

World War II.

So in almost 101 years, she had seen it all.

And she saved everything.

And now we have to figure out what to do with it.

Mom loved to talk about the little country church that she attended.

It was the Long Branch Church started in 1864 with a country cemetery that dated back into the 1790s.

It was a little one-room church that couldn't afford a full-time preacher.

They attended Sunday school every Sunday as long as they could get on, drive on the little dirt Rd.

that if it didn't get too muddy because it has a big hill they had to go up.

They only had a preacher once a month and on those Sundays they called it preaching Sundays.

They both, they had both a morning and an evening service.

Mom reported that little church had produced 7 preachers that she could name, and she didn't know how many had might have come before that.

Her brother Roy was one of those preachers, and he was ordained at the age of 17.

She made her own profession of faith around 12 years of age at one of the revival meetings and was baptized in the Grand River.

And that was probably the first and the last time she ever got her face wet.

I'm sure of that.

She remained a strong woman of faith.

She loved Jesus and trusted him throughout her difficult years.

She never really complained, just accepted it and moved on.

She knew where she was going when she would die and trusted Jesus to get her through whatever situation she was in, and he always did.

God blessed mom with a strong mind that lasted until he took her last breath.

When she became blind and couldn't read, do puzzles, watch TV, or do any of the things she enjoyed, she couldn't even see her grandchildren's face past their baby years.

So she listened to audiobooks.

So I tried to keep track of the titles so not to repeat the ones we got from the library, and that list is now approaching just under 2,000 books that she listened to these past 15 years or so.

I forgot to mention that Mom, several years ago, Mom wrote out, by hand, she wrote out a record of her life, which was later typed up by her nephew, Gary, as her hands had become so arthritic, she couldn't type.

That little book is sitting on the memory desk, a table out in the foyer.

And as I was perusing through it the other day, one paragraph caught my attention and she said, I think it was on page 39, she said,

God gave us such a wonderful gift when he created us with the ability to remember.

And he really blessed her with that.

But an even greater gift was one of being able to forgive and forget.

She said, how wise he was to create families to love.

So as you go through life,

Try to create good memories to the best of your ability because the road of regret is a very rough Rd.

I couldn't believe my mom was right and stuff like that.

A few months back, mom mentioned how her mom had told her as an adult that she had been her little jewel.

And I could tell mom felt really good about that.

So I'm here today to declare that mom was my little jewel as well.

And I'm going to miss her.

She left me with one memory I will never forget.

The night before going to hospice, she got tickled at how dry her mouth had become and she could barely talk.

She tried to talk and we both started to laugh.

We laughed until I cried.

She stopped for a minute and asked if I had taken a picture of us laughing because I always had my camera and taking pictures.

And I said, no, I didn't think that would have been respectful.

And she paused a minute and she said, I think you better.

And she started to laugh again so I could capture it all in a little video.

So she's the only person I know who was brave enough and confident in her faith to get the giggles before she went into the hospice care the next morning.

She was definitely one-of-a-kind.

So Mom would be disappointed if I didn't stop here to thank everyone that had visited, phoned, sent cards to her over the years as she became more and more housebound.

It meant so much for her to be remembered.

Also, I want to have a big thank you to my siblings, Connie, Rita, and Phil, who did all they could to help in her care.

Several times throughout the past year, Connie and Rita traveled by air from their homes in Arizona and Texas to spend a month with mom to allow me to go home and spend some time in my own home.

But the biggest thank you of all is to my husband, Joe.

You were an amazing partner.

In walking alongside me for these many years, he did the plumbing.

put in new appliances, fixed sinks, changed light bulbs, fixed ceiling fans, repaired toilets, shower tiles, put in a new bathroom sink, took out old carpeting.

The list was endless.

He rearranged all of his schedule around what I needed him to help me with, mom, and I'll never

forget that.

I remember it commenting to mom, what would we do without Joe?

And she simply said,

We could not do without him.

So thank you for everything.

In my father's house are many mansions

If it were not true, he would have told me so.

He has gone away to live in that bright city.

He's preparing me a mansion there I know.

When your friends have turned you down And left you lonely In this world you're all alone And oh
so blue Turn your thoughts away from sin To Jesus only

A new life and friendship suite he'll give to you.

Do not shun the Savior's love from up in glory.

Or you won't be there to sing the gospel story.

In my Father's house are men.

many mansions.

If you're true, then to this land you'll surely go.

Jesus died upon the cross to bear my sorrow.

Freely died that souls that die might have new life.

But I know there soon will come a bright tomorrow when

And the world will all be free from sin and strife Do not shun the Savior's love from up in glory Or
you won't be there to sing the Gospel story In my Father's house are made

If you're true, then to this land you'll surely go.

If you're true, then to this land you'll surely go.

You heard Carol talk about Ellery's faith.

She shared with me that there were a couple of verses, Ellery had a lot of favorite verses, but there were some that was pretty special to her.

One group of verses is 2 Corinthians 4, 16 through 18.

These were among many of Ellery's favorite.

After a study of these verses and hearing about her life, especially in her latter years, I believe I know why she was drawn to these particular verses.

As I read these verses here in just a second, I want you to listen to the themes in each of, there's three verses.

Listen to the themes in those verses and apply those to Ellery, attribute those to Ellery, or Ellery received a lot out of those three verses, and it influenced how she lived her life, the way Carol was talking about.

It says, Therefore, we do not give up, even though our outer person is being destroyed.

Our inner person is being renewed day by day.

For our momentary light of affliction

is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory.

So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen.

For what is seen is temporary, and what is unseen is eternal.

And I'll speak to those here in just a second.

In verse 16,

This is our outward person, our earthly body is being destroyed.

It's wasting away each day.

And the older you get, the more you feel that and the more you believe that, because that is what's happening.

But we do not lose heart, and Ellery did not lose heart.

We do not live, we do not give up because our inner self, our spirit, is being renewed each day by Christ.

This renewal is not a gradual process each day that we go through.

It is a full battery charge each new day.

Our daily renewal gives us a fresh perspective to face each new day no matter the difficulties we experience.

The inward renewal overcomes the outward destruction and ultimately overcomes even death itself.

Verse 17, even viewed from the perspective of eternity, the Christian's life difficulties are light in comparison.

Light in comparison to the glory of heaven.

And that's where she knew that she was going to find that glory.

And so that's what helped her to go through each day.

The apostle Paul states in Romans 8, 18,

The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

In verse 18 it says, therefore our inner renewal involves keeping our eyes on Christ and eternity.

That which is unseen, that which is unseen, that's our hope, that's Christ, that's eternity, that is the promised land.

That which is unseen, instead of fixing our eyes on what is seen, which are the difficulties and storms of life.

Ellery could have spent all of her time focusing on her difficulties, on the trials of life that she experienced, but she didn't.

She didn't.

What is seen, or the difficulties and the storms of life, are only temporary.

But what is unseen, our hope in Christ and our heaven home,

is eternal.

The context of these verses is that the Apostle Paul is encouraging the church at Corinth to live their faith in Christ no matter what difficulties life brings.

A glorious future in heaven with Christ is worth far more than the sufferings of this world.

I said earlier that I believe I know why Ellery was drawn to these verses.

First of all, Ellery knew Christ as her Savior.

Even though her life was a testimony of her faith, her life was difficult.

In her 80s, she began losing her vision and her hearing.

She didn't let these impairments dilute her love for Christ.

Like Paul encouraging the Corinthians, the Christians in Corinth, Ellery lived her faith in spite of the difficulties in her life.

She knew what a glorious future in heaven with Christ is worth far more than the sufferings of this world.

You see, Ellery identified with these verses.

She identified with the verses.

And Ellery lived these verses.

You're welcome to sing with me on this one.

When my way grows sweet

Precious Lord, linger near when my life is almost gone.

Hear my cry, hear my call.

Hold me close, lest I fall.

Take my hand, precious love, Lord, take my hand.

When the shadows appear and the night draweth near, and the day is past and gone,

At the river I stand.

Guide my feet, hold my hand, take my hand.

Precious Lord, lead me on.

Nearing life,

Journey's end, be my guide, be my friend.

Give me strength, Lord, to overcome.

I'll not go all alone, for by grace I'm thine alone.

Take my hand.

Precious Lord, lead me on.

Precious Lord, take my hand.

Lead me on, let me stand.

I am tired.

I am weak, I am warm.

Through the sun, through the night, lead me on to the light.

Take my hand, precious Lord, lead me on.

Please bow as we pray.

Holy God, you are the God of all comfort and mercy.

We have attempted to sincerely honor and celebrate Ellery's life, for she truly blessed each one she met.

May we hold our memories of her close to our hearts and never forget how she truly impacted our lives.

As we live out our remaining days, may we continue to honor Ellery by passing on to others the joy and the love that she so freely gave.

Now, O Lord, I lift up Ellery's family to you.

May they feel your comforting presence and know your perfect peace.

Surround them with your love, that they may not be overwhelmed by their loss, but have confidence in your goodness and strength.

Let them feel your presence and sustaining peace now and in the days ahead.

In Christ's name I pray.

Amen.

Let's sing her into heaven with all victory in Jesus.

Would you guys sing with me?

I heard an old, old story, how the Savior came from glory, how He gave His life on Calvary to save a

wretch like me.

I heard about His groaning, of His precious blood atoning.

Then I repented of my sins and won the victory.

Oh, victory in Jesus, my Savior forever.

He saw me and He bought me with His redeeming blood.

He loved me ere I knew Him and all my love is to Him He plunged me to victory beneath the
cleansing flood Well I heard about His healing of His cleansing power revealing How He made the
lame to walk again and cause

the blind to see.

And then I cried, dear Jesus, come and heal my broken spirit.

And somehow Jesus came and brought to me the victory.

Your victory in Jesus, my Savior forever.

He sought me and He bought me with His redeeming blood.

He loved me ere I knew Him and all my love is to Him.

He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood.

God bless y'all.