

## **Order of Worship**

**Prelude music – Margie Maestas**

**Welcome and Prayer – Jerry Koch**

**Thank you all for being here to join in remembering and giving thanks for Charles' life and ministry with us. Charles was, above all, a good and faithful servant – he took care of business in our congregation; he gently and faithfully loved his family. And he knew the correct answer to the question, "What is the best sport?" Baseball. More about that later. For now, let us pray:**

**Prayer: Our God of grace and glory, we remember and honor Charles today and we thank you for giving him to us to know and to love. By your compassionate presence, console us in our mourning. Inspire in us the confidence of a certain faith, the comfort of holy hope, and the peace which passes all understanding; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.**

**Memories from Roger and Greg Adams**

**To Charles' Family: The Presentation of Our Nation's Flag.  
SSgt Michael Travis, USMC (Ret)**

**Congregational Hymn: "O Beautiful for Spacious Skies." # 338**

**Scripture readings – Elizabeth Abraham**

**Psalm 23 (In unison)**

**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. Ye 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 annointest 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 forever.**

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-14:**

**But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep.**

**John 16:22:**

**So you have sorrow now, but I will see you again and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.**

**About Charles – Elizabeth Abraham**

**We are gathered here on this cold West Texas day to say our sad and love-filled good-byes to Charles and to give this gentle, giant of a man a most dignified and joyous send-off. Charles never met a stranger and his welcoming smile, genuine warmth and caring presence put others at ease and enabled him to always find a common ground and shared humanity with everyone he encountered. Charles loved life, was always open to a new adventure and a good time, treated people fairly and kindly, and early on learned that his bedrock faith, his cherished community of family and friends who loved him dearly from beginning to end, his strong work ethic, his congenial attitude and friendly demeanor would take him places, open doors, and allow him to generously use his gifts, resources and passions to leave our world a kinder, gentler, and more joy-filled place.**

**While it has been difficult to watch Charles navigate his cancer treatments and hospice experience, Charles was always upbeat, had a ready smile when we visited, and wanted to know what was going on in my life at that time. Charles told me he would be forever grateful for the watchful care and attentive presence Dedra gave to him throughout their years of marriage and in particular this last hard year. While Charles was not afraid of dying, he wanted to live as long as was possible extending his goal to read the most recent Bill O'Reilly book, see the latest WWII movie, watch the Cubs win the world series and stay up most of election night to know the final results! In addition to being interested in sports, history and politics, Charles was passionate about his family and his whole face would light up whenever he spoke about his four cherished grandchildren who have a few things to share about their Granddad and Papa.**

**Kaelyn said, "I remember when I was young, my granddad would come visit us in San Antonio during the summer. I remember going to Sea World with him and floating the lazy river for hours. We also went on the log ride and got soaking wet!! I also have fond memories of my time spent with him in Post. During the summers I would visit, and we always had so much fun! We went to Lubbock a few times to see movies and go to the mall. He loved going to Barnes and Noble. We would spend hours there reading and looking at books. I also remember going to Fredericksburg with him and buying fresh peaches and eating ice cream. One summer my granddad came with my family and me to Port Aransas and it was so great to be able to relax and spend time with him on the beach. I also remember my granddad coming to all of my dance recitals and my high school graduation and that was so special to me. He visited me during my first year at UT and I showed him around the campus and we went out to eat after."**

**Karly said, "There are many things that remind me of my Granddad and bring a smile to my face. My Granddad loved baseball and always had to have a baseball game on his TV. I will always remember entering the house and hearing the cheers of the fans from the Ranger games. To this day, I still laugh about my Granddad's choice of words. Every time I would get dressed up, he would say, "You look sharp!" Or when he was surprised at something, he would always say "Goodness!" I remember how happy my Granddad would get when I called him every Veteran's Day. My Granddad shared a loved for our country and the military. My Granddad was a caring person. He would always ask me about my grades and dance. During the twelve and a half years that I have known him, I can say that it is hard to see such a kind spirit gone, but I know that he has accomplished God's purpose for him on this earth."**

**Grant: What I remember most about Papa:**

- He was a great man; He had a big smile;**
- My Papa was very kind and always nice;**
- He was always willing to help;**
- He was very generous;**
- And he was extremely thoughtful.**
- The thing I enjoyed most doing with Papa was playing baseball with him.**

**Logan: What I remember most about Papa:**

- He was always happy and very peaceful
- He was a good Grandfather.
- What I loved doing with Papa:
  - Playing catch;
  - Hugging and laughing;
  - Keeping secrets;
  - Playing games and reading books;
  - Collecting baseball cards and sharing stories.

**Charles was born on March 25, 1938 in Alexander City, Alabama to Fitz Roy and Mary Frances Adams. Charles has a sister, Carol who is only 19 months younger and she told me that Charles was patient, friendly, kind and obedient from birth and teachers would ask Carol, “why can’t you be as good and quiet as your brother?” Charles and Carol grew up in the midst of World War II and even though their family was poor and food was rationed and they had no car, Carol remembers that she and Charles had an idyllic childhood playing Cowboys and Indians, walking to school and going to the movies, following the railroad tracks to their Grandmother’s house every Sunday afternoon after attending services at their church that had a Baptist service one Sunday and a Methodist service the next Sunday similar to what the Presbyterians and Christians have now in Post! Charles and Carol moved from Alabama to Sherman, Texas in 1952 when their father took a job with Burlington Industries and even though it was a tough transition, Charles always made the best of hard times and difficult situations and was thankful he was able to play varsity baseball and football at Sherman High School. Dedra said that recently when Charles was reflecting on his life, he told her that while he didn’t like it at the time, his family’s move to Texas was one of the best things that happened to him as it opened him up to meeting Dedra and made possible all the rest of his life’s adventures.**

**Charles was the first in his family to graduate from college and it was a big deal for him to receive a business degree from North Texas in 1961! Just before Charles was drafted into the United States Army, he and Dedra met one another on a double date they had with other people at a Sherman High School football game. Also at that time, when Charles visited his father at Burlington Industries, he was able to see Dedra who worked there to put herself through Austin College.**

**After Charles was stationed in Germany, he began sending letters to Dedra and during his two years in the Army, they fell in love with each other through their letters. Dedra is four years younger than Charles and her mother was worried that Charles would not want anything to do with her when he returned home. But when Charles was honorably discharged in November of 1963 and returned to Sherman to work at Burlington Industries, the love that had been nurtured in their letters would come to fruition when they were together. Dedra said, "I made a good catch and of course, both of my parents loved Charles to death by the time we married on July 17, 1964."**

**Dedra and Charles moved to Post in 1967 when Charles was transferred by Burlington Industries and had a wonderful life raising their two beloved sons, Greg and Roger. Charles never missed watching Greg and Roger play sports for Post High school, was an active participant in the Post Booster club and enjoyed coaching little league in the summers. Dedra said both boys grew up going to as many Texas Ranger games at Arlington stadium each season as was possible for them to attend. When Charles's job ended with the closing of Burlington Industries in Post, he went to work each day in Lubbock at the Texas Workforce Commission so the family could stay in Post!**

**Charles loved life, knew deep down that his life is truly a gift from God, and with a radiant smile and giving spirit. Charles always put the needs of others before his own. His brother-in-law, Ron told me, "Charles' Christian faith informed his values and the way he lived his life. He loved his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ and was truly a witness and example of the love of God that had nurtured and sustained him his whole life long. Charles's easygoing, polite, patient and gracious ways were always evident in his relationships, in the many community boards and organizations where he diligently served and in the various ways he ministered at this church through the years. Charles was so grateful that his neighbors, Jo Ann and Mike Travis, Sandee Cross and so many of you visited, brought food and were there for him and Dedra when they needed you most! Charles and Dedra were not used to asking for help and the care they received from this church, the Christian church and the greater Post community was indeed an affirmation of the love and sense of belonging they experienced here years ago!**

**It is fitting that Charles died during the Christmas season because Charles's life was seen most clearly through the lens of the love he so generously gave to others. Mother Teresa has said, "It is Christmas every time you let God love others through you." Charles's life was truly an affirmation of God's love and in his life's journey we see many humbling examples of how Charles allowed God's love to flow through him to others and truly make a difference in the lives of those he touched. As we give thanks to God for the gift of Charles Adams, may our remembrances of his unique, love-filled and authentic ways, open us to the love of God that brightly shines in our midst, brings healing, meaning and hope to each of us along the way when we need it most, and illumines our joyful purposes and grand adventures from beginning to end!**

**"Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me and the God of peace will be with you always." Philippians 4:6-9**

**Congregational Hymn: "In the Garden." (Insert).**

**Scripture readings and Sermon – Jerry Koch  
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8:**

**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 cast 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 cast away; a time to rend, 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.**

**Charles loved all things sports – Texas sports in particular. Post Antelopes. Texas Tech. SMU. UT. TCU. And (sigh), the Cowboys.**

**For everything – every sport - there is a season; for Charles, the spirit of every season was baseball, and his first team among equals was the Texas Rangers.**

**People who know and love baseball bring some of it to every other part of their lives. Their world-view, lifestyle, and character. Baseball is a metaphor for who Charles Adams was to all of us.**

**Charles knew – and he lived this way his whole life - what baseball people know. Life, like baseball, is a team sport. Not everybody can pitch or should try; not everybody can hit leadoff or should try. But everyone should – and Charles did – try to do what and all we can and find our niche.**

**Charles was in the lineup every day with a whole bunch teams in this town. Sometimes he was the cleanup hitter and captain – in this congregation for instance. And also relief pitcher. Pinch hitter. Third base coach. Statistician. For such groups as Meals on Wheels. Library board. Post Economic development. Trailblazers. He also had a special affinity for Post Cares. Because he cared deeply. For all things good. For all things Post. For all of us.**

**I suspect he had that mindset of caring all along, but perhaps had it set in stone while serving his country – and all of us – in the US Army. Which is definitely among the first teams of all teams in America. He quietly conducted himself with honor, and lived with the pride of having answered the call to be part of something where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Team sport. Team player.**

**Baseball people also know that life, like baseball, has adversity built into its essence. Adversity is not something that might happen if you have a bad day; it is part of what constitutes the game and the game of life. If a major league batter gets a hit one out every three times up for a career, he's in the Hall of Fame. So two thirds of the time, the very best have to deal with curveball strikeouts, great plays in the field against him, and even his own moments of ineptitude.**

**Charles and Dedra came to Post in the heyday of the Burlington Mill. A heyday which came and went – as do most heydays. So Charles**

changed teams and brought his skills and character to the Texas Workforce Commission. Out of adversity which is built in and inevitable, Charles found another niche, which – and I looked this up – seems almost heaven sent. The Core Values of the Texas Workforce Commission are as follows:

- Our employees are our greatest asset.
- We commit to excellence in everything we do.
- We treat people with respect and dignity and in a fair and equitable manner.

We strive to be an innovative, flexible and learning organization.

That sound like anyone you know? You think he made his work matter to real people who needed more excellence, respect, dignity, and innovation in their lives?

I know he did because I know how deeply he loved. He loved. His country. His community. His church. His family. And love is what sees us through adversity and doubles our joy. I can't say I know the details, Greg and Roger, but I'm pretty sure your Dad saw you – metaphorically now – strike out with the bases loaded. With shortcomings of skill and character. And he also saw – because I suspect he led you there – he saw you overcome the moment, learn from it, and grow beyond it.

Dedra – and since he was a numbers guy I actually I did the arithmetic on this – Charles spent two thirds of his life married to you. And he spent the first third, I suspect, looking until he found you. I know that 52 years of marriage will give you all of everything you signed up for at your wedding – better and worse, richer and poorer, sickness and health. Adversity built into the system. But so also the promise – and the reality - to love and to cherish. Don't you love that word – cherish? To cherish someone is to understand that every time you hold hands, you touch a treasure. That's why it's so hard when – as you knew it would and cheerfully decided it would be worth it – 'til death you do part. I've known you both for 22 years and I know that you know it was worth it. Love always is. It's the only thing that is – when it really matters.

Finally, baseball people know that in life, like baseball, it's never

about the last at bat, the last pitch, the last game; there's always the NEXT game.

Cub fans this past season waited until next year for 108 years. Until there it was. When the playoffs started last Fall, both the Rangers and the Cubs were there. Both Charles and I were hoping for our teams to match up in the World Series. And though that wasn't to be, Charles became a Cub fan at the last, (And aren't we all, just a little bit.)

We're all just a little bit a fan of hope. Even when hopes seem dim. Charles knew the hope for beating cancer was pretty dim from the start. But he lived with hope anyway. Hope as in, there's good to be found in this day. He went to Vegas. He put his house and his church in order. He followed his teams and laughed and loved as much as he could. He perked up talked to you, Kaelyn, on the phone, just a couple of days before his death.

So the hope embedded in every next day, for baseball, for us, and even for Charles, doesn't depend on things working out like we want them to. Hope is rooted in what we leave within those we love, and what they carry forward, even if that eventually means without us in person.

Hope in the next day for all of us now us takes the form of his most prized legacy – the people who carry the experience and energy of his love. His values. His character. Dedra. Carol. Greg and Melinda. Kaelyn and Karly. Roger and Lisa. Grant and Logan. God made you – God made your Dad and your Papa – because God loves stories. Especially the story that becomes you on the next day. The next game, The next time up.

One verse from Paul's last letter to his beloved apostle Timothy: "I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith."

I'm told Greg asked Charles "What are you going to do when you meet Jesus?" Charles said, without a blink or even much thought, "I'm going to shake his hand."

**Of course he did. I've received several thousand handshakes from Charles over the years. Each given with a step forward, a big smile, words of kindness and hope. Sometimes with both hands and extra energy. That's among my most vivid and cherished memories I have of my friend.**

**I'm sure Jesus will never forget it - that first one with Charles - and will look forward to thousands more. And I'm speculating here but not without hope or warrant. I'm thinking Jesus returned that big smile with his own solid grip and grin. With if not these exact words, certainly some to this effect:**

**"Welcome Charles." You're safe." "Safe at home." Amen.**

### **Prayer, Lord's Prayer, and Benediction**

**God of all grace, you sent your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, to bring life and immortality to light. We give you thanks because by his death Jesus destroyed the power of death and by his resurrection has opened the kingdom of heaven to all. We pray that we might be ever more certain that because he lives we shall live also, and that neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come shall be able to separate us from your love which comes to us in Christ Jesus, who taught us to pray together:**

**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 debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

**To Honor Charles - Go into the world in peace. Have courage. Hold onto what is good. Return to no-one evil for evil. Strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, help the suffering. Honor all people. Speak and act with love on your lips and in your heart.**

**For it is into your hands O merciful Savior that we commend Charles, your servant. Acknowledge him we pray, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into**

**the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company  
of all the saints in light. Amen.**

**Let us go in Peace.**

**Postlude music -- Margie Maestas**