

**Order of Worship honoring the life and memory of
Alta Jane Davis. July 23, 2016**

Prelude music

Welcome, opening remarks:

I want to thank everyone for being here and welcome you on behalf of First Christian Church and all the people who knew and loved Janie. And Janie loved you and her community. The list of groups and organizations to which she belonged is too long for the newspaper. To wit:

Let us pray:

Prayer: Our God of grace and glory, we remember and honor Janie today and we thank you for giving her 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.

From Laura:

People often look at life as two dates with a dash in between 2/4/1935 - 07/18/2016 the dates are special but what is even more special than the dates is the dash in between. The dash

symbolizes her life, and boy she made her dash count, with love and laughter everyday.

Alta Jane Davis also known as Janie, mom, grandmother or in my case Gmomma. I could stand up here and tell stories about her all day but most of all of you in this room know them all. There are so many wonderful things about her we wouldn't have enough time in the day to list them all. A couple words that would describe her best is loving, caring, strong, courageous and kind. She Was a loving kind woman of God who truly loved and cared for everyone. She was beautiful woman inside and out. Gmomma had a pure heart and was always thinking of others. She was a woman of many traits and there was nothing she could not do. She had love and passion for life and wonderful presence about her, in her company you Always felt welcomed and loved. She loved her family and friends more than anything in this world and always let us know how special we were to her. Even in the last days of her life she was still thinking of everyone else and remained her true sweet self. I believe with all my heart heaven is a more beautiful place with her there. One thing she wanted everyone to know is that she lived a long full wonderful life and wouldn't change one thing. I Once heard that death was not the period at the end of the sentence but merely just the comma. And I know that after her comma is her glorious life with our

savior.

She will be missed dearly every day but we know we have one amazing guardian angel watching over us and though she may not be here physically she will always live on in our hearts.

From Leanna:

From Luke:

Grace is often defined as God's unmerited favor shown upon his children. God sent his Grace to earth in the form of a man, Jesus Christ. His Grace shows us that no matter how many mistakes we make or how bad we can act, He still loves us for who we are and not just what we do.

Throughout my life, I've often found that God has placed people in my life to show me specific pictures of his amazing personality. I've often told my mom, that to me, she is my picture of strength in this world. But, there was one that showed me the portrait of Grace and that was my Grandmother.

It didn't matter who you were, how many mistakes you made, or how bad you might act...when you were around her, you knew you were loved. But, not only that, she treated all with favor. She was constantly thinking about how to make those

around her know they were loved and know that they were taken care of. She treated us all with pure Grace.

Even in her very last days, she was absolutely more concerned about us than she was her. In the hospital, she said multiple times, over and over, that she loved us and reminded us how good our family life has been. She was proud of her family and proud of the love we have for each other. She so loved Granddad and wanted to make sure he was taken care of....she even asked to make sure he had come to the hospital with a clean shirt. My mom told her he had...until lunch – and she laughed. Despite her state, we heard her laugh several times those last days. Yes, she laughed because we were trying to lift her spirits, but I think she also laughed to let us know that she was ok.

And, she was and is more than ok now. She was ready to go be with her Lord and Savior. She told us many times that she was ready to go. I think she was ready because she knew that Heaven was where she truly belonged. In Heaven, she's in her element. Jane Davis in heaven is like a fish in water and I know she feels so at home now.

To our family, I want to remind you to be strong and stay encouraged by her memories. Yes, she's gone and we've shed many tears because of that.

But, I think what really gets to me the most is when I look around at all of our faces and see just how much of her is still here.

She'll always be my picture of Grace. She knew how loved she was by Christ. She knew how much Grace He shined down on her and because of that she freely gave it to every single life that she was around. As a family, we will continue her legacy of Grace. We'll do it to honor her but we'll also do it because she showed us the way. And, I know, with each act of kindness we can do for others, her spirit will sing in Heaven.

Grandmother knew how blessed, favored and loved she was by her heavenly Father and by her family. She knew how blessed and loved she was by Granddad. She knew....for 60 years and 7 months. And, that was the secret to her kindness and love for others.

Freely we've received and freely we give. It's how Grandmother lived each and every day.

We'll never forget her face, we'll never forget her embrace and we'll never forget her heart. She will live on in each and every one of us forever. And for that, I am so comforted.

Today we mourn and will continue to shed tears, but the sun will rise tomorrow and the next day

and the next. That warmth that you feel when it does...that's her. The smiles you see, the laughter you hear, the hugs, the random acts of kindness you give and receive....that's her.

How blessed we were to know her and have her as a part of our life. Keep your head up family...that's what she would want. Keep being good to others...that's what she would want. And, cling to each other...that's what she would want.

We love you Grandmother and we absolutely know that we will see you again one day in the presence of our heavenly father.

Congregational hymn: "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus." # 190.

Scripture readings

Psalm 121

I lift up mine eyes unto the hills. From whence cometh my help?

My help cometh from the Lord, who made the heavens and the earth.

He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand.

The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

The Lord will watch over your going out and your coming in from this time forth and for evermore.

Psalm 23

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.

John 14:1-3.

Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so would I have told

you that I go and prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to myself, that where I am, you may be also.

Congregational hymn: “Have Thine Own Way.” #588.

About Janie – Rev. Elizabeth Abraham.

We have gathered here today to say our sad and love-filled good-byes to Janie and to give this big-hearted, fun-loving and most kind woman with much beauty, determination and spunk a most proper send-off. We are still in shock that Janie went to the hospital on Thursday, July 14th and was gone from this life just four days later – two Sundays ago, Janie sat in her pew beside Bud with her welcoming presence and big infectious smile that lit up her whole being and everyone knew she was most at home when she was either in church or with her family!

While we were not in the least ready to let her go so soon, Janie was ready and preparing her loved ones for her quick departure. On Saturday morning, she called Bud, her four daughters and two grandchildren to her side and told them each how much she loved them and how she had had a truly incredible life and didn't want them to be upset because she was ready to go and be with

her Lord. She kept asking, “is Michael here yet?” and was so glad to be able to speak to him on Sunday when he was still in “Ha-why-ya” as Janie always called it! Janie told Laura’s husband, Logan that she was tired of fighting and she told Laura she wanted her to have a baby! Janie was worried in the hospital that she had been neglecting Bud and she held Bud’s hand and said, “we sure had a good ride, didn’t we?!” Janie always knew what others needed and was the consummate caregiver to the end!

We are humbled by Janie’s can-do attitude and devotion to loved ones, and we are in awe of the remarkable way she packed so much hospitality, hard work, and sense of delight into her living. Janie loved life, lived her many years on this earth her way, cherished her relationships with family and friends and knew deep down that life was truly a gift from God. In this church, Janie found a sense of home and a place of belonging that renewed her spirit and purposes, and refreshed her life. I believe Janie would be so grateful that we have gathered here and would want us to give thanks for the marvelous gift of life she had been given. While Janie’s passing truly marks an end of an era, the unique ways she lived and loved will forever inspire us to live life faithfully and passionately as Janie did--always with compassion, kindness and much dedication! Janie has left us a bountiful legacy and continues

to remind us how the bonds of family, faith, and friendship sustain our lives and nurture our souls over the long haul of our living.

Alta Jane was born in Pampa, Texas on February 4, 1935 to Carol and Sherman Prichard. Her father never missed a day of work for the Santa Fe Railroad and when Janie was three, her mother died shortly after the birth of a son who also died. Sherman raised Janie and Jim with the help of a dear woman whom they affectionately called, Aunt Ruby. Early on, Janie knew hardship and grief and perhaps this helped to not only strengthen her faith in our loving God but also made particularly sensitive to the pain and needs of others and gave her the holy resolve to be there for others in the darkest of times.

Janie was always very close with her older brother, Jim who eventually introduced her to Bud! Bud met Jim at the Disciple's Student Fellowship when they were freshmen at Texas Tech and Bud kept hearing about Jim's beautiful little sister who was coming to Texas Tech the next year. I think it is truly remarkable and so sweet that Bud remembers the date that he finally got the courage to kiss Janie for the very first time—May 7, 1954 after five or six weeks of dating her! Janie spent one year at Texas Tech and told Bud she always thought she was supposed to marry a preacher and she felt she just had to go

to TCU and see what happened. After a few months they were both very lonely and Janie soon came to trust that Bud was the one for her! They were married on December 29, 1955 in Pampa and began their sixty year adventure of love, family, faith and devotion!

Janie truly loved life and her family and began the tradition of celebrating the 40th birthday of her four daughters. As Bud said, “Janie and the girls planned their trips and went on them together and I stayed at home and paid for their fun!” Carol was the first to turn forty and her trip to San Antonio with her mother and sisters was a complete surprise! Bud and Janie kidnapped Carol from school and Bud’s women all flew to San Antonio, stayed at a hotel on the river walk and got glamour shots! The next year for Christy’s celebration, the five Davis girls went to Las Vegas and stayed at Caesar’s Palace in a large room with a round bed and mirrors on the ceiling! For Leanna’s birthday, they went to New York City and toured the Statue of Liberty, ate at an unforgettable Irish pub and indulged Janie in delicious food and the ethnic atmosphere of an “Eyetalian” restaurant as Janie called it! When Cathy turned forty, Carol turned fifty and it was decided that the whole family including Bud and son-in-laws and grandchildren would go on a three night cruise in the Gulf of Mexico and I dared not ask for details of that trip!

Janie truly loved being a wife and mother and spoiled Bud and her girls all rotten! When her daughters were little, Janie sang them to sleep at night and fixed their favorite foods of banana pudding, beef stroganoff, pea salad and Michaels' favorite, broccoli cornbread. Janie was a leader of the Girl Scout's in Post for decades and always organized the Girl Scout cookie sale. Bud told me one of the few times that Janie cussed at him was when he ate a lot of the cookies and Janie very matter of factly said to him, "Now Bud, you can eat all the cookies you want but you are going to pay for every damn one of them!"

Janie was always on the watch for anyone who might benefit from her love and care. In 1967 Janie took two young mothers, Dedra and Linda, under her wing when they were expecting their first children. Dedra said, "Janie had us to her home to learn how to bathe a baby as she knew we needed help. Linda and I learned the correct way by watching Janie bathe Cathy and then she allowed us to bathe Cathy while Janie advised us. It was over 48 years ago but I still remember her patience and love!"

Wanda Cox said, "More than nearly anyone I have ever known, Janie Davis was a person in whose life I saw the love of God demonstrated fully and beautifully. The consistency of her faithfulness in

the little things is what set her apart. Wordsworth once said, “The best measure of a good person’s life is in the little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love.” Janie’s small acts of kindness and love set her apart and impacted the lives of many people.

I have so many precious memories of the time I was privileged to spend with Janie. We attended CWF together, and we co-hosted meetings and parties. We attended church together, as well as monthly church business meetings. (The latter always ended with good food and fellowship at Dairy Queen!) After I quit driving after dark, Janie faithfully provided me transportation for everything that occurred at night. It was difficult to leave church friends when we moved to the San Antonio area, but that move was made easier by delightful visits from Janie and Bud when they were here seeing family. It was always so good to see them! Janie possessed the gift of compassionate caring. She was pleasant, joyful, accepting, and non-judgmental. I loved her dearly. I am thankful to God for her life and for the wonderful privilege of having her for a friend.”

Janie received much comfort, strength and reassurance from the relationships she had with her beloved family, her many dear friends, and her loving God. Her Christian beliefs and her faith in our forgiving and generous Lord sustained her in

times of great loss and difficulty, and comforted her from beginning to end. While Janie's death fills us with sadness, her grand presence in our midst leaves us with great reminders of the significance family, friendship and faith have in our lives. Although Janie's journey through this life is now complete, her loving presence will continue to give us strength, fond memories, many smiles and an enduring sustenance for each of us on our own sacred journeys. Janie left us on Monday with a lot of life in her years and a lot of love, peace, gratitude, and joy in her heart.

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace, Where there is hatred, let me sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope; Where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy; O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.” Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & LORD'S PRAYER

God of Life, Death, and Resurrection, we gather today to give you thanks for Janie Davis, for the gift of her life and for the many ways her faithful and devoted presence will encourage each of us to make the most of our limited time here on this earth. We ask that you will be with her family and friends in this time of grief -- offer comfort, strength, peace, love, and hope in ways that continue to affirm life and nurture faith. But we feel more than loss and sadness on this day. We realize, dear God, that our hearts are also filled with an essence of life we would not now have without our having loved and been loved by Janie. The gift of her very spunky presence and love-filled life, reminds us that it is not what we have left when all is said and done but rather it is what we give of our selves in the service of others as we go about our daily routines that truly makes us all more whole and more well.

We are grateful for the values, abundance, faith, friendship, care and nurture we have received from being a part of Janie's life. Thank you, God, for the gift of Janie and for blessing us through her. As we leave this church, may our sadness and grief be touched by a sense of the joy Janie had for life, for people, and for You, O Lord. May we be blessed by the remembrances we will always have and like Janie, may we be open to the adventure of life and the joy of the journey. In the

name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, we pray, “Our Father, ...Amen.

Congregational Hymn: “In the Garden.” #227.

Scripture and Sermon – Jerry Koch

Matthew 7:16 "By their fruits you shall know them.”

Seven words from the Gospel. Seven words of good news. “By their fruits you shall know them.”

When you know someone particularly well – when the fruits of their life, labors, and love, are obvious every day – all you need is a few words to capture their essence. For me – with Janie – all I need is two words: Quietly Kind.

Janie’s quiet kindness led her to and throughout this community. That extensive list we heard at the outset today represents thousands of moments of quiet kindness. Gentle decency. Abiding care. Love and devotion. We knew her by these fruits.

Janie was quietly kind.

Janie was quietly kind in her appreciation. Her appreciation of life, and her appreciation of you when she was around. Janie dropped by our

home to visit a month or so ago. A deeply felt quiet kindness to us. To see how things were. She had come to Lubbock to have her study Bible re-bound. Turns out that's much easier said than done around here, but the larger point comes in almost sideways. A major concern for her in putting the well worn and often read Bible back together was some assurance that the book-binder could retain the little tabs which she had installed to mark the beginning of each book in the Bible. Those were important because those tabs were a gift to her from Edna Owen. They sat side by side in Sunday School, and it was important for Janie that Edna know she was grateful for the gift, used them every day, and was even more grateful for the friendship out of which that little gift came. And for what it meant. Janie's concern for this small gift, and her love for the person who gave them to her, shows her quiet kindness – in appreciation. And here's the larger point. Pretty much anytime you saw or talked to Janie, you got the same message. With a smile, a few words, her little laugh. She appreciated the moment. She appreciated you. Janie. Quietly kind.

Janie was quietly kind also in her service to others. Quiet service, too. Exactly one week before her life ended, Janie quietly served during the rather chaotic registration process for clients of the Mobile Food Pantry. She made sure the

church was open. The air was on. And then she found a seat near to all the comings and goings. It didn't seem like she was doing anything especially dramatic. Unless, that is, you were the one with whom she made eye contact. Or saw her smile. Nod a greeting or a farewell. Offer a word or two of encouragement. These quiet kindnesses came to folks who she regarded as guests in her home. Many of whom live with little kindness. For them, there was Janie. Quietly kind.

Janie's quiet kindness is contagious. Her friends and family live with all the quiet kindness she gave us through the years.

Sometimes the quietly kind fall in love with the "forthright and decisive." Outgoing and direct. Isn't that right Bud?

They balanced. They were a team.

That's the upside to quietly kind and forthrightly decisive. The down side is that the quietly kind are sometimes overlooked or taken for granted. And sometimes the wheels fly off the forthright and decisive.

For 60 years and seven months, Janie was the axle on Bud's wheels.

So what now? It is our honor and our responsibility to keep the spirit of Janie's quiet kindness close in ourselves, and to honor her life by sharing it as we are called and able.

To all the grands and greats, in-laws and outlaws: Randy and Tim. Laura and Logan. Michael. . Luke and Laura. Kartelyn and Mason.

Bear fruit as vectors of kindness. In your work. At play. In love. Honor her legacy.

Lastly I think of "the girls." All of whom chose a calling to serve, and who do so with some of their Mother's quiet kindness. Christy in the healing arts. Comfort and care. Carol and Leanna in the classroom. Channeling their dad some, too, in the art of teaching and nurturing. Cathy tending to, and caring for, all the frequent and not so frequent fliers. At least some of whom, every day, are just aching to get home.

I think when the gravity of her health crisis last week became clear to her, she let them try a few things, until I suspect she'd had enough, and was aching to go home. Imagine. Maybe she heard her mother calling.

"I know you." I've known you for a long time. I've known you by your fruits. Your quiet kindness. Janie! Welcome home.

Amen.

Let us Pray:

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. Amen.

Janie's Benediction:

**May the silence of the hills,
The joy of the winds,
The peace of the fields,
The music of the birds,
The fire of the sun,
The strength of the trees,
And the faith of you –
In all of which is God –
Be in your heart.**

Let us go in Peace.

Postlude.