

**Committal Ceremony for Meagan Margerum-Leys
June 25, 2004**

Opening Words (from Remembering Well, p.137)

We are here to return the elements
That made up the body of Meagan Anna Margerum-Leys to the earth.
Earth, air, fire, and water,
Joined by the ligaments of the spirit,
The bindings of life and love.

Let reflection be our memorial garment today,
The bright sun our scripture text,
The birds our comforting choral anthem.

Blessed is this moment of transition and letting go.
Blessed be this sacred act.
Blessed is the mystery of life and death which is our own.

Gathering Words (from In Memoriam, p.67)

Today we face one of life's most difficult moments. We suffer a loss-the death of Meagan touches us deeply.

It is good to be together. More than anything else we need one another right now. Each of us grieves. And when we grieve together, the healing begins.

Just by being here each of us gives comfort to everyone else. If only for this hour we are joined as a compassionate family. Yes, it is good to be together.

At times like this, words frequently fall short of what we really want to say. Yet we find ourselves trying to express not just our grief, but also our joyful feelings for Meagan. We will recall our love for her and we will recall her love for us. And we also want to remember Meagan as she was-when we saw her face and knew her touch, listened to her sing and heard her speak.

Our words are like our tears, welling in our eyes until they are too full. Then they must stream and fall.

Readings

(Meagan's teachers read from Meagan's poetry)

Wind Poem (Read by Lisa Teshima, Meagan's second and third grade teacher)
Oh sprinkle with stardust the bright leaves of Autumn!
Catch them and snatch them and whirl them around!

Let them descend, then surprise them with gusto!
Blow them toward me for my poems of sound!

There I'll place them quite carefully,
Beautifully,
Artfully.
Spreading them so that they cover the ground.
Leaving them peacefully,
sleepfully, sleeping.
Underneath winter's soft snow-blanket's mound.

Sunrise (Read by Kevin Karr, Meagan's third grade math teacher and principal of her elementary school)

A willow tree bent down to touch
the waters of the lake.
And so silent was the breeze.
The willow tree, a queen of trees
Spread golden ripples in her wake.

Boulder (Read by Kevin Karr)

There you stand, stubborn.
You are in my path, yet I
Perhaps am in yours.

Blank Paper (Read by Cindy Wilson, Meagan's Grade 6-8 teacher)

The clouds open and. . .
A hundred thousand words!
Like snow they are falling
To the lips of the reader.
Catch them on your tongue!
Delight in the simple beauty of each
As they dance in the air around you.
Yes! They are unique.
Yes! They are perfect.
Yes! They are stars,
Melting before you even get a chance
to study them closely.
Or arrange them in orderly rows,
As your mother once did with your shoes.
(She doesn't anymore,
because you like them like your words.)
All over the page,
mixing as they please.
The green with the pink, the pink with the blue.
Yes! They do not match.
Yes! They go together.

Yes! They make you smile.
And you hope you will never have to go in
and warm your hands by the fire.
With your back turned away
From that beautiful blizzard.

Spring Sonnet (Read by Sandy Wahl, Meagan's seventh and eighth grade math teacher)

With January, and December too,
You often wonder if it shall be spring.
You often wonder: Will the sky be blue?
And: Will the robins ever start to sing?
Will snow melt into mud, and then to flowers?
Will trees begin to bud; will clouds be white?
Will April really, truly come with showers?
And will the day be longer than the night?
Then come with me, and sniff the frosty air!
For spring is really just behind the bend.
In February and in March it's there
A tingle, like an old forgotten friend.
So if you've ever given spring a doubt
Just wait a bit-the sunshine will come out.

Color Music Summer's Day

(Read by Margot Amrine, one of Meagan's high school teachers)

Color is the music singing in my soul.
First are clarinets-blue and mellow.
A cloudless sky on an August day.
Then French horns and cellos resound in a deeper indigo tone.
Night descends.
Brass is yellow
The morning comes
Flutes are pink
Early with small clouds:
The oboe is decidedly green.
A frog croaks from a nearby pond.
Violet and rose-colored hues flow from the violins, and the low brass blaze a deep orange.

Speakers

Ron Leys, Meagan's paternal grandfather
Dave Margerum, Meagan's maternal grandfather

Prayer

Spirit of Love-as Meagan reminded us all
And as ancient scripture testifies-
You are stronger than death.
You flow in our tears and in our embraces,
You flow in our memorial heartbeats
And hopeful vulnerability to all that is to come.
You enfold us on suddenly lonely nights with strong arms of thanksgiving
For every day we knew Meagan.
You trust us to learn to live without final answers.
You set us free every time we turn to face letting go, loss, and sorrow.
You reveal yourself every time we turn to another with respect, tenderness,
reliability, and care.
Death has none of your brightness or beauty.
And so thus we bless you, Spirit of Love, that you are with us in our troubles, and
in our transition. And we give thanks for your continuing presence in our lives.
Amen.

Time of quiet reflection and note writing

Committal

(from Remembering Well, p. 139)

Ashes to ashes,
Dust to dust,
Memory to memory,
Story to story,
Blessing to blessing,
Strength to strength,
Gratitude to gratitude,
Spirit to spirit,
Love to love.
The wheel turns ever,
And what came out of the earth
Returns to it now in peace.
The wheel turns ever,
Yet whatever love and grace and gift
We know from Meagan is at the center of that wheel,
The center which doesn't turn,
But remains as constant
As the flow of time.
Earth, air, fire, water,
Receive your own. We stint you not.
But leave us what is ours forever.

(from In Memoriam, p.93)

In committing Meagan's body to the hallowed ground of Earth and to the keeping of Eternity, we do so with deep reverence for the body as a creation of the Divine—a unique expression of an Eternal and Abiding, though Mysterious, Love.

Under the round dome of Eternity the earthly remains of Meagan shall rest in peace. This grave is consecrated by our memories of and our love for her, but even more by the person she was and the life she lived.

Spirit of Life and Love, Eternal God, the spirit of Meagan that filled our world with love and delight has become one with your Eternity. Grant to us who grieve this death forgiveness, a sense of comprehending compassion, and a meaning in which all things are understood and made whole. May the love in our hearts join us together in richer ways than before and, in time, lead us to the peace that passes understanding. We know that Meagan's spirit will always be with us—her love for us and our love for her will never die.

Offering of Words and Flowers

We have flowers gathered together from many different gardens, that represent the life and beauty and joy that we shared with Meagan, and that she has shared with us. We also have words and memories in our hearts, some of which have made their way onto paper. You are invited at this time to take one of the flowers, and place it on the coffin, if you wish saying a few words about Meagan. You are also invited if you have written a note to her or about her, to leave that in the grave. After you have walked by and offered any flowers, notes, or spoken words, we will join together in a circle. If you wish, you may simply join in the circle at the end without any words.

Join in a circle

Invitation to Dexter-Huron Metropark and to Memorial Service (July 5, 2 pm, First UU)

Everyone who knows Dona Nobis Pacem sings it

Closing Words

From a Jewish prayer book for the High Holy Days

When I die
If you need to weep
Cry for someone
Walking the street beside you.
And when you need me
Put your arms around others and give them what you need to give me.

You can love me most by letting
Hands touch hands, and
Souls touch souls.

You can love me most by
Sharing your Joys and
Multiplying your good deeds.

You can love me most by
Letting me live in your eyes
And not on your Mind.

And when you think of me
Remember what you have been taught,
Love doesn't die
People do.
So when all that's left of me is love
Give Me Away.

Go in peace – giving away love.