

Minister's Introduction

We are gathered together to celebrate the life of a beloved friend. Edward Lohmann was a true and a steady friend; his quiet commitment to building our community has given substance to all of our lives. Today, we will give expression of our deep gratitude for the privilege of having shared our lives with him.

For some, his beloved family and closest friends, this sharing took place over the course of many decades; for others of us, it may have been a single penetrating glance from across the room. It is not the length of time this sharing took place we think of today, but how precious it was, and how precious it remains.



Let us stand for a few moments and honor Edward with our prolonged presence.



How do you sum a man's life?

Ultimately it cannot be by any external facts or accomplishments.

At death, it is clear that only the great, central, internal accomplishment - the accumulated moments of presence - can have true significance.

"When C Influence enters our lives, we are given the task to live forever.*" The particulars of our days; the efforts we take upon ourselves; the people we touch; the accomplishments we may or may not achieve; these are not who we are. These are the elements of a play given to us that we may become immortal. Edward has now completed his play, and in every real sense he completed it perfectly; he is able to say now, *"I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."**

As Edward returns to the source, returns unencumbered to God, let us remember that we share the same passage. We follow in his footsteps.

Reading:

St Catherine of Siena

We work so hard to fly
and no matter what heights we reach
our wings get folded near a candle,
at the end, for nothing can enter God but Himself.

Our souls are some glorious substance of the divine
that no sentry wants to stop.

Live without thought of dying,
for dying is not a truth.

We have swayed on the sky's limb together,
many years there the same leaves grow.

* Robert Burton

* *John 17:4*

But then they get that look in their eyes
and bid farewell to what they disdained or cherished.

This life He gave the shell, the daily struggles we know,
sit quiet for a minute, dear, feel the wind,
let Light touch you.

Live without thought of dying,
For dying is not a truth.

Eulogy:

Timothy

Edward's request was that this Eulogy serve the living, and impress upon us the urgency of promoting presence. He wanted us to remember how time was fleeting faster than we want to think it is. During his last few weeks Edward fully accepted his play; he told Bonnie several times that he did not have a problem with what he had to endure. He enjoyed the contents of a fortune cookie that was shared with him shortly after being diagnosed. "Life consists not in holding good cards, but in playing those you hold well." There was no self-pity or negativity about what he was experiencing and Edward told a few friends that he was now experiencing more love, compassion and acceptance than ever. Robert frequently called him, and Edward's face would be lit with silent presence after each conversation. During the last difficult days he would sometimes wave away those who were with him so that he could better focus on being present.

There are many beautiful things that we can say about Edward's life, but perhaps what we remember most is his devotion and integrity to his family and friends. He arranged his life around awakening, while deeply valuing and enjoying his family life as loving husband to Bonnie and devoted father to Brandon and Monica.

Those less close to Edward might easily be unaware of his skills as a master juggler, balancing the many elements of his life with an elegant grace and an unassuming talent. Edward was devoted to supporting the school and Robert. At various times he served on the Boards of the Fellowship, Renaissance Vineyard and Winery, the Fellowship Council, and Apollo Arts. His being as a student and his business experience made him a valued contributor. Many students also remember him from his consistent visits to centers. As he told his family, the traveling required by his occupation made him a "road warrior" for over 30 years. Edward made great use of the opportunity to visit centers. He would intentionally plan to spend time with students even though it would be demanding to balance those visits, his business duties, and jet lag. He felt strongly that the students in these centers served as a refuge from the rigors of travel. He always looked forward to being with them, and they in turn valued the energy he brought to them.

We will remember his generosity, be it a fine wine for a special dinner, unexpected theatre tickets for his friends, a useful bit of advice in a time of need, or a well-timed tickle to create a memorable moment. He was consistently generous with his willingness to share his insights, and to listen to what others had found useful in their lives. He was passionate about putting into action the best of what he learned about promoting presence. Edward's quick smile and diamond twinkle in his eye helped many of us reconnect to the moment.

One of the great joys in Edward's life was movement. We remember with fondness his need to leave a dinner table for his characteristic stroll, rejoining the table after his walk, energized. Edward also enjoyed snow skiing, slipping away for a joyful day on the slopes with his family and a number of friends.

We have gained much from knowing Edward, from his dedication to awakening, the School, and Robert, and from his unwavering love of his family and friends. He had no regrets; he lived his life to the fullest, and was present to the end.

These lines from Petrarch perhaps summarize best the urgency Edward wanted to impress upon us at this eulogy.

"The Friend taken from me at death cannot come back to me; I can no longer rejoice in his presence, but I am sure that his spirit will not forsake me.....

Everyone has to finish his course, and we shall have to do the same, we must follow those who went before us.....

He who gave him to me can take back His gift. We have no right to blame death for claiming its due, nor to accuse nature or fortune, to complain that an order should be broken that has always existed.....

Everyone has to finish his course, and we shall have to do the same; we must follow those who went before us. We must face what we have a thousand times had on our lips; the philosophy of the tongue is worthless, unless we prove by deeds what we profess, and what is our only refuge. Let us weigh our words, and then look into our hearts.

We shall indeed follow our dear ones. Who did ever doubt this? We shall follow them quickly and soon, and at this moment we are following them already."

We shall never see Edward again in this lifetime, but we will see him forever and ever in the next. We are grateful to have shared such a fine companionship on this spiritual path.

Musical Interlude:

Arvo Part *Spiegel im Spiegel*

Reading:

Rumi

Today, like every other day, we wake up empty
and frightened. Don't open the door to the study
and begin reading. Take down a musical instrument,
and let the beauty we love be what we do.
There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.

The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep.
You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.
People are going back and forth across the doorsill
where the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.

I would love to kiss you.

But the price of kissing is your life.
Now my loving is running towards my life shouting,
"What a bargain, let's buy it!"

Daylight, full of small dancing particles
and the one great turning, our souls
are dancing *with* you. Without feet, they dance.
Can you see them while I whisper in your ear?

All day and night, music, a quiet, bright reed song.
If it fades, we fade.
People are going back and forth across the doorsill
where the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.

Minister's Conclusion

Ibn Arabi says, *"Do not spend the numbered breaths which have been given to you without purpose. Every action must be for a divine purpose."*

The death of the body is the narrow gate to a higher world, through which nothing mortal can pass. The sequence of events that comprise one's life come to an end and the *purpose* of those events - the very reason we were born - is revealed: the silent ascension of an immortal soul.

*I am not afraid of death.
Death will be eternal union with my Beloved.
I know this.
Above, beyond all the union I know on this earth.
I am confident of this.
Death will be my bridge.*

Edward's presence, his life and his death are an example to us. To follow his example is our finest testament to him. Dearest Edward, we thank thee.

Let us now accompany Edward's family to the cemetery.

At the Cemetery: Minister's Introduction

In the book of Job it says, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return: the LORD giveth, and the LORD taketh away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Hafiz

How should
Those who know of God
Meet and part?

The way an old musician
Greets his beloved
Instrument

And will take special care,
As a great artist always does,

To enhance the final note
Of each

Performance.

Here, the earth returns to the earth and the divine spark returns to its divine source. In Rabia's words, "Love comes from eternity, and goes into eternity." The circle is complete.