

Reginald Carter

June 14, 1946 – January 25, 2025

Funeral Service

Minister: Gail

February 8, 2025

Minister's Introduction

Welcome friends, and a special welcome to Margaret's daughter Abigail and her husband Alex, who are with us today.

We have come together to honor the life of our dear friend, Reginald Carter.

We are here to bear witness to the mortal man who moved through this lifetime, playing the role of his name, and to the immortal soul which has transcended that role.

Let us stand and remember Reginald in silent presence.

(Silence)

Thank you.

Walt Whitman wrote, "All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses,
And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier."

Reginald takes with him the presence and being that he has gained in this lifetime, and his connection with Influence C. Our teacher has said, "That is all we can take with us, but it is more than enough."

[Reading: from *Auguries of Innocence* by William Blake]
(Reader: Conrad)

from *Auguries of Innocence* by William Blake

Every night and every morn
Some to misery are born;
Every morn and every night
Some are born to sweet delight;
Some are born to sweet delight,
Some are born to endless night.
Joy and woe are woven fine,
A clothing for the soul divine;
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.
It is right, it should be so;
Man was made for joy and woe;
And, when this we rightly know,
Safely through the world we go.

We are led to believe a lie
When we see *with* not *through* the eye,
Which was born in a night to perish in a night
When the soul slept in beams of light.
God appears and God is light
To those poor souls who dwell in night:
But doth a human form display
To those who dwell in realms of day.

[Music: “Adagio from Sonata in F k332” by Mozart]
(Musician: Justin, piano)

[Eulogy: Marcia]

Reginald George Carter entered the world on June 14, 1946. He was born in Belgium. His parents immigrated to Canada, where he was raised in New Brunswick.

Reginald took great pride in the fact that his mother, Rose, was a concert pianist. She named him after her favorite musician, "Reginald George." He did not like to be called Reggie or Reg. He was close to his younger brother, George, and they ice skated on the frozen lakes of New Brunswick.

In adolescence, he once went to Mass with a friend and was so struck by the beauty of the Church and the solemnity of the ceremony, that he wanted to convert to Catholicism, but his father forbade it.

In college Reginald majored in physics and enjoyed playing his guitar and singing love songs. He was quite bright and earned a master's degree in mathematics. He had been fascinated by computers ever since he saw his first mainframe, which fills an entire room, and taught himself computer programming.

Reginald enjoyed Bob Dylan, and was delighted to find out - years after the event - that Dylan had won the Nobel Prize for Literature. It made him think that there might be some justice in the world.

Once, before joining the Fellowship, high on LSD, he was interviewing for a job and saw a sign in the interviewer's office, saying "You are in hell. The only thing you can do here is help other people and get out." For Reginald it came through like the voice of God, and he carried it with him.

A friend remembers:

Reginald joined the school at an open meeting in Vancouver in 1979. The meeting finished, and people began to filter out. Finally, only Reginald remained. Someone intervened to say, "We have to be out of the hall shortly and need to clean up now." There was a pause. Reginald looked up and said, "But this is a matter of life and death OR EVEN WORSE." The friend still remembers those words resonating through the building, and

says, "He did have that understanding of the work. There was, for him, simply no alternative."

Another friend recalls traveling from Seattle to Vancouver by car, and, after a flat tire, arriving at the teaching house at 2 am. She was amazed to find Reginald still up. He said, "I'm so glad you came!" welcomed her in, offered food and wine, and they stayed up talking for an hour.

He gave himself unconditionally, and trustingly to the school. and moved to Apollo, taking whatever work he could pick up, finally securing citizenship.

Reginald loved Apollo. He was a willing worker, grateful for the opportunity, and he appreciated the simple lifestyle. He stayed on salary more than thirty years and worked in the vineyard, at the carpentry shop, transplanted palm trees, and at one time, took care of the animals on the property: the water buffalos, the camels and the pigs that live out by the back gate. There was a little lady pig who adored him. Once she escaped, but when she heard his truck coming she ran up the road to meet him. Ignoring the scratches and the dirt, he got out and petted her and she cooed with joy at his touch.

Reginald loved animals and was almost inseparable from his two dogs. At the care home where he lived out his final years, he kept on his night table a picture book of animals of different species, resting together or frolicking with each other.

Reginald lived for the moment and trusted. He was completely open and genuine, and was well able to laugh at himself. He could also treasure a good cry, not in self-pity, but just a washing, a softening of the hardness it takes to live in the world. Chocolate was one of his favorite things, and was a key later in his life to getting him to open up and chat.

Margaret Ayckbourn was the love of his life. Their relationship was a unique alloy of cooperation and boundaries, but it nourished Reginald and made Earth bearable.

His happiest moments were being with Margaret and her daughter, Abigail: going on camping trips, having dinner with friends, playing music and singing after a glass of wine. He was a loyal and steadfast companion to Margaret for 27 years. Abigail said that after so many years together, each seemed to feel that a day spent without the other was incomplete, although of course, they could each be difficult in their own way.

She recalls that Reginald loved to swim, and on camping trips he would ALWAYS jump in the water even if it was freezing.

He was surprisingly decent at watercolors, creating abstract but emotive views of the oceans and dunes they visited.

He was good at memorizing poems, and easily recalled verses by William Blake, Walt Whitman, and other poets.

Margaret's death from Alzheimer's was the beginning of Reginald's own decline into dementia. After a major surgery, it was clear that he could no longer live alone. He entered a nursing home, and the staff gave him the best care they were capable of, and became fond of him. Nevertheless, his last years were hard. He fell, broke bones, and had fits of paranoia.

Once when friends were leaving after a visit, saying, "See you soon," he crumpled a little, then with his wry smile said, "Could you make that a little sooner?"

Exhausted at last, he slipped into unconsciousness. When death finally came, it was quiet, soft.

Reginald did not question his suffering, and he wasted very few words and little time on resentment. We cannot know how an evolving soul experiences dementia, but we can follow Reginald's example and live fully for the moment and trust that every effort counts. What we do know is that each of us needs the School and the School needs everyone in it. As

Emerson wrote:

All are needed by each one;/ Nothing is fair or good alone.

We are ascending together as one being.
Reginald Carter was a gift to us all.

[**Music:** "Romanze no. 2 in F#" by Schumann]
(Musician: Justin, piano)

[**Reading:** "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold]
(Reader: Rowena)

from *Dover Beach* by Matthew Arnold

The sea is calm tonight.
The tide is full, the moon lies fair
Upon the straights; on the French coast, the light
Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
Come to the window, sweet is the night-air!
Only, from the long line of spray
Where the sea meets the moon-blanchèd land,
Listen! You hear the grating roar
Of pebbles which the waves draw back, and fling,
At their return, up the high strand,
Begin, and cease, and then again begin,
With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
The eternal note of sadness in.

Sophocles long ago
Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow
Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! For the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help from pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,

Where ignorant armies clash by night.

Minister's Conclusion:

The death of a friend reminds us that our bodies are fragile; our period on this earth temporary. Only the realm of uncreated light – which unites us and is us – is boundless and eternal.

Reginald was sensitive to the harshness of life, and this helped him to understand the urgent necessity of school work. He gave his best to his friends and his school, and endured his difficult final years without resentment.

May his consistency, lack of pretense, and quiet strength inspire us as we confront our own plays, and help us to value one another more deeply.

Dear Reginald, we thank thee.

The task of this lifetime has been fulfilled. The role of Reginald is complete, and the soul that played that role is released to continue its divine journey.

Candle Ceremony

With this candle to light our way, let us join in raising a glass to Reginald and then depart, with renewed gratitude for the gift of life we have received.

Please stand.

Funeral party exits the room.

Participants gather for the toast.

[Toast: Thomas]

Reginald played many roles well in his life at Apollo. He worked in the vineyard for years, he wrote computer programs at the office and helped with accounting. What he started, he finished well. For a few years Reginald knew as much as any student about Apollo – he collected the refuse from every octave. He always had intelligent comments and a cheerful disposition while supporting the whole. Let us toast to Reginald, a true Apollonian.