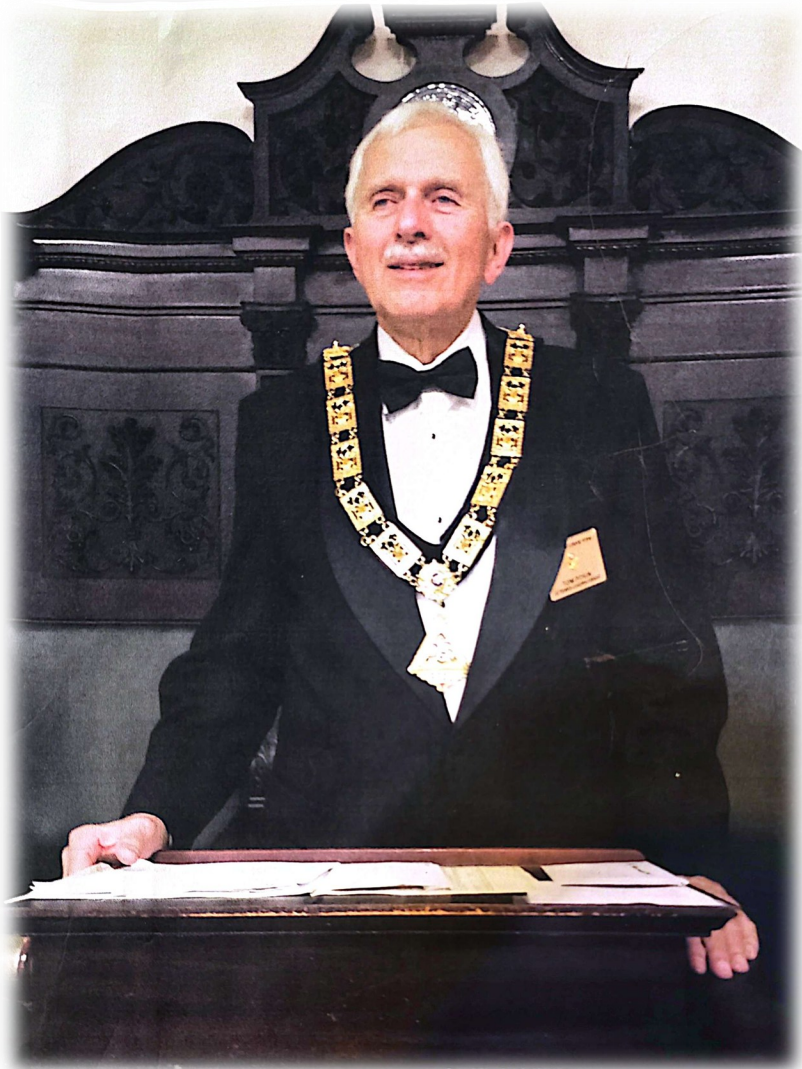


St. Stephen's Episcopal Church

A Celebration of Life

Sunday, February 1, 2026, 3:00 pm



Thomas Arthur “Tom” Pitkin

January 3, 1939 — January 22, 2026

A CELEBRATION OF LIFE

In Thanksgiving for

Thomas Arthur “Tom” Pitkin

January 3, 1939 — January 22, 2026

Prelude

New World Symphony

Antonin Dvořák

RECEPTION OF THE CREMAINS

The Officiant receives the cremains at the door of the church and says

With faith in Jesus Christ, we receive the cremains of our brother Tom for burial service. Let us pray with confidence to God, the Giver of life, that he will raise him to perfection in the company of the saints.

Silence is kept; after which the Officiant says

Deliver your servant, Tom, O Sovereign Lord Christ, from all evil, and set him free from every bond; that he may rest with all your saints in the eternal habitations; where with the Father and the Holy Spirit you live and reign, one God, for ever and ever.

People Amen.

Let us also pray for all who mourn, especially for Brenda, and the rest of Tom's family, that they may cast their care on God, and know the consolation of his love.

Silence is kept; after which the Officiant says

Almighty God, look with pity upon the sorrows of your servants for whom we pray. Remember them, Lord, in mercy; nourish them with patience; comfort them with a sense of your goodness; lift up your countenance upon them; and give them peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People Amen.

*Processional Hymn **The Strife is O'er, the Battle Done** Hymnal 208*

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

The strife is o'er, the battle done,
the victory of life is won;
the song of triumph has begun.
Alleluia!

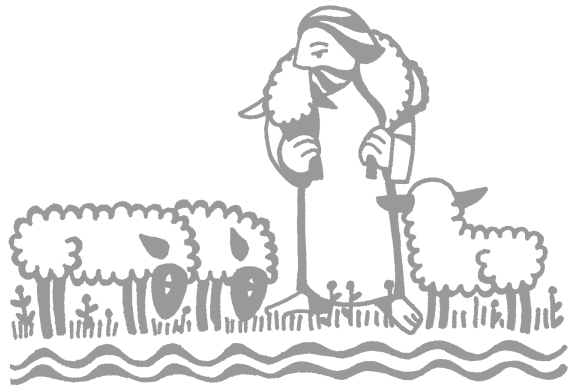
The powers of death have done their worst,
but Christ their legions hath dispersed:
let shout of holy joy outburst.
Alleluia!

The three sad days are quickly sped,
he rises glorious from the dead:
all glory to our risen Head!
Alleluia!

He closed the yawning gates of hell,
the bars from heaven's high portals fell;
let hymns of praise his triumphs tell!
Alleluia!

Lord! by the stripes which wounded thee,
from death's dread sting thy servants free,
that we may live and sing to thee.
Alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!



THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

Officiant In the midst of life we are in death; from whom can we seek help? From you alone, O Lord, who by our sins are justly angered.

People ***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and merciful Savior, deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.***

Officiant Lord, you know the secrets of our hearts; shut not your ears to our prayers, but spare us, O Lord.

People ***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and merciful Savior, deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.***

Officiant O worthy and eternal Judge, do not let the pains of death turn us away from you at our last hour.

People ***Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and merciful Savior, deliver us not into the bitterness of eternal death.***

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Officiant Let us pray.

Collect at the Burial of an Adult

O God, who by the glorious resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ destroyed death, and brought life and immortality to light: Grant that your servant Tom, being raised with him, may know the strength of his presence, and rejoice in his eternal glory; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. ***Amen.***

THE LESSONS

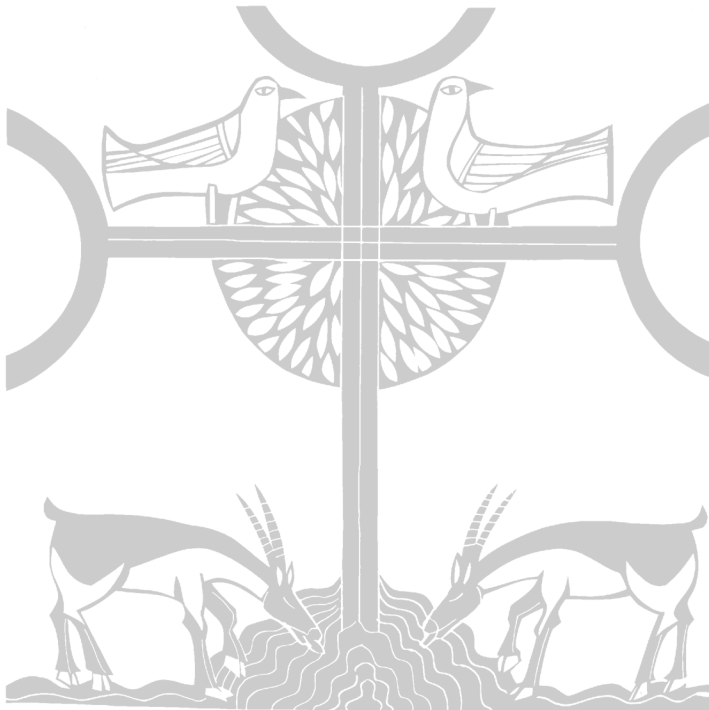
May we hear the Word of God through these words.
A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah 25:6—9

Amy Monroe

On this mountain the LORD of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the LORD has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.



Psalm 23 to be said 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.
Yea, 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 anointest 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 for ever.**

Officiant and People

**Glory to the ✠ Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.**

May we hear the Word of God through these words. *Sarah Pitkin*
A Reading from the the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians 4:16—5:9

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling — if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord — for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

For All the Saints

Hymnal 287

For all the saints, who from their labors rest,
 who thee by faith before the world confessed,
thy Name, O Jesus, be for ever blessed.
 Alleluia, alleluia!

Thou wast their rock, their fortress, and their might;
 thou, Lord, their Captain in the well-fought fight;
thou, in the darkness drear, the one true Light.
 Alleluia, alleluia!

O may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
 fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
and win, with them, the victor's crown of gold.
 Alleluia, alleluia!

Please remain standing.

May we hear the Word of God through these words.
A Reading from the Gospel of John 5:24–27

Jesus said, Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God

For All the Saints

Hymnal 287

And when the strife is fierce, the warfare long,
steals on the ear the distant triumph song,
and hearts are brave again, and arms are strong.
Alleluia, alleluia!

The golden evening brightens in the west;
soon, soon to faithful warriors cometh rest;
sweet is the calm of paradise the blest.
Alleluia, alleluia!

But lo! there breaks a yet more glorious day;
the saints triumphant rise in bright array;
the King of glory passes on his way.
Alleluia, alleluia!

❖ **Eulogy**

Kari Pitkin ❖

❖ **Poem** (see insert)

Jill Warner ❖

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,
who abide in this shadow for life,
say to the Lord: "My refuge,
my rock in whom I trust!"

*And I will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of my hand.*

Snares of the fowler will never capture you,
and famine will bring you no fear;
under God's wings your refuge
with faithfulness your shield.

Refrain

For to the angels God's given a command
to guard you in all of your ways;
upon their hands they will bear you up,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Refrain

❖ **Sermon**

Wilmot T. Merchant, II ❖

The Apostles' Creed *Officiant and People standing say*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession *Please sit or kneel for the prayers*

Leader The Lord be with you.

People ***And also with you.***

Leader Let us pray.

Leader For our brother Tom, let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ who said, “ I am Resurrection and I am Life.” Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to us who mourn for Tom, and dry the tears of those who weep.

People ***Hear us, Lord.***

Leader You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend; comfort us in our sorrow.

People ***Hear us, Lord.***

Leader You raised the dead to life; give to our brother Tom eternal life.

People ***Hear us, Lord.***

Leader You promised paradise to the thief who repented; bring our brother Tom to the joys of heaven.

People ***Hear us, Lord.***

Leader Our brother Tom was washed in Baptism and anointed with the Holy Spirit; give him fellowship with all your saints.

People **Hear us, Lord.**

Leader He was nourished with your Body and Blood; grant him a place at the table in your heavenly kingdom.

People **Hear us, Lord.**

Leader Comfort us in our sorrows at the death of our brother Tom; let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope.

Officiant Father of all, we pray to you for Tom, and for all those whom we love but see no longer. Grant to them eternal rest. Let light perpetual shine upon them. May his soul and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

People **Amen.**

And now let us joyfully sing in thanksgiving the prayer our Savior Christ taught us,

**Our Father, which 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, for ever. Amen.**

The Commendation *Please stand for the Commendation*

Officiant Give rest, O Christ, to your servant Tom with your saints,

People *where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.*

Officiant You only are immortal, the creator and maker of mankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return. For so did you ordain when you created me, saying, “You are dust, and to dust you shall return.” All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

People *Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.*

Officiant Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Tom. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

Faith of Our Fathers!

Hymnal 558

Faith of our fathers! living still
in spite of dungeon, fire and sword:
O how our hearts beat high with joy,
whene'er we hear that glorious word:

*Faith of our fathers, holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death.*

Faith of our fathers! we will love
both friend and foe in all our strife:
and preach thee, too, as love knows how,
by kindly deeds and virtuous life.

Refrain

Officiant Alleluia. Alleluia. Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People ***Thanks be to God. Alleluia. Alleluia.***

Bagpipe Tribute

Amazing Grace!

Jeanine Shelley

Please follow the family as they recess.

❖ *Following the service, a reception will be held at the family's home* ❖

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Thomas Arthur Pitkin

Thomas Arthur Pitkin, age 87, a man of quick wit, deep integrity, and tireless service, passed away peacefully January 22, 2026, at his home in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Born on January 3, 1939, in upstate New York, Tom grew up in a small resort town on Schroon Lake. As a child, he ventured into business with his brother, running a popcorn stand and selling bait & tackle to the summer visitors. Tom participated in all the activities the lake had to offer, such as racing cars on the frozen lake in the winter and waterskiing barefoot in the summer. He made his film debut as an extra when the major motion picture *Marjorie Morningstar* was filmed in town.

After graduating from high school, Tom attended various colleges and universities as he tried to figure out what he wanted to be when he grew up. He met Brenda and married in December 1962. Tom completed his MBA at SUNY Albany and began a career in retail, working at Sears and Denby's department stores. In 1978, he moved the family to Virginia and purchased a hardware store in Dale City with his brother - which grew into the beloved Pitkin's Ace Hardware. He grew the business, running it with a mix of old school business acumen, while being compassionate to his employees and community needs. It was normal to see the store cat laying across his desk as he was working. He had a big heart and helped many of his employees over the years. Tom also had a quick wit about him and would get a certain look when he was up to something – casually dropping a one-liner and walking away.

Tom was a pillar of the communities where he lived. Starting at age 16, Tom joined the Schroon Lake Fire Department. He continued in the Verdox Fire Department in Latham, NY and in 1980, he joined the Buckhall Volunteer Fire Department in Manassas, Virginia, where he served as Chief for many years. Upon retirement, and as Tom was not one to sit idle, he volunteered with the American Red Cross when he and Brenda moved to New Bern, NC.

cont'd

He was an active member of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks for 66 years and was elected Exalted Ruler of Elks Lodge No. 764 in New Bern. Tom and Brenda moved to Myrtle Beach where he volunteered with McLeod Health Carolina Forest and was honored as Volunteer of the Year. He enjoyed greeting people and helping them with directions. Some of his happiest moments were spent feeding the turtles and ducks at the edge of the pond in his backyard. He shared his life with many faithful dogs and quickly bonded with any dog nearby. As his health declined, some of his favorite visitors were those four-legged friends.

Tom will be deeply missed by his family. He is survived by his wife, Brenda; his four daughters, Jill (Lee), Kari (Damian), Sarah (Jason), and Amy (Richard); and ten grandchildren (Samantha, Lauren, Kaitlyn, Gigi, Tommy, Izzy, Mosby, CJ, Amanda and Mason). He was preceded in death by his parents and his brother, Ronald Pitkin.

Tom chose his final resting place to be near one of his favorite places – “the River House”. His ashes will be interred at a later date at Saint James Episcopal Church of Cople Parish, 63 St James Ln, Montross, VA 22520.





PARTICIPANTS

Congregation: Relatives and Friends of Tom
Officiant: The Very Rev. Canon Dr. Wilmot T. Merchant, II
Verger: Robert Dunn
Organist: Roberta Rowland-Raybold
Bagpiper: Jeanine Shelley
Eulogist: Kari Pitkin
Readers: Sarah Pitkin, Amy Monroe, Jill Warner
Crucifer: Mike Raley
Usher: Joe Lenhard



St. Stephen's Episcopal Church