

2004 Memorial service, written by Judy Bessinger, presented by Western Stars Area club

Of all the things that man has made, none is so full of interest and charm, none possesses so distinct a life and character of its own, as a ship.

The common language in which we speak of them is an unconscious confession of this feeling. We say of a ship, she sails well. She minds her helm quickly. The wind is against her, but she makes good headway. We wish her a prosperous voyage. We endow her with personality.

One reason for this is undoubtedly the fact that the ship appears to us as a traveler to an unseen and often an unknown haven. It is the element of mystery, of adventure, of movement towards a secret goal which fascinates our imagination, and draws our sympathy after it

1 Corinthians 9: the Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

Picture this scene of a loved one going to Heaven. It won't even come close to the real thing, but come journey with me.

I am standing upon the seashore.
A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the morning breeze
And starts for the blue ocean.
She is an object of beauty and strength.
I stand and watch her until at length
She hangs like a speck of white cloud
Just where the sea and sky come
To mingle with each other.
Then someone at my side says,
There, she is one.
Gone where?
Gone from my sight. That is all.
She is just as large in mast and hull
And spar as she was when she left my side
And she is just as able to bear her load
Of delivering freight to her destined port.
Her diminished size is in me, not in her.
And just at the moment when someone at my side says,
There, she is gone,
There are other eyes watching her coming
And other voices ready to take up the glad shout,
Here she comes.

Many were there waiting her arrival. Some had been there a long time waiting for her and they were exceedingly glad to see her. And that is dying. We cannot see into Heave

and cannot know exactly what it is like when one goes to Heaven, but just as we know the ship is beyond the horizon, we know a mansion waits for us.

Song “Face to Face”

What is your desired haven beyond the grave? No ship that sails the sea is as free to make her port as you are to seek the haven that your innermost soul desires. If your choice is right and if your desire is real, so that you will steer and strive with God’s help to reach the goal, you shall never be wrecked or lost.

Let us Pray: Dear Heavenly Father, we bow before you with humble and broken hearts. We know in our deepest thoughts, beneath our doubts and fears Father that thou are great. Give us the confidence, strength and comfort we need in this hour. Father we lift our hearts in gratitude for the life of our departed; for all that they were to those who loved them, and for everything in their lives that reflected your goodness and love. Help each and every one of us to lean upon you, dear God. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen

Song: “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”