
Jayne Clark:

Hello, everybody. If I could ask you all just to come on in and find your seat, that would be really helpful. Just want to have a moment of quiet and reflection before the Powlisons come in. I don't know if there's folks out there in the lobby that can hear me as well. If you can make your way in, that would be wonderful. Thank you. Also wanted to let you know, I don't know if anybody has any small children with them today, but if they should get restless during our time together, there is an area that's upstairs behind the doors up there in the balcony where there are monitors available with sound so that you could still hear everything that's going on in here. So feel free if you need to, to take your kids up there. Thank you so much.

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Jayne Clark and I served as David's chief of staff at CCEF for the last five years, and am now serving as the acting executive director. And on behalf of the Powlison family and all of us at CCEF, we're just so glad to have you join with us today. And I know it would bring a twinkle to David's eye to see so many Hawaiian shirts in Pennsylvania. And he would've just loved the sea of color that's before us, so thank you. We've gathered today to remember and give thanks for the life in ministry of David Powlison, husband, father, grandfather, brother, counselor, teacher, writer, mentor, colleague, friend, artist, nature lover. And maybe what meant the most to him, child of the living God.

It probably won't surprise you to know that David had some thoughts about how we might go about this. So we're going to be singing some of his and Nan's favorite hymns, hymns that are poetic, meaningful, and rich in theology. We're going to be hearing remembrances from multiple generations of the Powlison family and from close, dear, lifelong friends, and from his coworkers and friends from CCF, the ministry that he loved so much and gave his life to. And then we're also gonna hear a message from – that is centered on what David described as his life first, 2 Corinthians 4:6. And as we do so, in the way that he loved so much to hear the way that scripture and life intersect. So given how much David loved being a child of God, it seems only fitting that we begin by singing *How Deep the Father's Love for Us*, and then the Powlison family will come and share. So please stand and sing that together.

Hymn: How Deep the Father's Love for Us

How deep the Father's love for us
How vast beyond all measure

That He should give His only Son
To make a wretch His treasure

How great the pain of searing loss
The Father turns His face away
As wounds which mar the Chosen One
Bring many sons to glory

Behold the Man upon a cross
My sin upon His shoulders
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice
Call out among the scoffers

It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished

I will not boast in anything
No gifts no pow'r no wisdom
But I will boast in Jesus Christ
His death and resurrection

Why should I gain from His reward
I cannot give an answer
But this I know with all my heart
His wounds have paid my ransom

D. Powlison Smith: My name is Diane Powlison-Smith and I'm David's sister. I was 12 when David left home for Harvard. I was young enough to believe that he would be back for summers and holidays, and then back for good after four years. And I was old enough to understand that our family had shifted forever. David never did return to Hawaii for longer than a few weeks or months at a time and I feel like I have missed him continuously all these years. Always waiting for college to finally be finished and for him to come back home. Even though he spent the majority of his life on the East Coast, I think he always considered Hawaii as his home as you can tell by what we're all wearing.

So since his public writing and his interviews do not describe much about his early life, I thought I'd tell a few stories about the family and the homeland that I think formed a deep core of his being. David was born in the neighborhood hospital a few blocks from the family home. As you could see from his baby pictures, he

was an adorable baby, blue, blue eyes, a button nose, and a very big, round head. The family joke was that he needed that big head to carry around the abundance of brains that he came into the world with. A few months later, he was baptized at Central Union Church. This was the oldest church for English speaking people in the island. On that day, a large group of family and friends gathered. In the photo after the baptism, everyone was beaming and staring at wonder at a very pensive looking baby David.

Stories and other photos from his baby and toddlerhood portray a sweet, gentle, and rather serious child who tended to take his time observing others and the world with reserved consideration before breaking into a beaming smile and joining in. Two and a half years later, our brother Daniel arrived, bringing an abundance of exuberant laughter with him. At first, David appeared somewhat dubious about his presence, but their later photos reveal many adventures together: climbing, swimming, surfing, camping with David carefully holding Danny's hand, steadying him as he stood beside him or smiling at his antics with amusement.

When David was five and a half, I came on the scene and he seemed to have perfected his older brother protector rule by then. Again, photos repeatedly show him holding my hand and steadying me with two hands on my shoulders. And this was the sense that permeated my next 12 years with him. He helped me with homework and chores, and was an always present protector against Danny's humorous teasing ways. Even as a young boy and teen, David had the soul of a shepherd, watchful and ready to step in at any sign of hurt feelings or tears. We had a lot of outdoor adventures and travel as a family. We were the family who climbed up the clothesline pole by the side of our roof and took our sleeping bags up and slept on the roof to watch the meteor showers. We were also the family that went out in the storm rather than sheltering from it so that we could mudslide on the neighboring hills.

I remember one camping trip to Molokai and at one of the campsites where a herd of cows approached and turned on the outdoor showers with their mouths to take a drink. David and Dan ran down to the beach to go skinny dipping and they looked like white porpoises bobbing and diving in the waves. And mom and dad and I were laughing from the hill. Later when David was in eighth grade, our dad took a sabbatical to study at the University of Washington and we spent months traveling around the entire United States. We touched all four corners of the country. We reenacted Picketts' charge at Gettysburg. We hiked the Grand

Canyon, gathered rocks at meteor crater, and countless other adventures.

Our family traveled well together. We were a team with our dad leading the way in family style, our mom providing care and comfort, David and Dan companions in discovery, and me tagging along trying to keep up. When David left for college, one part of our team was missing and in every letter, I must've written how much I missed him because something I always looked forward to were his letters back to me. He wrote me funny stories that were geared just for a girl in junior high about being scared on campus in places where there were no lights, crazy things that his professors and his classmates did. He sent a Polaroid of the dust bunnies under his bed, a random penny that he found on the sidewalk, and a two foot high birthday card that must've cost a fortune in stamps. He found a way to stay connected and to let me know he was thinking of and caring about me, two characteristics that he retained his whole life.

As most of you know David through his Christian journey and teachings, it may be interesting to know that while he was not intellectually challenged by his childhood church teachings, I think its fundamental messages landed in his heart and manifested in everything he did across his life. The importance of caring fellowship, real relationships, finding personal and authentic meaning in the scriptures and in life, and the concept from 1 Corinthians 13, that we would gaze up at every Sunday glowing above the simple right cross at the end of the sanctuary, love never faileth. While David was later drawn to much more complex wordings and analysis, this simple message of love that does not fail seemed to me to be at the core of his being.

In my experiences of David and his actions in life, he conveyed a love that extends beyond the confines of a specific label and sees through the barriers of difference. It was love that embraces and creates connection through a listening, nonjudgmental heart. Love that appreciates simplicity and the subtleties of a quiet moment. The graceful curve of a flower or a particularly vibrant shade of green against a clear blue sky. To take a walk with David was to join in a soft orb of noticing, of love for colors, sense, and the shifting of light and shadow. And to be with David was to be noticed and loved in the same way.

In March, just three months ago, David and Nan spent two weeks in Hawaii and this trip provided some extended time for him to be with us for some special moments of noticing and sharing love.

The first week, they stayed right next door to Dan and me at our cousin Cossette's house on the hill. Cossette was like an older sister in our family growing up. So we were able to recreate a little sense of what it might've been like to have David home finally. He felt clear minded and healthy, and it was enough time to fall into a brief rhythm of sharing the simplicity of daily life. Meeting up for occasional meals, texting about whale sightings, walking down to the beach for a quick swim.

A favorite day happened when we gathered kayaks and a standup paddleboard for a family trip to an offshore island. We swam in a warm tide pool gazing out at the raw beauty of the rocks, ocean, and sky. Then David, his son Pete, and my son C.J. braved the crashing waves to go around the backside of the island where there's a little inlet that rises and falls with the swells. It was an incoming tide, so the water whooshed in and out dramatically. Pete and C.J. decided against the traditional jumping into the water from the cliff, but David leapt out into the deep, landing in the water gleefully, getting pounded as he tried to climb out, sucked back into the water, and finally clamoring up the rocks to safety. As Cossette and I watched from the side, all three of them were laughing at David's reckless bravery.

After we all hiked back to the beach side of the island, the waves were wrapping around each side, crashing into each other in a crescendo of spray. David, Nan, and Cameron were smiling from ear to ear, running and jumping into the waves at the exact moment of impact, as Pete glided along surfing the waves on a standup paddleboard. Everyone was alive with childlike joy and abandon. This is how I will always remember my brother, in the midst of family and nature, greeting life with equal measures of calm, contemplation, and exuberant rejoicing. I was 64 when he came home this last time and now I know he's truly home, and home is actually love that is ever present and never failing.

Daniel Powlison:

So I'm happy to see all the aloha shirts and bright colors here today, and I wanted to express my love and aloha for my brother. And when I say aloha, I wanted to make sure the deeper meaning of aloha was understood. Perhaps most of us know that aloha is a multipurpose word. It can mean love, affection, compassion, mercy, kindness, grace. It can also mean hello and goodbye, but looking deeper, it is the combination of two Hawaiian words, alo and ha. Alo in this context means in the company of and ha means the breath of life. So when you say aloha, you are actually acknowledging the presence of life and the gift each of us has to be

alive and be here today. David can't be with us here physically today, but he is with us in spirit as we remember him.

When I was thinking about what I would say today, I decided to approach it by putting myself as much as I could in David's place and feeling what he might want for us and what he might want to say to us today. I also enlisted some outside help, which you'll hear later. I feel that David would want us gathered here today to be happy, content, joyous, in love with life, and in peace. I wanted to share a story from David and my childhood today together. One day, David and I decided that we were going to run away and being the good boys that we were, we had the forethought to tell our mom.

So what did our dear mom do? Well, she wished us well and made us sandwiches that we put in our little red wagon along with some clothes and other items that we were taking with us as we ran away. We headed off down the path from our house and a couple hundred yards down the path, there was a big tree under which we often played. And David and I stopped there and proceeded to eat our sandwiches. When our lunch was over, we decided that we were done running away and we came back home. My wish for all of us here today is may all our runnings away from ourselves be that short and may all those that love us be that smart. Now when I said that I had enlisted some outside help, what I meant is that I called a friend of a friend who has some special abilities, one of which is to talk with those departed from our sight. I asked her to find out if David was open to sharing anything with me and with you all gathered here today.

What I will now read is David's message as passed on to me. Talking to all of you free of old scars is a joy. I thank you for asking, Dan. You are one of my very favorite people. You understand how long this life has felt. Now I know how short it is and how important to cherish every moment. No apologies, just a clear thought. I see everything so sharply and I have lots of help. Love is everything. I see you through a veil of love and everyone else, too. I love my family. I hope you can tell them I'm more than fine. I am buoyant and my love is greater than I can put into words. Love is the control stick, the power button. Look for love in everything. I'm always with you. Life is a fleeting thing, but this is forever. Now this is me again, Dan, and I know that David, like his voice message on our phone said, that he is in our hearts and minds today. And I wanted to wish our dearly beloved David and each one of you here and each one of you watching the live stream aloha.

Hannah Belkovic: Good afternoon. I'm Hannah Powlison-Belkovic. I'm David's youngest daughter. My earliest memory at age two or three is of being held in my dad's arms in a downpour. It's just an instant, a flash really, but so specific and intimate. Many of my best and boldest memories of him include water in various forms. This is because my dad was immensely delighted by and at home in the water, whether in the gentle waves of Lanikai Beach in Hawaii or the heavy comers at Pounders Beach or the Jersey shore, whether on a surfboard or in a kayak, at sea at our family pond in Vermont or tubing down a river in Nova Scotia. In recent years, he delighted in visits to Croatia, my adopted home place. And we swam together in the turquoise rivers and the clear blue sea. He somehow always managed to find the highest rocks to jump off of. Outside of the water, his enthusiasm for and encouragement of me and my family and our life project, as he called it, was so meaningful.

He actively appreciated the diversity which each of his children's marriages and which each grandchild brought to our family. Dad loved to recount, for instance, my own son Ezra's Calvin-esque, of Calvin and Hobbes, antics and comments, while also drawing him out in more gentle ways. We stayed with them for several weeks last summer, and Ezra and Baba were the early risers. One morning, I came downstairs and overheard dad explaining the various players of World War II to my four year old over their respective bowls of raisin bran. For Dad, nobody was ever in a box. He always sought to see the complexity of the whole person.

Growing up, my father's deep consideration and exuberant delight in the wonder of the creative world touched me deeply. I learned from him and my mom how to really see the world around me, to be thrilled by the wind thrashing the pale leaves of a maple in a storm, to be amazed by the constellations we'd watch during summer campouts in Vermont. And even in our suburban neighborhood at home to notice the birds and the light and the sky. My dad taught me to not be afraid or intimidated by the vastness of the world and its people. He taught me to explore and discover with gusto. He taught me of the beauties to be found in all places and in all human hearts. My dad lived his life with great attention to others, to the world, to God. He set an example just in his way of being, which is something I admire especially as I learn to be a parent.

Dad was an attentive listener, something I'm sure many of you here can attest to. As I grew up, I probably took it for granted that when I talked to my dad about something hard or bewildering or

frustrating or scary that he would take notes on our conversation. I could sometimes hear him scribbling over the phone as we talked. He felt things with me and was able to offer advice or wisdom while being completely respectful of my personal agency and capabilities. He would never tell me how to solve a problem, but would frame the problem in such a way that my possibilities took shape. Pointing me towards Christ, but not with force, with love. He was a guide through tangled moments and a dear friend who always showed me through his own life an example who is our dearest and truest friend.

The last weeks of my dad's life were hard. The downturn in his health while on hospice care was so sudden that we, my mom, brother, and sister, and I often felt like we were scrambling to keep up. Friday night, one week before he died, was one of the last times when I spoke to him and he was able to respond. I told him much of what I've just shared with you and we laughed and wept together over many memories, but we ended with laughter. Let me tell you the story. One day when I was about 12 and my sister Gwenyth 15, it happened that Gwen, dad, and I went to the Jersey shore, just us three. Off season, mid-week, the beach was deserted. While dad was off getting a picnic lunch for us, some shady character set up his beach chair nearby facing my sister and I rather than the ocean. This naturally made us a bit nervous. So when we saw my dad coming back a few minutes later, we ran over to him. "Dad," I said, "there's this weird guy who's been watching us. You're gonna have to pretend to be buff." So that Friday night, I told my dad that he's been doing a great job pretending to be buff all these years and he laughed. The truth is that his strength of heart and mind rooted in a piercing recognition of weakness has been a cornerstone of my life, of many lives, and how he will be missed. Thank you.

Peter Powlison:

My name is Pete Powlison, David's son, and hopefully I can do this without breaking down. It's short, so that may help. I'd like to start with a quote from Goethe that hung on our wall growing up in the form of a Michael Podesta print that I saw nearly every day. A man should hear a little music, read a little poetry, and see a fine picture every day of his life in order that worldly cares may not obliterate a sense of the beautiful which God has implanted in the human soul. My dad loved beauty in words. He would sometimes pause in conversation and you could see him savoring the search for the perfect beautiful word or reaching toward the ridiculous with polysyllabic sesquipedalian wordplay. In books and art, he loved beauty, painting or writing. That was a feast for the eyes and ears, be it one of his favorite artists, Cezanne, or one of his favorite

books, *A Soldier of the Great War*, which dwelled on aesthetics and beauty.

He loved the beauty of human interaction. He was a great counselor and teacher. Many of you know this having sat through some of his lectures. I sat through some of his lectures as well, some that none of you had the pleasure of, long, long talks about what I'd done wrong and what was going on in my heart when I'd done that wrong. But when he'd talk to me or more often at me, I only later realized the subtext of every talk was the same. I love you deeply. And no matter the immediate lesson of those talks, the larger lessons were about being a dad and he was the best. I'd like to close with a poem by Walt Whitman, *A Clear Midnight*, which brings a lot of these themes together, along with another of his loves that embraced beauty, astronomy and the heavens.

This is thy hour O Soul, thy free flight into the wordless,
Away from books, away from art, the day erased, the lesson done,
Thee fully forth emerging, silent, gazing, pondering the themes
thou lovest best,
Night, sleep, death and the stars.

Gwenyth Hale Ray: Hi, my name is Gwenyth Ray and I still like any cereal resembling Mueslix. Next to helping my mom, brother, and sister do end of life care for my dad just a large handful of days ago, standing here and sharing with you all may just be the second most challenging task to date. And the only way I'll make it is to start light. So many of you have written and shared many beautiful things about who dad was and so I will begin by sharing a few things about who he wasn't. He was not any help to anyone at nighttime and really struggled at large dinner parties. You may or may not know that from birth, dad was stone deaf in his left ear. Maybe the light bulbs are going off for someone here who had wondered why such a gracious man completely ignored your question in a crowded room. Well, if you were addressing him from the left side, he simply did not hear you, nor did he hear any of us crying or needing middle of the night help in our childhood years. My mom singlehandedly answered all of those cries. For my dad of course always slept good ear down.

Dad was not a fine artist. He drew masterpieces with words, but when it came to simple figure drawing, his creations were pretty elementary. I can credit him for teaching my two older daughters to draw snowmen, but that was as far as they got with him. And I know the original three trees model from his foundational dynamics of biblical change course was an early computer graphic,

but he stood by it with no artistic updates for a couple decades. It's actually pretty remarkable that so many of us learned such deep lessons about the spirit's work of growing a fruitful life from a tree that looked more like a polka dotted hot air balloon. To God be the glory, I guess.

Dad was not fashionable. I remember begging him to refrain from going out in public with shorts and his white gym socks pulled up so high when I was at my height of fashion awareness 22 years ago. Dad was not flashy in his old cars and sometimes rumpled shirts. Of course we all loved him for this most of the time as it was just one more visible outworking of his humility. I say most of the time because I do know it must've been hard for Paul Tripp the time in India when dad had wrinkles in his shoelaces, but Paul had remembered to iron his. But that's another story for another time and true story. The reality is that I come to this point of transition with a bit of trepidation. There have been so many renditions of what is most important to share here. I've considered talking about dad's abiding and masterful care for children of all ages. How he loved to engage and get to know. I've considered delving into stories of his adventures with us. When you love and study the intricate glories of creation as much as dad did, there are many adventures to be had on this earth, but I don't actually have the stamina for that at present.

And so I'll close with sharing an anecdote that I had taken the time to write down from this past, our final Christmas together as a family. We were all lingering at the table after dinner and dad opened the conversation. I bet you can all hear him saying these things. So how's everyone doing? What are questions you have about my health, about mom, about our situation here? Let me share how I'm doing. And so we talked, our adult nuclear family, all spouses present. It didn't happen often this way with each of us bound to our seats by the power of pure, deep cherishing. We all had quivering chins and wiped tears at different points as we talked logistics, treatment plans, even briefly tiptoeing by the question of selling our childhood home, but then this question was posed to dad.

So all these details can all be talked about very matter of factly, but what moments have pushed your emotional buttons, Dave, in these past postoperative weeks? Dad went onto share three vignettes about care professionals who had cared for him very personally and how nourishing it was for his soul. A nurse listening well, showing genuine concern and taking extra time to attempt to make him more comfortable in his excruciating pain. The on call surgeon

sitting long to explain why and how his planned procedure couldn't have been completed and the change in his diagnosis. And finally the HR insurance representative who took his phone call and worked thoughtfully and diligently to clear a mistaken charge from a medical bill. I know these anecdotes are not very glamorous, but as we've already established, dad wasn't glamorous. He loved people well and thoroughly, and thus opened himself to be so moved by simple, generous, genuine acts of human care.

I remember numerous times over the years in his preparation for medical procedures or surgeries, dad's request for prayer would always include a desire to remember the names of everyone with whom he came in contact with: nurses, doctors, techs, the folks delivering lunch from the cafeteria. Each semester for the decades of his teaching, he would take pictures of his class members and print them out to study so he could at least have a fighting chance to call on students by name throughout the course of weekly lectures. Dad validated the worth of the individual richly because he saw in you, in me, in us reflections of the one who captured his greatest affection. Dad loved us and he loved our stories, and aren't we the richer for that. Oh, how I will miss him.

Speaking of stories, would you help us? Let me be candid. We are really tired, but we want to hear from you. Today we will be able to hug you, but not be able to hear your hearts and memories with very much staying power. As we continue to grieve and process in different seasons and stages in the years to come, my mom, our family, the grandchildren would love to have your words. As Jayne will also remind you at the conclusion of the service, in the lobby there are a number of baskets and boxes with four by six note cards and many available pens. If you are able, would you write down some of the things that you may want to say to us about dad? That would be a great gift. Thank you so much again.

Michaela Ray:

Hello, my name is Michaela Ray and I am the 12 year old granddaughter of David Powlison. On behalf of the Ray, Powlison, Belkovic cousin club or RAPOBEL as we are known, I would like to share some of our favorite memories about Baba. Caroline loved reading books with Baba. Ezra loved getting up early in the morning, having cereal, and reading the newspaper with Baba. He loved jumping off the diving board into the pond and going sledding in Vermont as Baba was a good sledder. Cameron loved that Baba was always the first one in the water in Hawaii and at the pond. They shared a love of water and a love of adventure. He also loves remembering Baba telling stories at hilltop house with the

friendship candle lit. Sophie loved steering the car from the perch of grandpa's lap on back dirt roads in Vermont and says he was the gentlest man I've ever met.

And I, Michaela, loved that Baba was always ready with a smile and a joke, and he was always ready to listen. He also loved to tell one story about me from when I was about three. He was putting me to be one time when my mom and dad were out, and I guess I was having a hard time. I got up and I crept downstairs to announce that grandpa, this isn't working for me. He loved to retell stories that made us laugh. We will miss him so much. Thank you.

Nan Powlison:

This is a really hard act to follow. I love my family. I love my family in Christ, all of you who have been praying for me and for all of us. Thank you so much. I brought with me my engagement ring. It's a cowry shell that David found on that out shore offshore island in Hawaii and I guess giving me this, he realized this was what I would like rather than a diamond. And that's why we got married and were married for 42 years. I'm so thankful for those 42 years with my sweet gem of a man. We loved the sea, the salt, the tides, and the waves together. And I wrote this poem quite a few years ago and he edited it a little bit, so I'll read it now with his edits. It's actually called *Pamet River Late Tide*. And the Pamet River is very near where he will be buried on Cape Cod in Truro, Massachusetts.

Did you know heaven could come in on the tide?
Victorious dancing over rock and shell
Champagne waves erasing every trace of mud and odor of death
The flats sparkling and sand washed under the sky's blue shield

Did you know heaven could come in on the tide?
Joyous, kissing cool the white hand sand and flooding into pools
Transforming mothers and daughters into sisters and couples into
lovers as they float in on the eternal cleansing of the sea

Did you know heaven could come in on the tide?
Glorious, dazzling phosphorescence swelling from depths
Even song between silvered rocks
Flood tied on a full moon night
The duet before a silver amen

Did you know heaven could come in on the tide?

Hymn: O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus!

Oh the deep deep love of Jesus
Vast unmeasured boundless free
Rolling as a mighty ocean
In its fullness over me

Underneath me all around me
Is the current of Thy love
Leading onward leading homeward
To thy glorious rest above

O the deep deep love of Jesus
Spread His praise from shore to shore
How He loveth ever loveth
Changeth never never more

How He watches o'er His loved ones
Died to call them all His own
How for them He intercedeth
Watches over them from the throne

O the deep deep love of Jesus
Love of every love the best
'Tis an ocean vast of blessing
'Tis a haven sweet of rest

O the deep deep love of Jesus
'Tis a heaven of heavens to me
And it lifts me up to glory
For it lifts me up to Thee

Robert Kramer:

I'm Bob Kramer, a longtime friend of Dave's. Nan, Pete and Carrie, Gwen and Drew, Michaela, Sophie, Caroline, and Charlotte, Cameron, Hannah and Nadia and Ezra, Dan and Diane, CCF colleagues past and present, Westminster College past and present, friends of David Cameron Powlison, it's a joy and a privilege to share my reflections this afternoon about my dear friend for more than half a century. Since we first met as 17 year old freshman entering Harvard College, both excited and nervous, adventurous and yet slightly intimidated. You might say David and I counseled each other about life and living for these past 50 years.

David Powlison, Dave to me, was a gentle giant. Why do I say gentle? Because first of all, he radiated calmness. There was rarely a sense of his being in a hurry or impatient when you were talking with David. He was all in when he was in conversation with you. He was fully present. Secondly, he spoke softly. There was no

shouting, no clanging cymbals, no yelling, no pounding the table. Thirdly, David knew he was broken and needy. He had an overwhelming sense of his own defiant rebellion and that at the moment of his conversion, Ezekiel 36, came alive for him. And mapped onto his heart as what he likened to and called many times an armor piercing missile, cruise missile shot its way through his stubborn – the stubborn resistance of a stone cold heart. And his refusal to let another be his God and turned his heart of stone into a heart of flesh.

Fourthly, he walked humbly. He was so aware of being invaded by undeserved mercy and grace that David would say this protected him when he experienced success in his life and career. He walked so humbly that at times some of us had to push him to go for an achievement, such as getting his doctorate at Penn and to fully use the life experiences and opportunities that God had given him. Lastly, David was gentle because he treasured and celebrated beauty in people, in nature, in art, in literature, in poetry, and especially in words as you heard earlier. In one of our first conversations about the gospel, David said if this is true, it's beautiful. It's like a garden of beautiful flowers, but his fear, he said, was that if he entered the garden, he would trample on the flowers, as he thought many Christians did.

Now why do I describe David as a giant? Not because of his strength, though he was a two time all American swimmer in high school, but in fact in the last 20 years, David experienced the depths of physical weakness. Major heart surgery followed by five years of unexplained at the time never ending exhaustion. Five cancers, the last of which took his physical life, but these last 20 years were also the peak of his fruitfulness, of his productivity through his writing and speaking and ministry. He was fully present. He was a giant not because of his intellect, though he was one of the wisest and most intellectually curious individuals I've ever known. David had an incredible curiosity about people. It made him such a good listener, about knowing and understanding people and life and the messy reality of our lives, of what he called street level struggles and the self-deceptive habits of the heart. And he had a passion for seeing how scripture spoke to those real needs with real promises.

He was a giant not because of his accomplishments, though they were many. In fact, I believe biblical counseling was made attractive, winsome, and life changing for tens of thousands of individuals because of Dave. And he was a giant not because of his leadership. Dave never sought nor desired leadership roles. In fact,

in our many discussions when I would seek his advice in my own political and business career, he would always laugh and say, "I'm so glad God gave you those gifts and those opportunities. I'm not the one to lead an organization. I can't imagine having to do fundraising, having to oversee administration, or leading a team. Thank goodness, Bob, that's you, not me." And then God called him to lead CCF and he and Nan knew it was a call, and they answered and responded to the call. And Dave was a terrific leader of the people, of the organization, and oh, yes, he was a great fundraiser. God had quite the laugh. God richly blessed his leadership.

Why then do I call my friend Dave Powlison a giant, a gentle giant? On the CCF website under who we are, it says Christian growth catches fire where life and scriptures meet. Well, this is where David hung out. He was fully immersed in both and as a result, he caught fire where life and scriptures meet. The website goes on to say we help others change when in the midst of their day to day joys, sorrows, sufferings, and sins. We point them to Jesus Christ through his word to find grace and mercy for their time of need. David was a giant pointer. He pointed individuals to Jesus through his word to find grace and mercy for their very real daily human needs. David loved to talk about how scripture maps, a big, big Powlison word. Scripture maps onto the realities, the depths, the joys, the sorrows of human experience and onto the deceitfulness of our hearts. David Powlison was an artist who married another artist, Nan, who became his soul mate. Thank you, Nan.

As an artist, David used words to point – to paint the truths of scripture onto our hearts. He used words to paint the truths of scripture onto our hearts. As an artist, he was also a great lover of beauty, of people, and supremely of Jesus. He was passionate to connect the dots for us. Like a skilled artist, what he did sublimely was to enable us to see with new eyes how the life giving, joy creating truths of scripture connect with the realities of the human heart. So that we go wow, yes, that's me you've described with that phrase. Gee, is that what God means? That promise is for me and my struggles. In his remarks to Westminster graduates just a few weeks before he died, David said his hope was that they would be unafraid to be publicly weak as the doorway to the strength of God himself, and he cited the example of King David.

David Cameron Powlison also was not afraid to be publicly weak as the doorway to the strength of God himself and for us to see what that looked like. When he heard from his doctor that he only

had a short time to live, David wrote to the CCF community and shared that. And I quote, grief and tears are close to the surface, but scripture has been active and full of love. The dots are connecting and the intimate voice and presence of God in Psalm 121 has been a particularly significant companion. David went onto say our shepherd watches over us, protects us, cares for us, and never dozes off. It's so. Do you see what David is doing here? He's being intentional. David Powlison was intentional. He's being intentional. In his moment of total physical weakness and facing death, David is being fully transparent so that he can point us to the tender mercies of his God. As he faced imminent physical death, David was living where scriptures – where life and scriptures meet. He was a gentle giant pointing us to Jesus. He was sharing how the dots are connecting for him. Two words, dots and mapping, I will never ever use or hear and not think of Dave. He was sharing how the dots are connecting for him, that we might know that scripture maps onto the deepest of our human fears and sorrows and griefs and aspirations, offering us grace and mercy in our time of need.

Eleven days ago, Dave heard these words as he was welcomed by his savior into heaven: well done, good and faithful servant. And I want to say this afternoon, David, you did not trample on the beauty of the flowers in the wonderful garden. No, what you did was to enable us, if we are willing, to see with new eyes the beauty of the mercy and grace of God, the beauty of his promises for our deepest needs. Thank you, my dear friend. I love you, David. I look forward to our future in eternity. Praise God.

Paul Miller:

The first time that David and I had a serious conversation was in – golly, about 30 years ago and some poor soul had assigned us both to infant nursery duty together at New Life Church. And we knew one another already and were – anyway. And that was not a bad duty. We loved kids. We were both pretty good at diapers at that point, but one long wall of the nursery was a chalkboard and it had a little chalk tray with chalk in it. And David and I kinda after about five minutes of diapers and whatever, we started – David had this three trees chart he was working on and I had this chart with a cross, and pretty soon the whole chalkboard was filled with our charts. And the kids were fine.

It was about five years after that, that I saw David. It couldn't have been more than ten seconds as I walked by him at New Life Church again in the hallway and he was talking with a woman, and I was startled. He was leaning in towards her just like almost every other person has described here, attentive, treating her as an equal. What we both knew was that this woman was struggling with

significant mental illness and David was treating her as if she was normal. And that as if shows why I was so startled and what was wrong with me. What I was watching there for the first time in David was the way he valued her as a person. I had thought of her as a category. I'd put her in a box called mental illness and dehumanized her, and that was really at the heart of David's life project. He was living out in front of me his discovery of the person that so shaped his life and theological vision. As many of you know, he often described the human condition as a cigarette vending machine. This woman might have been a pack of Camels, but I was a pack of Kools. Different packaging, but both of us with tobacco like hearts that wander from God and one of David's life themes was we all need Jesus.

What I saw in David with this woman was exactly what David had seen in two workers when he was still a non-Christian at the psychiatric hospital where he worked after college. David noticed that a cleaning woman and an orderly did more good than the physicians. They treated patients as people, not as clients. In fact, when I was going over this story with David, we were just reflecting on it together about a year ago. David mentioned – he interrupted me and mentioned their names, which I have forgotten. David fought a two front war in his passion for the rediscovery of people. One was against the depersonalization in secular psychology that labels people and the other was against the depersonalization in fundamentalism that misses the person.

Several years ago, I came across Robert Alter's insight that for the Hebrews, a person was a center of surprise. I couldn't wait to tell David because that described his life project, the rediscovery of the person and all the richness that entails. That's why David encouraged prospective counselors to get – to study literature instead of psychology. Good literature captures the roundness and complexity of a person. David first encountered Christianity in a literature course that he took at college with his friend, Bob Kramer, that explored Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. Notice when I was describing David's college experience there, I said college and not Harvard. Even though David went to Harvard, that's how he talked. I remember the first time I heard him say college, I was like, "What? I went to Temple, so I say college, but if I went to Harvard, I wouldn't say college."

I loved what Diane shared. David never lost his liberal passion for equality. Now it was equality at the foot of the cross. David embodied Jesus' command judge not. That is don't make yourself better than your friend by saying Harvard. Don't make yourself

better than your counselee by calling them a client or thinking that you don't have the same sin. Judge not captures David's whole approach to life. When David became a Christian, and I'm not quite sure how to say this, two things came together in his life. He finally had the power to do his liberal passion of caring for people. The – which that very passion came from Jesus of Nazareth. Liberalism is simply Jesus secularized and David had felt the powerlessness in his own life to do good consistently. And when the cross, which is the means, came together with his passion for people, David became a believer.

Just for the sake of balance, I'm gonna do what Gwen did, which is just kind of the downside to David's incredible ability to be present with people, which many of us have experienced here, is if you live in the present, sometimes you might not care too much about the future. That was Nan's work. So sometimes writing deadlines, for those of you who know David, might have eluded him. On more than one occasion, I told Nan, you married a Hawaiian whose stated life goal – David told me this once, that his goal was to live in a hammock, to lie in a hammock on a beach drinking a piña colada. A lot of you didn't know that, but that's what he told me.

My favorite story from Nan was David's book on anger was especially late and at one point, Nan said everyone is angry about the anger book except David, which absolutely nails him. Several of you have mentioned David's love for beauty and just growing up was one of the things that we shared. We both grew up out west surrounded by natural beauty and David, he was an artist as Bob and several of you said. He crafted his writings often coming back multiple times to an essay. In one of our last long breakfasts a couple months ago, he reflected on Plato's triad of truth, goodness, and beauty, and how strong the church was at truth, but weak at cultivating a vision of goodness and beauty.

In our last conversation that Bob and I shared with David, I said to David, you've not been so much an artist, but a medieval craftsman building a gothic cathedral. Like the nameless architect who designed Notre Dame, you are building a space that soars into the heavens, drawing people into the life of God. David's cathedral was his passion for the church to be shaped by the richness of scripture and relationships. CCF was another cathedral that David labored over, a school for creating fellow craftsmen who could create beauty in people's lives. David's primary tool for building this cathedral was all the richness of the word of God. You gotta see his Bible out there. The word wasn't just in ministry for David. Almost every meal together, we'd talk about some portion of the

word, just nothing organized, what are you reading. We especially loved the psalms and we'd bounce all over the place. The person of Jesus in the gospels, especially John and Luke, was a favorite topic of conversation. The word was life because God was life. Counseling, as many of you know, was David's cover for wanting Christians to live God centered, God saturated lives filled with sadness and joy, despair and hope, dying and rising, and of course rising is the last word. We can't wait to see him again.

Jayne Clark:

As many of you know, David and Nan loved to practice hospitality. And over the years, they had numerous people live on their third floor and I've run into several of you who are here. Those connections are strong and one family who came for a year, Sharon and David Covington, stayed for five. I think according to Nan they hold the record, but obviously those roots run deep and kids were of similar ages, and they got to know each other. And so David and Sharon today are gonna be sharing one of David's favorite songs called *Supper time*, and they're joined by Joy MacKenzie, their daughter.

Special Music: Supper time (by David & Sharon Covington with Joy MacKenzie)

Tonight I'll be able to sit at the table
With somebody who understands.
I know I'm not worthy; my clothes are still dirty,
But Daddy, he's washing my hands.

Supper time, oh supper time,
At the close of a long working day I come home to
Supper time, oh supper time,
And I know they won't turn me away.

We'll come in together, or some one by one;
We'll wait until everyone's there.
When we're all in our places, the light on each face is
From the one who sits in the end chair.

Supper time, oh supper time,
When I most need to know that it's near,
Supper time, oh supper time!
Sometimes I smell the kitchen from here.

When my heart gets tender, it helps to remember
That I'm going to be there tonight.
I'll see all the others, my sisters and brothers,
And I've got the right, I can invite you to

Suppertime, oh suppertime,
At the close of a long working day we'll come home to
Suppertime, oh suppertime,
And I know they won't turn us away.
We're here to stay.

Ed Welch:

My name is Ed Welch. I worked with David for 38 year and it was far too short. I'd like to tell you three stories, one I hope will amaze you and two I hope will edify you. Here's the first that I think is really quite amazing. It was during the winter and I think the Philadelphia Flyers were having a particularly good year. I was driving to work listening to Philadelphia sports radio and it seemed as though the theme that morning was say something good about the Flyers and put it in a creative way and for everybody else. And I think I got on when somebody was singing a really poor song and then – I don't know if you know this.

Then David from Glenside got on the phone. Did you know that? Listening to WIP, talking about the expanse of his life and the limitless boundaries. He launched into this poem. I think he put it – from the – it was the night before Christmas. I think that was the cadence that he used and he went through every single Flyer. It was just beautiful. I was stunned. I was just utterly amazed, but here's – this is the amazing part. WIP sports radio, there's never a silence ever on the radio. There are various people talking at once and when David was done – do you know this story? David was done and there was silence probably for five seconds. And then one person finally spoke and they said wow, that was deep. Never happened before in Philadelphia sports radio and another five seconds of silence. That is amazing.

Let me tell you another story that I hope will encourage you. It was during David's dissertation. It was probably a Friday. We were dressed something like this, but worse. And I was walking around. He was walking around. We just started talking together and I asked – of course the conversation asked – we asked each other what are you doing today, what's occupying your time. And David had been working on his dissertation. He actually came up from the basement, which in those days was a bit of a dungeon. And I thought he was just coming up for air essentially, but then he mentioned that there was a pipe that was leaking in the basement and it leaked on his computer, and it actually destroyed 100 hours' worth of work. He told it to me even more gently than that, like it was just another day.

Now there was a rumor going around Westminster Seminary in those days and the rumor was that David hadn't sinned. And this is one of those stories that when students would – no, I'm serious. Students would actually ask me that question, has David ever sinned? This is one of those stories that would lead me to say absolutely not, he's never sinned. David didn't agree with me on that one, but I didn't care. But here's what animated that particular story. He knew that his Jesus who he followed was the God of the universe. He had all creation in the palm of his hand. He was the one who moved in the very details of our lives and so David would follow suit. He was absolutely confident that as a child before his God, his God was in control, even if computers losing 100 hours' worth of hard fought data. There's a passage from James that goes like this. Today or tomorrow we'll go and we'll do such and such in a town. We'll spend a year there and trade and make a profit. But James goes onto say but you don't know what tomorrow will bring. Instead you ought to say if the Lord wills, we will live and do this and do that. That's why David could speak casually of losing two, three weeks of data. That's encouraging.

Let me give you one other story that is encouraging. Soon after his diagnosis in October of last year, we happened to be walking together and I asked what he was thinking. He said you know. That's the way he started. He started that way a number of times with me and every time he started that way, I knew that I was gonna have no idea what he was gonna say, but he graciously thought of me as a kindred spirit who perhaps understands. And this is what he said and I didn't understand it. He said, "Well, you know, it's a beautiful day. I still feel good. I still have an appetite. It's a great day." His Jesus was the God overall, but his Jesus was also the one who was very close giving grace for each day.

Matthew 6. In some ways, it – as we read Matthew 6 and the passage on anxiety, it's as if Jesus himself invites us for this walk with him. And he says look at the birds of the air. You add to that. Look at the beauty of the birds. Look at the ways that they fly. Look at how they're cared for. Do you think in some way that you are less than the birds? Look at the grass, the fields, and the flowers. Transient, yet beautiful. Do you think in some way the Lord doesn't care for you? And Jesus goes onto essentially say that he gives grace for today. Tomorrow might have its hardships, but he gives grace for today.

David went onto say that he knew indeed that there would be harder days where he was going to need unusual grace. The passage he often went back to was Psalm 46:1. He used it during

Hannah's physical struggles. He used it when he was post-surgery and he used it more recently. God is our refuge and strength. He is an ever present help in trouble. It was an honor to work with him. It was a gift that I was aware of every single week that we worked together. I also suspect there wasn't a week that went by where we didn't say, almost with these words, can you believe that we get paid to do this? If we were here in 20 years from now, I would say I worked with this brother for 60 years and it was far, far too short.

Mike Emler:

I'm Mike Emler and it's an honor for me to speak briefly about David's impact on my life and our lives collectively. I knew David for over 20 years as my teacher, mentor, colleague, leader, and friend. It's not surprising that when I think about David particular scriptures come to mind given how saturated his life was with God's word. One passage that captures a foundational quality in David is John 1:43-51, which describes Jesus' calling of Phillip and Nathaniel. Specifically about Nathaniel, Jesus says, behold, an Israelite indeed in whom there is no deceit. Older translations use the word guile, a person without guile, without hidden agendas, without subterranean political maneuvering, a person with complete integrity and disarming honesty. What you see is what you get. That was Nathaniel and that was David Powlison.

I'll mention just three examples of this quality in action, which I've had the privilege of observing over time. First, David asked for prayer honestly. In the fall of 1996, I was a student in my first semester at Westminster Theological Seminary taking dynamics of biblical change, which he taught. One of the things I most remember about that class was when David asked for prayer about an upcoming trip he was taking and the potential relational challenges that it would entail. He said something like please pray that I would have the courage to engage in difficult conversations. Pray that I wouldn't avoid important interactions out of love of comfort or fear of conflict. I remember thinking at the time, I would not have asked my students to pray that or if I would've asked them to pray, I would've shared something generic and safe that didn't reveal my weakness, but David didn't need to look strong in front of his students nor his coworkers, which I've come to deeply appreciate over the years and particularly over these last months.

Second, David encouraged others without any sense of flattery. He embodied Ephesians 4:29, speaking words that built up, fit the occasion, and communicated grace. From my first day at CCEF, he welcomed me as a valued colleague. Although I felt a little bit like a high school drummer sitting next to Ringo Starr, David never

made me feel like that. Never once did I wonder what does he really think about my presence here. His encouragements were genuine. His enthusiasm to see me and others grow in grace was heartfelt and motivated by love. He always saw the good that God was up to in people's lives and was a champion of each person's fullest and unique potential in Christ. I think everyone at CCF would testify to that fact.

Third, David exhibited a winsome and enduring curiosity about scripture, people, and the world around him that wasn't constrained by personal insecurity or by party line thinking. Because his identity was anchored in Jesus Christ, he felt the freedom to explore new terrain biblically and theologically. He read widely. He studied deeply and he asked honest questions, which reminds me again of John 1, the scene before Jesus made his remark about Nathaniel. Phillip encountered Jesus first and then he tracked down Nathaniel, and said to him, we have found him of whom Moses and the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Nathaniel responded, can anything good come out of Nazareth? It's an honest question and I think a question born more out of curiosity than any real sense of cynicism. Hmm, Nazareth. I don't know about this, but I'll check it out and that was David's posture.

He wasn't afraid to tackle thorny and complex issues. He wasn't trying to impress or win accolades. He pursued truth wherever it led, whether it turned out to be popular or not. I'll end with another verse that David frequently quoted, 1 Timothy 1:5, and I think it describes his own life beautifully. Love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. That speaks of a man in whom is there no deceit. We miss David deeply already, but we know that by God's grace and because of the surety of Christ's resurrection, we will see him again.

Jayne Clark:

I often heard David say that before age 50, he had no medical history and since age 50, he had nothing but. And looking back, I realized that even though David and I have known each other and worked together for about 30 years, I really did not start to get to know him until about 20 years ago. In those early days, we were both teaching multiple classes. I don't know how many hours he was counseling. I was counseling 15 hours a week. I was taking on more administrative responsibilities. He was – had become the editor of the *Journal of Biblical Counseling* and was working on his dissertation. So really our paths didn't cross that much. It was mostly in meetings and that limited possibilities for interactions, but about the time when he came back to CCEF post-surgery and

he was struggling just with all of that fatigue, that was the first time that I came alongside him to try to figure out how to best marshal those energies. And to help him to give himself to the things that would be most helpful.

And so I – he's told this story as well. Maybe you've heard it. So I met with him in his office and you have to know, if you haven't seen this, that there was not an inch of desk showing. It was all papers and I think there was some of the floor showing, but I can't guarantee that. And so I just – I sat there and I asked him to pick up a piece of paper and just to tell me a little bit about that piece of paper 'cause I wanted to get some kind of idea of how he processed these things. And he just sort of started giggling and he kind of – I really don't know. I said, okay, what do you wanna do with it? And so he sat it down and over the course of time, I realized he basically had two choices: either every piece of paper, no matter what it was, ended up in its own pile or it ended up in one pile. So clearly he was gonna need some help with trying to figure out how to process these things and we had a lot of fun doing that.

And we got to the point of okay, we've got some – we know what kind of assistance he can have with people and processes and all the rest. And so I don't know, maybe it was a week later. I come to him and I say to him, how's it going? And I'm sure you can just imagine this. He gets this grin on his face. His eyes light up. He kinda scrunches his shoulders and then he goes and proceeds to explain to me every single way he has circumvented everything we set up. And I'm like, "You are so rebellious. What is this?" So apparently he did sin once in a while.

Anyway, over the course of time, he actually did come to appreciate it and we made some progress. But as I was thinking about that 'cause it really was coming out of that childlike nature of his. I love the word that his brother used yesterday. He was an imp. That's a great word to describe David. I was thinking about that and then I was reading through some of the passages that I knew David loved and had meant so much to him. And in particular, I was just struck by Psalm 131, which reads – it's three short verses. My heart is not proud, O Lord, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother, like a weaned child is my soul within me. O Israel, put your hope in the Lord both now and forevermore. And as I read that psalm, I just realized this so described the David that I knew and we've heard described today. That his eyes were not haughty. He was a humble man.

As well-known and highly regarded as he was, he was David and he was just kind and thoughtful and friendly and all the things that you've heard here today. Even when he became executive director, he just wanted to stay up in his office under the eaves, the very room he was living in at the time he went to seminary. And he said that was the room he was living in when he proposed to you. Right, Nan? He'd been in so many different offices, but that's where he wanted to be and he preferred to go to other people's offices to go to their territory. He was aware of his position and just didn't want to use that in any way to intimidate people. He wanted to put them at ease and have them on their home ground.

And I recall, too, that actually back in those early days, the times when I did have some interactions with him. Back then, don't get jealous, but we, the faculty people, we used to have a deep dish pepperoni pizza during faculty meetings every faculty meeting. And somehow or other, it started to feel like why is it up to me to have to clean up every week. And then who would come down the hall would be David Powlison and he would help to clean up after the faculty lunches. And back in those days, I was also the educational administrator and we were doing the changing hearts, changing lives weekends. And we had to – we – I had to put together these notebooks and I would be walking around the table 'cause these were getting larger and larger. And I would actually start to get dizzy from walking around the table. I'd have to change directions. And every once in a while, David would peek in and he would just come in and make a few circuits, helping me to put those notebooks together and just being there.

And David was – as we've said, he was peaceful and he was steadfast. He was a person who had stilled and quieted his soul. He was not given to worry or to fretting. As has been alluded to and as Nan and I can tell you, sometimes we wished he would worry and fret a little bit more. But at the same time, it just helped to put a pause and to say no, it's okay. It really is. There is time. He was not going to be rushed. He's not gonna jump on a bandwagon. He's content to fly under the radar and just to stay on course as a person and as the leader of our organization. And of course this was all rooted in the fact that he was so trusting and hopeful. That was true when he took over the leadership of CCEF and I saw this. There were a lot of upheaval and things going on at times, and he was just totally trusting. He said look, you know, we – and he said this to the entire staff – we have no control over what happens, of the students signing up to take courses or people coming to the conferences or buying books or anything else or giving us money.

That is all the Lord's. We need to keep our eyes on the Lord and be faithful to what he's called us to do, and trust him with everything else. That's the way he led us and the way that we tried to follow.

And it was the same way when he got the cancer diagnosis. He was grieved. He was so grieved to leave his family and CCEF that he loved so much. And he was grieved because he had so much more that he wanted to write and to share. He loved what God had called him to do and having the opportunity to do it. But at the same time, he was absolutely trusting in the God who knew him and had numbered his days. He did pray and he asked us to pray that he would be healed, but he trusted God with whatever would happen. And he was just steadfast in that way and that hope and that trust until the end. But David would be the first one to say to us that this psalm is not about him. It's about Jesus and that if any of it is true of him, David, it is because the God that he loved had worked in him by the power of the spirit over the course of a lifetime. Transforming him from glory to glory into the image of Jesus. And so I'm sure like the rest of you, as I grieve and as you grieve, we do miss him. We will miss him, but we are also so comforted and happy that he is now seeing Jesus face to face.

Barbara Aills and Steve Estes, two of our CCEF board members will now lead us in prayer.

Steve Estes:

As Barbara and I pray, there's a real temptation in front of all of us, as there always is whenever someone is leading out loud in prayer. And that is for the people listening to listen as opposed to pray, but what the goal here is, is since David was created in order to bring praise to God, the goal here is that this room full of people inaudibly pray as you hear an audible prayer of thanksgiving to God for this man's life. And then as Barbara prays for this dear family. Shall we pray? Our good Father, thank you for the physical appearance of this man. Thank you for his lanky frame. Thank you for his unruly wisps of hair that went straight down his forehead and his smile that was warm and impish, but thank you God even more for the person that he was. Thank you Father that he mirrored your son so well. We are pleased that he cared so deeply for his family and he did it in semblance of the one who from the cross said to the disabled John, take care of my mother.

Lord, have any of us known a more gentle man? But he got that from the one who said take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart. Lord, did we not delight in the content and the tone of his language? And yet his speech came from the carpenter of Galilee of whom we read all were amazed at

the gracious words that fell from his lips. Father, did he not have a brilliant mind? Yet we know that he had the mind of Christ. In controversial subjects and debates, did he not often give reasonings that were so penetrating and unanswerable? And Lord, we know that's because he was filled with the one who was far greater, of whom it was said that no one could say a word in reply to what Jesus had spoken.

God, what wisdom we heard from this man's voice and yet Lord, we heard it only because he had learned it from your son whose enemies admitted no one ever spoke like this man. Father, what vivid word pictures and stories were in David's teaching, but he himself was taught by the one who told us things like consider the lilies of the field and the kingdom of God is like a man who had two sons. Lord, we all know that when he's speaking to any one of us, he looked at us like we were the only people, the only one in the room. But of Jesus, it is said time and time again, before Jesus spoke a word to somebody and Jesus looked at him and said the following. God, we remember David's physical touch, an arm around the shoulder, a hug, a hand on an arm. Oh, did – Lord, did he not get this from the one who put his hands on the lepers, who touched the blind, and placed his divine fingers in the ears of the deaf?

Father, David would stop and find time for those of us who would stop him and speak when doubtless he had a myriad of things to do. He did this because he was loved and bought by the savior who was pressed for time when he went to raise a girl from the dead and a crowd was pressing him, but he stopped to discuss and heal a woman with so much bleeding. Lord, we are so grateful that David never met a person that he considered to be a hopeless cause, but he was like that because he worshiped a savior who cast seven demons out of Mary Magdalene. Thank you God that he not only could give the kind word, but that in kindness, he could give the hard word and he did so because he saw the savior speak hard words to people in love. As Jesus said in Nicodemus, are you a teacher in Israel and seriously don't you know these things?

Lord, many people were drawn to David, but it was because someone was living in him who when he was on earth, we read that great crowds followed him. David cared to bring the message of your word to people around the world, in Great Britain, in India, in Korea, and elsewhere. He did so because your son first said I have other sheep not of this fold. I must go and teach them as well. And yet Lord, we know that David would make no comparison between himself and Jesus. David would only say he must increase

and I must decrease. Lord, thank you for his perception because he loved the wonderful counselor. Thank you Lord that his writings and his presence and his words would give us calmness when we felt restless and troubled because he followed one who stilled the sea with his words.

God, when our hearts were lifted and thrilled by things that David taught and spoke, we know it is because he pointed us to you of whom when you spoke, people said did not our hearts burn within us as he spoke to us. Lord, he was a dad to many and in this sense just a small reflection of your son whom Isaiah called the everlasting father. Jesus, the reason we love David is because he reminded us of you and when we consider your full glory, doubtless it was mirrored in David, dimly to be sure. But Father, though we know that David could never match your son, my what a reflection we saw of Jesus in his life. And so Lord, for us who have never seen your Jesus, you gave us this stunning human picture. Thank you, thank you for sharing him with us.

Barbara Aills:

Gracious Father, we need you to help us. All of us are struggling to understand what life without David Powlison will look like. It's hard to imagine. It even feels surreal that he's not with us today worshiping you whom he loved so deeply. We miss this man who kept such close company with Jesus. Our hearts are full of a strange mixture of deep sorrow at our loss and honest joy knowing David is worshiping in your very presence this moment. Lord, help us face this reality. This is happening. We are really celebrating David's life today and we are really saying goodbye to him. Please help us.

And now Father, we pray for David's precious family, those who feel this loss most profoundly. David delighted in his family. Each person was such a good gift from you. Lord, we pray for David's brother and sister, Danny and Diane and their families. They have lost their big brother. We pray for Nan's sisters, Tammy and Jody, and her brother, Cleveland, and for their mother, Mrs. Gardener. They will miss all the family gatherings in Hawaii and Vermont. Lord, comfort them in their grief. And Father, we pray for David's precious grandchildren. He loved to tell us stories about them and he delighted in each of them. He grieved that he would not meet his seventh on earth. Lord, they miss their grandpa, their Baba, and will miss him profoundly in the years to come. We pray for Peter and Carrie's son, Cameron. We pray for Gwen and Andrew's daughters, Michaela, Sophie, Caroline, and Charlotte. We pray for Hannah and ___ son, Ezra and their baby due in October. Jesus,

would you shine your face on these little lambs? May they always know the legacy of their grandfather's life: faith, joy, and love.

And oh, how David loved his children. His Peter, his Gwenyth, his Hannah. He marveled at their unique personalities, gifts, and talents, and they were each lodged deeply within his heart. David grieved that his time with them on earth was ending. Lord, help them in the coming days when they long to hear his voice on the phone or sit with him in long conversations. Processing life and getting wisdom from their father and father in law. Please comfort Peter and Carrie, Gwen and Andrew, Hannah and ___ in their unspeakable sorrow and loss. Jesus, would you shine your face on David's precious children and their spouses? May they always know the legacy of their father's life: faith, joy, and love.

Oh, Father, we pray for David's beloved wife. Nan has lost her dear husband and the poetry of their lives together has come to an end. Thank you for the past seven months as David was dying, for the countless walks together, long fruitful conversations, and intimate prayers. When all the activity slows down and her family departs for their homes, Jesus, would you be Nan's husband in the quite loneliness without David? Please hear her cries for help. Soothe her sorrows and fears. Lord, will you repay from your own fullness all you have taken away? And oh, Lord, please help Nan face all the firsts without David, the first falling of maple leaves, the first look at their new grandbaby, the first CCF conference, the first Christmas carol sung. Pour out your grace on Nan. In this new season, fill her days with purpose and meaning. Jesus, please shine your face on Nan. May she always know the legacy of her beloved husband's life and faith, joy, and love.

Gracious father, thank you for David Powlison, who showed us the art of living and the art of dying well. Please comfort the Powlison family, knowing David has passed through death into the very presence of the lamb of God who died for his sins. David has met Jesus face to face and he has heard you, his good shepherd, call him by name. He is in his father's home where he has no pain. All darkness has become bright and all his tears are wiped away. Thank you, Father. Lord, may your goodness and loving kindness follow the Powlison family all the days of their lives. We pray in the precious name of Christ. Amen.

Hymn: I Will Arise and Go to Jesus

Come ye sinners poor and needy
Weak and wounded sick and sore

Jesus ready stands to save you
Full of pity love and power

Come ye thirsty come and welcome
God's free bounty glorify
True belief and true repentance
Every grace that brings you nigh

I will arise and go to Jesus
He will embrace me in His arms
In the arms of my dear Savior
O there are ten thousand charms

Come ye weary heavy laden
Lost and ruined by the fall
If you tarry till you're better
You will never come at all

I will arise and go to Jesus
He will embrace me in His arms
In the arms of my dear Savior
O there are ten thousand charms

Lo the incarnate God ascended
Pleads the merit of His blood
Venture on Him venture wholly
Let no other trust intrude

I will arise and go to Jesus
He will embrace me in His arms
In the arms of my dear Savior
O there are ten thousand charms

Esther Liu:

You may be seated. Our scripture reading for today is from 2
Corinthians 3:17-4:6

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is,
there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the
glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from
one degree of glory to another. For this comes from Lord who the
is the Spirit.

Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not
lose heart. But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways.
We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but

by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This is the word of the Lord.

Steve Midgley:

It is, as you will very much understand, a very great privilege to have been asked to speak on this occasion. It could come as something of a surprise to you that a random Brit like me should've been given this honor. It certainly took me by surprise when David asked me back in April and then I discovered about the Hawaiian shirt bit and suddenly it all made sense. I could see the twinkle in David's eye, that mischievous grin appearing. He was able to imagine a reserved Brit like me stood here in a shirt like this. David wanted me to speak on just one single verse, 2 Corinthians 4:6, which as we've heard was his life verse. Let me read it again.

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. What you notice first is the gift that is given, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. That is the gift that God gives, a knowledge of God's very glory. What's being described here is like an internal illumination. This light of God's glory being shone right into the very heart of a person, right into the very core of their being so they are enlightened within. And over these past ten days, I have found myself asking what does that look like in a person. What exactly happens when someone is illuminated in that way? And I found myself puzzling over lots of the tributes that have flooded the internet to David's life over these past ten days.

And as I read them, a theme seemed to emerge and it's emerged again in today's memorial service. That again and again what people want to describe about David, what they want to emphasize is David in relationship, David in conversation, David being with people. Jeremy Pierre said this: like few other people I know, David would engage his full interest in the person sitting across from him, happy to explore their unique experience. You felt cared for talking about anything from counseling theory to Philadelphia sports. Kevin Deyoung, speaking of a long van journey, said except for our questions, David talked almost the entire time. It

was one of the few times I can remember in life when someone dominated hours of conversation as an act of humility.

How about this from my colleague in the U.K., Andrew Collins. Masterful in his thinking, yet so down to earth, ordinary, approachable as he reclined in his maroon bathrobe, talking about the three threes model at 7:30 a.m. in the morning. Those of us who've been in his house will remember – know well the maroon bathrobe. And I think it was John Henderson writing of the way that David spoke with colleagues in the council of the biblical counseling coalition. He nails it for me. I can recall so many moments of conferences and leadership summits when I would look over and see David sitting in a corner with a little group of you, listening intently, speaking gently, lost in the conversation as if nothing else mattered in the world. He knew how to zero in and that was it, I thought. That phrase, he knew how to zero in.

David used to like to say that sin could be captured as an incurving, a person turning in on themselves. God had worked something very different in David. Like Jesus, he turned out, turned out toward people. He gave them time. He gave them his heart. More than anyone I ever met, David seemed constantly aware of the presence of God in his life. So many things communicated that about him. One was the way that he loved to sing. My wife Beth and I had the privilege of hosting David a couple of times in our home in Cambridge. One memory sticks in the mind. David and Nan are in the living room of our house in Cambridge. We're approaching bedtime and a lovely evening of conversation is coming to a close, and David says, shall we sing?

Now I don't know how your evening bedtime routine goes in your home, but I confess that for me at least unaccompanied choruses are not my normal evening routine. And you can probably imagine how the four of us spontaneously turning to song – and Nan, I'm sorry, it wasn't a song that Beth and I knew terribly well – could've been just a little bit awkward, but it wasn't. It wasn't in the least bit awkward. It was utterly right, utterly appropriate. It was even beautiful. Something about David and Nan sat on our sofa worshipping their Lord made it that, beautiful as they led us into the presence of Christ. And I've come to realize that was David's gift, that by himself living so absolutely in an awareness of the presence of Christ in his own life, that just overflowed to whoever he was beside. It was also there in the way that David loved to pray.

It was about year after the curious incident of the singing at bedtime that I had the very great joy of becoming one of the many

attic dwellers that have lodged in David and Nan's home. And I soon learned that there were many features of Powlison family life that I needed to become more aware of, one of which was the time that it took to get from the attic to the front door. It's not that David and Nan's house is huge. It's just that I could pretty much guarantee that on that journey at some point, I would be intercepted. It might be on the first floor, usually by David in that maroon bathrobe and he would fix his eyes upon me and ask me what my day had in store.

Actually just saying that reminds me, did you catch a little line in John Piper's tribute online? No one, he said, greeted me like David Powlison. Eyes fixed on mine, smiling gently, seeing, asking. That was it. He'd capture me, seeing, asking, and draw me into prayer. And even if I was successful in avoiding David on the first floor, Nan would catch me on the hallway and before I got out the door. I learnt to allow at least 15 minutes to leave the house and it was lovely. It was lovely because it was one more way in which David and Nan showed me what it was to be a person in whose heart the light of the glory of God shone.

It was only after David died that I discovered that he wanted me to speak from this one verse and I would so very much have loved to have asked him why. Why this verse? What is it about it? What is it that you want me to say from it? How I would love to have sat at his side once again, scribbling furiously as another exquisite exposition from scripture flowed from his lips so effortlessly, but it wasn't to be. David's decline was too fast, which is why all you have are my distantly second best thoughts. But I want to tell you there is one thing that I feel fairly confident of, which is that David chose this verse because he knew that it would force us to conclude today with the focus not upon him, but upon his Lord.

We have taken much time today to have described all of the ways in which the light of the glory of God shone in David's life. We could go on for many more hours, but at some point, we have to stop and ask the question, how? How did that light get there? And it is clear to me that David wanted no confusion on that issue because he's chosen for us a verse that puts the focus where it absolutely has to be as we conclude, upon his God. For God, who said let light shine out of darkness, shone his light. Who did the shining? God did. Who made this man that we loved so much into the man that he was? God did it. The same God who said let light shine out of darkness.

Did you see the connection? Paul wants us to understand that it's the very God who brought creation into being, the one who stands outside time, the one who brought even light itself into existence with a very word. This God shone the light of the glory of the knowledge of himself into David's life in nothing less than a miracle. Bringing any one of us out of darkness and into his light requires the miraculous work of God in our hearts for David and for any one of us. So the God of creation becomes the God of recreation. And that process is what the dynamic of biblical change, David's basic, essential, glorious, wonderful, foundational course, that's what it's all about. And if you haven't done the course, then sign up today. I'm sure there's somebody from SBC here who will do you a discount deal. And if you do, then you will discover that at the very start of the course, David has us singing. There you are thinking you're in for some serious academic study and instead it's more unaccompanied singing.

'Cause as David puts it, the whole point of this dynamic of biblical change is to cause us, enable us to become worshipers. And then pretty much the next thing that David does is to think about the destination, think about where it is that God is taking us on this dynamic of change. 'Cause when God shines his light into a person's heart, he commits himself to transforming that person as the verse at the end of chapter three of 2 Corinthians tells us, from one degree of glory to another. I would love to quote to you all of the words that David uses to describe the destination. On my way over on the plane, I listened again to the first of those lectures in dynamics of biblical change and turned the speed right down and typed out his words. Let me offer you some of them.

Someday you will be strong and healthy forever. You will be alive forever. No more death. No more decrepitude. All the shadows of death, disability, sickness, disease, weakness, your eyes are bad, you've got diabetes, you might have cancer, nagging fears of Alzheimer's. No more. Healthy forever. How about this one, he says, that you would never ever fret about anyone that you care about: child, spouse, parents, friends. You'd never fret. No more reason for fretting. No more loneliness. No more threat of being hurt. No more injustice. No more things are unfair. No more I'm a victim of bigotry or judgmentalism. No more feeling overwhelmed. No more being driven to distraction by life's pressures. No more disappointment. No more disillusionment. That's where we're headed. That's the goal that we are headed to. Or imagine this, David says, you'll be forever truly and deeply happy. Now remember one morning I woke up. I was just absolutely happy and the next thought that went through my mind

was, what's wrong? How could I feel this way? But imagine that, you'll be absolutely and truly and deeply happy forever.

This is me again now. What we can now be confident of is that transformation, the transformation of which David taught so richly, so fully. He blessed so many of us by drawing us into an understanding of this dynamic of change that God brings about in a person. That transformation is for David now complete. Nan, how I so want you and your children to know the truth of this and be comforted by it. More than that, even to rejoice in it. That the Lord who David served, the Lord who shone light into his heart, the Lord who equipped him for ministry, that this Lord has now completed his great work and is serving David, and David is happy. 'Cause we must know this: even at his brilliant insightful best, and David was brilliant and will miss his brilliance, even at his best, he still saw only a reflection as in a mirror.

And even in the finest of his luminous teaching, teaching that blessed me so much and so many of us here, even then David knew only in part, but now David sees not a reflection, but he says face to face. And David knows not partly, but fully even as he is fully known. And of this one thing we can be utterly certain. David is singing. He is singing. I had not realized till I arrived and looked at the program that the song that has been set for us to conclude now is as it happens that song with which David begins the first of the dynamics of biblical change lectures, *Fairest Lord Jesus*. He gives a long speech about the loveliness of the fairness of Jesus Christ. We have the opportunity now to join him in singing it together. The musicians are gonna come up and lead us as we do that.

As they do so, let me lead us in prayer. Our Father God, it is so precious to us the confidence that you grant because the work that has been accomplished in David has been accomplished on the cross through the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus. All that was needed for David to be saved and to be taken into glory, and to be in your presence forever. All of that has been done and we rejoice that can give us confidence today as we commit him to your care, knowing that in your presence he knows now eternal happiness and goodness. Amen.

Hymn: Fairest Lord Jesus

Fairest Lord Jesus
Ruler of all nature
Son of God and Son of Man
Thee will I cherish Thee will I honor

Thou my soul's glory joy and crown

Fair are the meadows
Fairer still the woodlands
Robed in the blooming garb of spring
Jesus is fairer
Jesus is purer
Who makes the woeful heart to sing

Fair is the sunshine
Fair is the moonlight
And all the twinkling starry host
Jesus shines brighter
Jesus shines purer
Than all the angels heav'n can boast

Beautiful Savior
Lord of the nations
Son of God and Son of Man
Glory and honor
Praise adoration
Now and forevermore be Thine

Jayne Clark:

If you could be seated for just a moment, I have a couple of closing announcements and then we'll close our time together. Nan and the family will have a receiving line out in the lobby, but if you've already had a chance to greet Nan or you expect to see her soon, if you could just stand back and let other people who've come a distance of haven't had that chance to see her and the family first, that would be greatly appreciated. And as Gwen said, if you could kind of limit it to a greeting, telling them you love them, and a hug, that would be great, but we – they would love to hear more if you would take the time to write out a card. There are plenty of pens and cards and baskets out there for you to do that. There are also displays out there. If you haven't had a chance to see them, you'll see some family pictures and some of David's Hawaiian heritage there. And there's also a display with David's writings and a couple of the interesting points about that, first of all, is just how much is there, but also the languages that certain things have been translated into.

And the Powlisons are a generous family and they have made it possible – there are a couple of mini books out there and a track that has recently come out from Crossway. And if you don't already have one of those tracks, you're welcome to take it or if you do, you're welcome to take and to give it to somebody that you

think it would bless. So please, please do that. And just as the way we will dismiss, the Powlison family will leave first and then if you could just dismiss from the front to the back, that would be great. This may be the hardest part for me, so you're just gonna have to bear with me. You may know that once upon a time, David had done a book called *Power Encounters on Spiritual Warfare*, and he had always wanted to do a different book on spiritual warfare. And so I think it's about two years now, he had done an article in the journal on that subject.

And working with Barbara Juliani, he produced a manuscript of a new book called *Safe and Sound, Standing Firm in Spiritual Battles*. He and Barbara met and did interviews together, and they were transcribed and it was edited from there, but sadly David's decline was so fast, he was not able to see the final manuscript. But it just seemed very fitting today that he would have the last word and to offer the final prayer. So I'm going to read the last two paragraphs of the last chapter in that book, which is called the last battle.

At times, I am tempted to lose heart, but my good shepherd is leading me toward life, not death. One of my favorite hymns is *My Song is Love Unknown* written by Samuel Crossman in the 17th century. It begins love to the love is shone that they might lovely be and then goes on, oh, my friend, my friend indeed who at my life – at my need, his life did spend. Since the first day the Lord invaded my heart with his mercy and grace, I have never lost that sense of the friendship of Jesus, that he showed love to the loveless to make them lovely. That he befriended the friendless, that he befriended the unfriendly that were self-absorbed and all about themselves. That is the gospel of peace. My feet are fitted for this battle with my final enemy, so I do not lose heart.

As Nan and I pray together, we do not lose heart. And even if I did or she did, God's mercy and grace would remain unchanging. We can always turn and ask for help in our time of need. He is always near. This is what the whole Bible is about. It's about life and death. It's about what is gonna happen to you when you die. It's about right and wrong, true and false, hope and despair, obedience and recklessness, faith and idolatry. This is the drama that we and those we minister to are living in, and the miracle is that we are given a new heart, a heart of flesh, and a new spirit that – so that we can and will live forever. What a privilege it has been for me to serve my faithful Savior these many years. What a privilege it has been to walk with others in need and what a joy it will be to see him face to face. Lord, you are the strength of your people. Save

your people, bless your heritage, be their shepherd and carry them.
Thank you that those who look to you in faith will be forever safe
and sound. Amen.

[End of Service]