

# MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR Robert Clyde Mong

**Friday, March 9, 2018 2:00 pm**  
**FUMC Parlor**

**Prelude:** Guest and Family enter

## **WELCOME and Words of Grace**

Good Morning and welcome. Thank you for coming today to celebrate the life of Robert Clyde Mong.

Dying, Christ destroyed our death.  
Rising, Christ restored our life.  
Christ will come again in glory.  
As in baptism Robert Mong put on Christ,  
So in Christ may Robert be clothed with glory.  
Here and now, dear friends, we are God's children.  
What we shall be has not yet been revealed;  
But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him,  
For we shall see him as he is.  
Those who have this hope purify themselves as Christ is pure.

From John 11: "Jesus said, I am the resurrection and I am life.  
Those who believe in me, even though they die, yet shall they live,  
And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."

From John 14 "Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also...Peace I give you; not as the world gives do I give you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

Isaiah 41: 10 Fear not, for I am with you. Be not dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you. I will help you. I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

We praise God that because of the gift of grace, through Jesus Christ, Robert is now spending eternity with God.

Today, we rejoice that Robert believed in Jesus as Lord and called upon him in this life. That gives us a great sense of peace and comfort that he is with God now.

But we are in a mixed place today. While we come praising God that he received Robert, Robert is gone from us.

Your lives will be different because he is not on this earth any longer. You will miss him. But you can be comforted in the fact that God can and will help you in the days ahead.

**PRAYER:**

Please join me in prayer.

Father we are gathered here this afternoon.

To celebrate the life Robert Mong.

Today we are reminded that our life is like a vapor compared to eternity. Help us to see death as you see it:

Not the end but the beginning, Not a dark road...but a path that leads to eternal life. Through Christ's life we have been blessed. Through Christ's death we have been redeemed. Through his resurrection, we have been filled with vibrant hope. In our sorrow, help us to look to the risen Christ.

We thank you, for Robert whose life we honor and remember today. We are grateful for his influence upon family, friends and community. We pray especially for Lori and Lisa and other family members. May they feel your comforting presence. May they know your perfect peace within. May they experience the reality of our sustaining strength. And may they be encouraged through the love and prayers of friends in the days ahead.

Help all of us to live each day with gratitude for your blessings, and with a deep commitment to Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and with hope of eternal life.

In the strong name of Jesus Christ we pray. Amen

**Please stand as you are able.**

**CONGREGATIONAL SONG: Amazing Grace**

**Scriptures**

Robert experienced God's grace.

2 Corinthians 4:16-1

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. 17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on

what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”

Psalm 73:23 “Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand.  
24 You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. 25 Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. 26 My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.  
Please stand as you are able as we sing:

**Congregational Song: “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less”**

**EULOGY/MESSAGE**

Robert is survived by his two daughters Lisa Sifuentes and her husband Enrique and Lori Saws (Saas). His brother Larry Mong. Nephews Milo Schield and his wife Cynthia, Marlo Schield and his wife Connie (who are not able to be here). Marshall Schield and his wife Samantha and Michael Schield and his wife Barbara.

Larry his brother was 4 years younger than Robert. Larry said that he and Robert were very competitive. They would debate or you could say argue over most things. They debated over licking the cake frosting bowl! They wanted to make sure one didn’t get more than the other. Their debates about food didn’t stop there—they would count the scallops around the outside of the pie crust to be sure the other didn’t get a bigger piece! The debate or argument went further—when they were drinking milk they would get down and sight across the milk level in the glass to make certain the other one didn’t receive more.

The food theme continued in their traveling in the back of their old Model A or even their new Plymouth as they drove to the old farm at Uncle Clyde’s and Aunt Irene’s place. They would get into a debate about eating Bing cherries. Their mom had a big challenge dealing with her competitive boys!

Robert and Larry shared a room. If Robert fell asleep first his breathing would keep Larry awake. Larry would initially reach his foot out from under the covers and try to shake Robert’s bed. When that didn’t work he yelled at Robert go on for a while—then Larry would hear his mom and dad down the hall start laughing and giggling. And sometimes the noise did wake Robert up.

In later years when they hadn’t seen each other for a while Robert would say, “Nice suit Larry, you clean up pretty good.” Larry would often reply, “you too!”

Lori said her dad's manner of speech was direct and assertive. When he had something to say, he said it plainly. She never questioned what her Dad might be thinking. He communicated his values, his desires, and his opinions without restraint. He was a straightforward man.

Lori said, Dad played his cards pretty close to the vest. However, his actions revealed his heart. He was devoted to the well-being of their family. He made sure that Lisa and Lori had the richest of life experiences. He assured that their mom could stay at home to raise Lori and Lisa. He provided extravagant trips across Europe, Canada and the US for family vacations to share his love of travel. He provided both of his girls' education at the college of his family's history, Anderson College in Indiana. He taught Lisa and Lori how to live within their means, delay gratification and work until the work is done.

Lisa said her dad was a fairly serious and reserved man. Lisa loved it when he let his child-like character be seen. She recalls in the 1960's in July when her dad and their retired neighbor Mr. Buller had a lot of fun shooting firecrackers. They would light firecrackers under cans and in pipes and run to safety, laughing as they ran. She said her dad probably still had his Bermuda shorts with a burn hole from shooting firecrackers.

Lisa said they would see another side of their dad on family vacations. Trips to Florida had many fun memories. The family of four would find themselves at a cafeteria table, somewhere in Florida, laughing uncontrollably. Their Dad would tuck dinner napkins into his belt. Upon a laughing spell and his standing up from the table, Lori remarked that his napkin looked as if he was wearing a loincloth. Florida also allowed their Dad to watch Spring Training Baseball games, which he loved, instead of shopping with his womenfolk.

Both of Lisa and Lori's parents were very musical. Robert thoroughly enjoyed the love of music, cultivated by his mother who taught piano. He played the violin from early childhood until his death. Lori said her dad shared his love of the violin by placing his tiny, quarter-sized violin in her hands at the age of six. Their grandparents sacrificed during the depression to buy their Dad his violin and provide him lessons. Many years of violin, piano and organ lessons enriched Lori's childhood. And piano and flute enriched Lisa's life. Robert played in area symphonies. Growing up in Pennsylvania, he participated in music competitions, and generally placed in the top three. Robert and Nadine played violin-soprano duets together for many church and family celebrations. Both sang in church choirs and community choruses throughout all their married life. The Mong family of four frequently played musical programs

together for local organizations, at their mother's instigation. They kiddingly referred to their family as the "Von Trapp" family.

As their Grandpa EsKey use to say, "First we work and then we play." Both girls said their dad was first and foremost an excellent provider. He had an admirable work ethic that he learned from his parents. Lori said their dad worked his way up the ladder into management without a college degree. In many ways, he was self-taught. At Schield Bantam, he learned about profit-sharing programs for all, including "the shop" employees. This was a brilliant strategy to get employees "invested" in their jobs, their personal financial goals and ultimately the outcomes, productivity and quality of their work. Quickly, he aspired to his position as International Manager at Hesston Corporation. For many years, he traveled in Europe, Australia, Japan, South America as well as "farm belt" managing operations for Hesston. Robert also managed several small farm equipment manufacturing companies. He had a knack for prudent financial methods that led to profitability. Robert walked the manufacturing floor daily to be in touch with the "front lines" and to personally develop his employees.

Lisa said that their dad was a wise business man as demonstrated in the story of their parent's move to Bella Vista, Arkansas when they retired. Together, their dad and mom picked out a street for their new house that met their criteria. There was one problem, there were no for sale signs in vacant lots. So, Robert talked to residents of the street but they were not encouraging that a lot could be had. That didn't stop their dad. He and their mom went to the Office of Public Records and retrieved the names and addresses of owners of the vacant lots. They mailed personal letters to the owners inquiring if their lot could be purchased. Their perseverance paid off and a seller was found.

Lori said the bar was high for the standards to which their dad held himself, his family and others. Early on, this wasn't her favorite approach but now, she sees the enormous values he instilled that have prepared her and Lisa to live well.

The girl's dad loved cars, especially sports cars. Lisa remembers a couple of car stories. When the family was living in a suburb of Chicago, their dad found a white 70's Alpha Romeo Spider in the classifieds. It was a Sunday morning and they were at church. Robert took Lisa and left church early to track down the car. He wanted to be the first to see it and he was by minutes. He made an offer on the car that was accepted, before a higher offer was made. The Alpha moved with the family to North Manchester, Indiana. He would take the girls speeding on country roads. When they returned to the house their hair would be in knots!

Lisa also recalls Saturday car rides to their father's Hesston employer. Their dad had a gold 1966 Ford Galaxy 500 outfitted with an 8-track player. Dad, Lisa and Lori would sit on the front row bench seat and listen the 8-track of Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass. The girls referred to it as the lady in whipped cream.

Lisa and Lori's parents were Christian parents, people of faith. No matter where they lived they found a church home for the family and became involved in the church in the choir, finance and hospitality. Family devotions at the supper table were common place. Lori and Lisa were given a legacy of faith, family and integrity.

In recent years as dementia and decline stole the best parts of their parents, Lori said that their dad responded to their care with unrestrained love and gratefulness. However, it was clear that losing the love of his life, their mom, through death was more than he wanted to bear. A few weeks before their Dad's fall, they were planning on moving him to memory care. Unexpectedly, God turned the move into their Dad's final homecoming instead. A few days before, God gave their dad a vision of heaven that he described to Lisa and Lori with excitement as his "move upstairs to memory care." It blessed them to know that God knows the number of our days and He prepares and comforts us. As much as it breaks their hearts, they rejoice in the Heavenly Gift their Dad now enjoys.

The day before Robert passed away I visited him, Lori and Lisa in his hospital room. We talked quietly as he slept. He seemed to be unaware of our presence. We gathered around his bed and prayed for him. As I prayed Robert smiled. At the end of my prayer I said Amen, and so did Robert! It surprised all of us.

In Revelation 21, it talks about how all earthly things pass away in heaven. Rev 21:4, "He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain for the old order of things have passed away. 5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new! 7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. 11 It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. 23 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. 25 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

Rev 22:1 “The angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. 3 No longer will there be any curse. 14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city. 17 Come! Let the one who is thirsty come; and let the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

The Bible tells us there is a time for everything. And even with that knowledge it is hard to understand death. But in spite of life and the unexpected circumstances that happen, we can have hope. Death seems bigger than life. But in Jesus Christ, life is bigger than death.

Psalm 34:8 “Taste and see that the Lord is good. Oh, the joys of those who take refuge in him! 15 The eyes of the Lord watch over those who do right; his ears are open to their cries for help. 18 The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed.” (NLT)

So even when the hurt runs deep, God’s love runs deeper.

We thank God for the life of Robert Mong, and we thank God for his love and grace through Jesus Christ.

## **VIDEO**

### **Closing Prayer**

Dear Heavenly Father we thank you that your love never ends. We are here this afternoon because Robert has left his fingerprint upon hearts and lives in some way. We thank you that Robert’s legacy lives on in the life of each person that knew him. For the loss and grief we are experiencing, we pray for your precious touch. We ask for your peace, and your comfort and your encouragement. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen

Before Phil comes to sing, “We Shall Behold Him” listen to I John 3:1-2 “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.”

### **SOLO: “We Shall Behold Him”**

### **BENEDICTION:**

As we go forth may the extravagant love of God our Father, the Amazing Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the intimate friendship of the Holy Spirit be yours.