

Memorial – Jessica Knight - Oct. 9, 2021

Julie, Derek, Travis, family, and friends,
Grace and peace be with you from God our Father and our
Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Grace and peace be with you. Let me say it again – grace and
peace be with you. Grace and peace from God.

Right now those are the most important words we can hear in
the midst of a tragic loss. Grace and peace. Hold onto these
words - today and in the days to come.

Grace – God’s love is unconditional. Peace – there is no end
to God’s love. Grace and peace.

I’m not sure how everyone is feeling right now, because most
likely we are all over the map, but I hope these gifts of God,
grace and peace, bring you comfort no matter how you are
feeling, and I also want to assure you that whatever you are
feeling is valid.

Anger – yes. Disbelief – yes. Resignation – yes. Relief –
yes. Sadness – of course.

Whatever you are feeling right now and in the days, months,
and years to come is valid. But, there is one feeling that I
cannot let you leave here today with and that is despair.

Grace and peace be with you. With Christ there is no despair.

Jessica is a beloved child of God and in her baptism she was
guaranteed the gift of eternal life, so there is to be no despair
for her. Jessica is fine. God has her in God’s loving embrace.
That’s God’s grace and that is our peace.

On the cross, Jesus reached out his arms to bring all people into God's loving embrace – all people – no matter who they are or what they are dealing with. There is no one outside of God's love.

God has been walking with Jessica from her birth, and God continues to walk with her as her loving creator who mourns with us. God after all knows what it is like to lose a child. It is heartbreaking.

Heartbreak – yes. But despair – no.

With God there is no despair. With God there is only hope – eternal hope that goes beyond our human understanding.

And so today we release Jessica into God's care knowing that she is a beloved child of God.

We have done all we can, and now she is resting in God's abundant love.

So, grace and peace be with you.

And if you are currently struggling with the “if onlys” – If only I had done this. If only I had done that. If only... Remember that God's loving embrace is open for you as well.

You are not held responsible for what has happened. Just as Jessica is a forgiven and beloved child of God, so are you.

So, banish those “if onlys” along with any despair from your mind and receive God's grace and peace.

God is with you and God will be with you as you work through your grief. And it will take time to work through this grief that is associated with Jessica's death, and no two of us will grieve the same, but be at peace. God's grace and peace is for all of us. So take them. They are yours.

The whole reason Jesus came was so that all people might know God's unconditional and unending love.

We are baptized into Jesus' death and resurrection, so that we will never forget that God is with us for all of eternity, through all that we experience, and nothing can destroy our relationship with God – nothing, not even drug addiction or death.

And because of our baptism, our relationship with Jessica continues as well, and we know that in the end we will see her again face to face, and we will all rejoice in the fullness God's grace.

Grace and peace be with you.

Christ is with us always.

Thanks be to God. Amen.