

Message at the Funeral of Mildred Twenhafel  
“This Child is destined...for the rising of many”

Luke 2:34  
January 9, 2026  
Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.  
Dear Christian family and friends of Mildred Twenhafel, our text for this celebration of the victory that our sister in Christ, Mildred, has received through her Savior Jesus Christ, is from the Gospel of Luke - Luke 2:34.

**“34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this *Child* is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel,”**

So far the text:

God’s will, God’s timing and His plans are always good. We might not always understand them. But for the believer who daily trusts in the Child, Jesus, whom Simeon lovingly held in his elderly arms, there is much peace and joy. And it is with much joy that I can tell you that Mildred trusted in Jesus, her Savior. And she like the elderly believers in this Christmas story, Simeon and Anna, received much peace and joy for having seen God’s salvation for the world with her eyes of faith.

Simeon, Anna, and Mildred lived their long lives in service to their Lord. And when God decided to call each of them home to their heavenly fatherland, to rest from their labors, they are now served by their Lord with the heavenly feast, by the Master who girds Himself and invites them to sit down and enjoy the heavenly banquet eternally!

It was during the Christmas time, that God called Mildred from this imperfect and fallen world to glory. And so, I thought it was fitting today to recount God’s promises through the voices of two wise servants as they saw the Christ Child, God in the flesh, the Savior of the world. It is Jesus, this Child, who came for us, for Mildred, into our sinful broken world to rescue us by giving His life for us and for Mildred... so that when our lives on this earth come to an end...as they will for each of us...there is a beautiful perfect future awaiting in God’s heavenly kingdom, where He has prepared mansions for all His people.

This corruption of our imperfect sinful nature must put on incorruption to enter heaven, as we heard from 1 Corinthians 15. For this to happen, the only way, the one way for heaven to be opened so sinful people like you and me and Simeon, Anna and Mildred...was for God to come to us and become like us, but without sin, so that He could take upon Himself the corruption of the world and give to us, to Mildred, His incorruption, His righteousness!

Thanks be to God that Mildred received this most precious gift of righteousness in her baptism. So we will hear this Sunday from the Epistle reading from Romans 6 which we read at the beginning of this service:

**“Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,**

And so we who also who have been baptized like Mildred proclaim with Paul in 1 Corinthians 15,

**“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

Mildred lived with this baptismal victory all the 97 years of her life. And so, like Simeon, she could depart in peace when the Lord called her home...depart in peace that her Good Shepherd Jesus was with her for He had forgiven her all her sins.

This is the salvation which Simeon was promised to see before he would die. And God always keeps His promises.

**“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace,  
According to Your word;  
30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation  
31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples,  
32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles,  
And the glory of Your people Israel.”**

God keeps His promises to Mildred and to us. Simeon had one more promise to tell us in the Christmas story. It is the resurrection story, isn't it?

**34 Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this *Child* is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel,”**

The rising of many... literally the resurrection of many. This is the same word which Jesus said, now as an adult, to another woman named Martha.

**“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. 26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.”**

Jesus is the resurrection and the life. Jesus is Mildred’s resurrection and life, and I pray that He is yours also. For believing in Jesus, death has lost its sting. Though our body will rest in the grave, our soul continues to live and never die! And on the last day, when Jesus returns, at the sound of the trumpet, in the twinkling of an eye, the bodies of the believers in the graves will be raised incorruptible, glorified!

Yes, this Child Jesus is destined for the rising of many, for Mildred’s resurrection and for you and me, believers in Christ. For He, Himself, has first risen from the dead! And so He will raise up all His family of believers on the last day! God always keeps His promises!

As you heard this beautiful promise through the Holy Spirit inspired lips of Simeon, he also speaks of a warning. This Child is also destined for the fall of many. Those who reject Jesus and do not believe in Him will fall into eternal ruin. Death will not lose its sting for unbelievers and they will suffer eternally in hell.

As we wait for our Lord’s coming, it is our fervent prayer that He would keep us steadfast in the faith by coming to God’s house like Simeon and Anna to hear His Word be strengthened in our walk of faith. And like Anna to tell of the redemption to the world.

So Paul tells each of us:

**"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."**

Mildred loved to hear God’s Word. Though she couldn’t come to God’s house in her later years, we came to her. And she received the Lord’s Supper for her peace in her heart. This Child that Simeon held would be spoken against, suffer and die for the sins of the

world. And in this sacrament Jesus gives us and He gave Mildred His very body and blood, broken and shed on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins.

Simeon told Mary that it would be especially sad for her. The death of our loved ones is difficult and brings sadness as we miss them, as we miss Mildred. Yet, the glorious news for Mary and all of us is the announcement of the angels to the women at the tomb: “He is risen! He is not here!”

And we look forward to the day when we will see our Lord face to face and all our loved ones again! Thanks be to God who gives us this victory! He is risen! And we say together “He is risen indeed! Alleluia!” Amen.

**And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**