

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR JOHN EDWARD JOHNSON

THE EDMONDS CHAPEL, INDEPENDENT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA, NOVEMBER 21, 1998

“Thou dost show me the path of life; in thy presence there is fulness of joy, in thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.” --Psalm 16:11

Prelude	Dr. Patrick Allen
Opening Sentences and Words of Salutation	The Rev. Dr. James L. Carter
*Hymn: “God of Our Life, Through All the Circling Years” (*Please stand.)	No. 275
Prayer	Dr. Carter
Readings from the Old Testament: Psalm 91; Psalm 121	Dr. Thomas L. Johnson
*Hymn: “The Lord’s My Shepherd, I’ll Not Want”	No. 170
Readings from the New Testament: Romans 11:33-12:2; Philippians 4:4-9	The Rev. Dr. Merwyn S. Johnson
Pastoral Prayer and Our Lord’s Prayer	Dr. Johnson
*Hymn: “Fairest Lord Jesus”	No. 306
Memorial Moments	
*Hymn: “Eternal Father, Strong to Save”	No. 562
*Benediction	Dr. Carter
Postlude	Dr. Allen

The Word from Daddy/Granddaddy/The Great One/John/Chaplain Johnson/Captain Johnny/
Dr. Johnson/Uncle John/Handsome Harry/Old Dog Barking in the Bayou:

I'm still listening to the song of life. Your dear mother was a great song of life. She has moved into another realm of God's domain. It can't be very long before I'll be at her side forever. . . .
--from a letter of August 6, 1998

I've always loved the great hymns and music of the Church and, of course, the Psalms and the great passages of Scripture which are woven into the fabric of life and bring faith, assurance and commitment.

My dear mother used to memorize the things that meant much to her. When she could no longer see to read she repeated the gems to herself and found strength and pleasure in them.

It's been my high privilege to share God's grace with many who have expressed appreciation. When we retired life did not suddenly stop. Lila gave the Bible lesson in Circle #2, and I served 39 churches as interim minister or pulpit supply. --from an undated account (after 1967)

The most important health care person is the wife, mother, daughter, sister, who bears the brunt day and night, week after week, year after year. Whenever there is a pain, or need, she is there to do whatever she can. . . .

Our dear daughter, Carolyn, and her husband, Martin, have given us excellent care for seven years. I do appreciate what they have done for us all these years.

I may not make it to May, but whatever and whenever, I thank God. I've been blessed.

--from the last letter, November 11, 1998

My greatest disappointment is in myself--the mistakes I've made, the stupid things I've said and done, my insensitivities, my thoughtlessness.

My most pleasant surprises have been in my dear wife and family and friends, all of whom have been wonderful!

Remember: in the Navy there are no disappointments, only pleasant surprises.

--from "The Old Navy Philosophy," November 1, 1993

Dearest Ones, you have put me in that wooden box and have taken me to Marion. But I shall return. I'll turn up in the daytime; and as you lie awake at night I'll come to you.

This is the resurrection each one of us will come to sooner or later. The thought of it may help us to understand the resurrection in the New Testament which was written with limited facts but with inspired imagination and with prodigious, eternal significance. --from the "Taps" file