

A Celebration of the Life of Janet Mersereau

The Reverend C. Phillip Craig, Jr.

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*For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd,
and he will guide them to springs of the water of life,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Today we gather in this place

To celebrate - a life well lived.

To honor - a marriage of deep devotion.

To offer - our gratitude.

Gratitude for the manner by which our lives were blessed by the loving hand of Janet Hughes Mersereau.

And gratitude to our God, who has welcomed Janet into his kingdom, and prepares a place for you and for me.

“Do not let your hearts be troubled.”

54 days ago, on July 8th, I was invited to make a pastoral visit to the Mersereau home. I had been honored with invitations to visit before, but this one was different.

Janet and Brad wanted to celebrate the 32nd anniversary of their wedding day, and to renew their vows.

The actual date of their wedding anniversary, August 8th, was still a month away. Brad's Facebook post, though, spoke volumes:

And I quote Brad: *“We look forward to Father Phillip's visit tomorrow when he will celebrate Janet's and my renewal of wedding vows in advance of our 32nd 8/8 wedding anniversary. There's no time like the present”*

Brad welcomed me at the door with his customary hospitality. I sat down in the dining room, with some questions of how I might find Janet.

And then, the bride entered. Warm and welcoming. Bright. Truthfully radiant. Playful. Of good cheer - with sharp eyes, and focus on her beloved Brad.

I'm proud to say that like Janet, I majored in English. I just know she would agree with me when I say that words find greater depth of meaning and significance when they are lived out.

To have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn VOW...

“There's no time like the present”

Almost ten years ago I preached an Easter Sermon entitled SIX WORDS. My premise was that the entire Christian faith could be summed up in just six words spoken by Mary on that first Easter morning, when she proclaimed...

“Jesus is risen from the dead.”

Brad liked that idea of six words.

Since that sermon, Brad has often met me at the door after worship, and handed me one of his trademark calling cards, with a six word summation of my sermon.

More than once, given a choice, I suspect that the congregation would have preferred his six word calling card to my five page homily!

It is true that Janet Mersereau's earthy life ended before August 8th. That symbolic day of her wedding anniversary with Brad.

However, I can speak from experience, and because all of you are here today, I'm sure you can as well, when I say that Janet Hughes Mersereau lived every single day as a celebrated anniversary of her marriage to Brad. Likewise Brad to Janet.

And she lived every single day of her life as a celebrated anniversary of the first day she met any and all of her friends. You and me.

And how often she captured those celebrating - those moments - in the words of her prolific writing - notes - cards. Her letters. And her art.

Janet knew.

There's no time like the present.

Janet's life reflected and modeled that theme.

I wonder, Brad, when you posted that poignant observation on July 7th - if you counted your words.

There's. No. Time. Like. The. Present.

Jesus speaks to us this day, and comforts us in our loss.

“My Father's house has many rooms,” he says.

“I go and prepare a place for you.”

“I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

My friends, do not let your hearts be troubled.

Janet Hughes Mersereau has arrived in our Father's house. And she is well.

In the meantime, may we all remember -

“There's no time like the present.”

Amen.