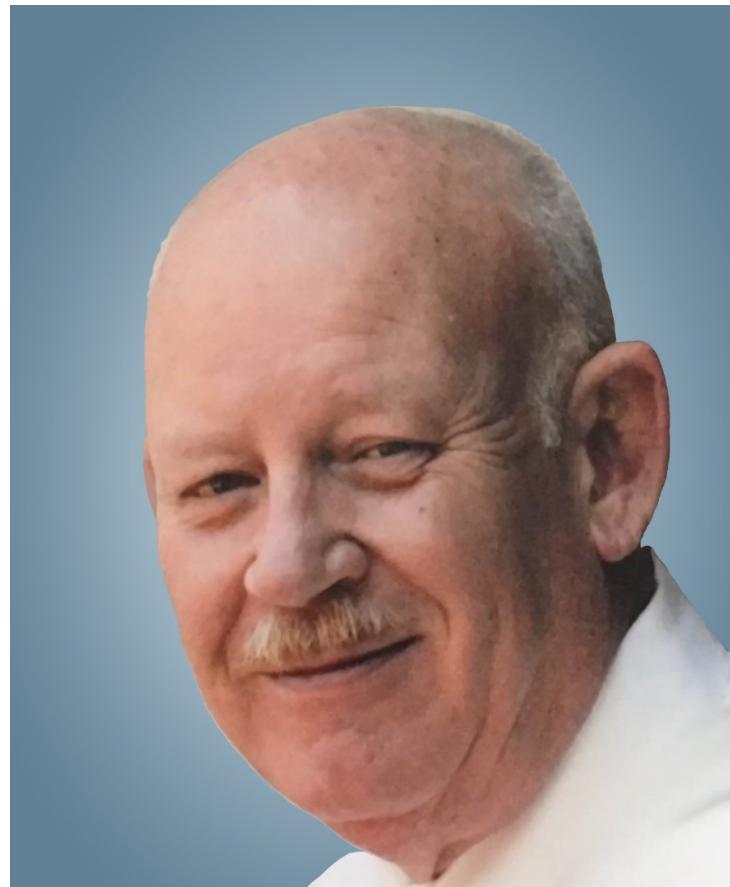


**In Celebration and Thanksgiving for the
Life of
Blanding DeSaussure Roberts Jr.**

June 27, 1947 – December 10, 2025



**January 17, 2026
3:00 p.m.**

**St. Edward's Episcopal Church
Lawrenceville, Georgia**

Remembering Blanding

Surrounded by family and love, Blanding DeSaussure Roberts, Jr. took his final bow on December 10, 2025, leaving behind a lifetime of love, laughter, and endless memories. Born June 27, 1947, in Augusta, Georgia, Blanding grew up in Atlanta, where he marched proudly with his saxophone at Decatur High School before earning his bachelor's degree at North Georgia College. It was there he met the love of his life, Melinda Carolyn Baker, his soulmate of 52 years. Together they built a marriage full of loyalty and devotion until her passing in 2020.

Upon graduation, Blanding was commissioned into the United States Army and served with distinction as a Captain in Vietnam with the 701st Maintenance Battalion, 1st Infantry Division. He earned an Army Commendation Medal and, more importantly, annual bragging rights each December... "Go Army, Beat Navy"! After his honorable discharge in 1974, he returned to Atlanta and joined his father and uncles at Roberts Engineering Corporation, where he spent five decades working alongside family to uphold the company's reputation for integrity and excellence. But Blanding's greatest joy was his family.

Summers were filled with coaching his sons on the football and baseball fields at Redan Park, orchestrating all-star caravans across Georgia, and perfecting his sideline whistle. When the games were over, Tybee Island called, where he crowned himself "Master of the Body Surf," devoured shrimp and crab with gusto, and declared every sunset to be the best one yet. He was a man of simple pleasures: a cold beer, a nice cigar, 2x Titos on the rocks, gumdrops, licorice, old westerns, and even the occasional Hallmark movie (though he'd never admit how much he cried at the endings). He loved visiting with friends, reading John Clancey novels, attending church, sharing fellowship, and bragging endlessly about his grandchildren. His infectious smile could light up a room faster than any HVAC system he ever worked on, and his warmth made knowing him a privilege and loving him effortless. Blanding is preceded in death by his beloved wife Melinda, his son Joseph, his parents Blanding and Ann Roberts, and his brother Thom Roberts. He is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, David and Amy Roberts; grandchildren Taylor and Cole Roberts; brother Sam Roberts; and sister Eleanor Honeycutt. The Roberts family extends heartfelt gratitude to Kristen Smith, who for the past five years provided not only exceptional care but also a loving presence, comfort, and peace of mind. Blanding's legacy is one of joy, laughter, and love...a beacon of light that will continue to shine in the hearts of all who knew him. A service will be held at St. Edward's Episcopal Church, 737 Moon Rd, Lawrenceville, GA 30046 (770-963-6128) on Saturday, January 17, 2026, at 3:00 pm. The family will receive friends from 2:00 pm until the time of service. A reception will follow at Dantes Pizzeria & Trattoria, 2135 Loganville Hwy, Grayson, GA 30017.

In honor of Blanding, please consider a gift to
St. Edward's Episcopal Church 737 Moon Road,



*This leaflet is your guide to the service.
Hymns listed here are in the blue Hymnal 1982 found in the pew rack.*

PRE-SERVICE MUSIC

MILITARY HONORS

PROCESSIONAL HYMN Amazing Grace

HYMN

671

Please stand, if able.

OPENING COLLECT

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Presider: Let us pray.

Eternal God, your mercy is without end, and your steadfast love never ceases: Accept our prayers for Blanding, and receive him into the land of light and joy, into the company of your saints; for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Please be seated for the lessons.

THE FIRST READING

Colossians 3:12-

14

A Reading from the book of Colossians.

Read by David

Roberts

As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

Lector: The Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 23

Led by Darcey

Tatum

The People read responsively

1 The LORD is my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.

2 **He makes me lie down in green pastures ***
and leads me beside still waters.

3 He revives my soul *
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.

4 **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; ***
**for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.

6 **Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life, ***
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

SEQUENCE HYMN

Be still my soul

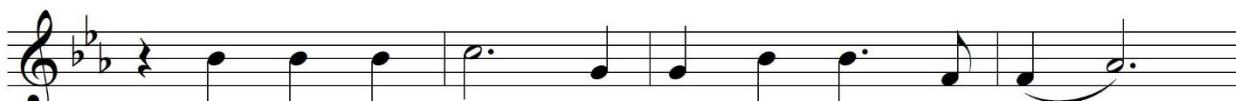
Please stand, if able.



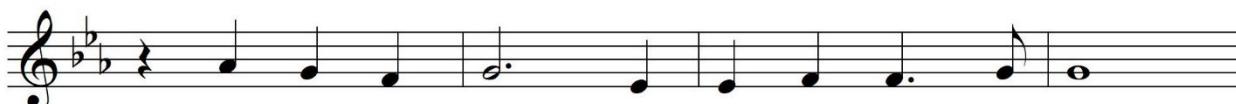
Be still, my soul! the Lord is on thy side;—
Be still, my soul! thy God does un - der - take—
Be still, my soul! the hour is has - tening on—



Bear pa - tient - ly the cross of grief or pain;
To guide the fu - ture as he has the past;
When we shall be for - ev - er with the Lord,



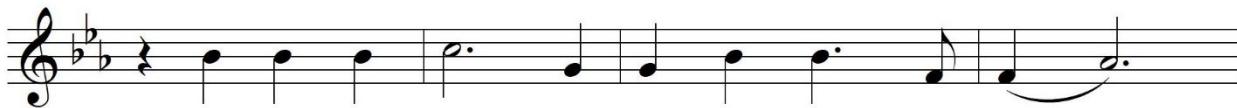
Leave to your God to or - der and pro - vide;—
Thy hope, thy con - fi - dence, let noth - ing shake;—
When dis - ap - point - ment, grief, and fear are gone,—



In ev - ery change he faith - ful will re - main.
all now mys - te - rious shall be bright at last.
Sor - row for - got, love's pur - est joys re - stored.



In ev - ery change he faith - ful will re - main.
all now mys - te - rious shall be bright at last.
Sor - row for - got, love's pur - est joys re - stored.



Be still, my soul! thy best, thy heav'n - ly friend ____
Be still, my soul! the waves and winds still know ____
Be still my soul! when change and tears are past, ____



Thru' thorn - y ways leads to a joy - ful end.
His voice who ruled them while he dwelt be - low.
All safe and bless - ed we shall meet at last.

THE GOSPEL READING

JOHN 14:1-6

Deacon: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People: **Glory to You, Lord Christ.**

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Deacon: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

People: **Praise to You, Lord Christ.**

Please be seated.

EULOGY

David Roberts

POEM

Remember me

Taylor Roberts

HOMILY

The Rev. Fabio

Sotelo

APOSTLE'S CREED

Please stand, if able.

In the assurance of eternal life given at Baptism, let us proclaim our faith and say,

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

**He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Read by Kip

Cloward

For our brother Blanding, let us pray to our Lord Jesus Christ who said, “I am Resurrection and I am Life.”

Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to us who mourn for Blanding, and dry the tears of those who weep.

Hear us, Lord.

You wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend; comfort us in our sorrow.

Hear us, Lord.

You raised the dead to life; give to our brother eternal life.

Hear us, Lord.

Our brother was washed in Baptism and anointed with the Holy Spirit; give him fellowship with all your saints.

Hear us, Lord.

He was nourished with your Body and Blood; grant him a place at the table in your heavenly kingdom.

Hear us, Lord.

Comfort us in our sorrows at the death of our brother Blanding; let our faith be our consolation, and eternal life our hope.

Hear us, Lord.

Silence may be kept.

Presider: Lord Jesus Christ, we commend to you our brother Blanding, who was reborn by water and the Spirit in Holy Baptism. Grant that his death may recall to us your victory over death and be an occasion for us to renew our trust in your Father's love. Give us, we pray, the faith to follow where you have led the way; and where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, to the ages of ages. **Amen.**

THE PEACE

Presider: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Please be seated.

HYMN

645

Please stand, if able.

The King of love my shepherd is

HYMN

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Presider: As our Savior Christ has taught us, we now pray,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

THE COMMENDATION

Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints,

where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

You only are immortal, the creator and maker of mankind; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return. For so did you ordain when you created me, saying, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Blanding. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

THE BLESSING

Presider: Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day. The blessing of God the almighty Father, Son, and Holy Spirit remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Deacon: Rest eternal grant to him, O Lord:

People: **And let light perpetual shine upon him.**

Deacon: May his soul, and the souls of all the departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. **Amen.**

Deacon: Alleluia. Christ is risen.

People: **The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.**

Deacon: Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

HYMN

For all the saints

HYMN 287

Sts. 1, 3, 4, 7 & 8

POSTLUDE

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee

St. Edward's Episcopal Church

737 Moon Road

PO BOX 351

Lawrenceville, Georgia 30046

www.StEds.love (770) 963-6128



Those Serving Today

Presider – The Rev. Fabio Sotelo

Deacon of the Word – The Rev. Alyssa Sali

Verger – Leslie Nystrom

Flowers – Marquelle Martin

Altar Guild – Jewel Efrench

Crucifer – Salena Staub

Torches – Pat Bush & Valerie Curry

Thurifer – John Nystrom

Ushers – The Brotherhood of St. Andrew

Sound & Video – Ted Ruchalski

Piano & Organ - Carla Strott

St. Edward's Choir

Leslie Nystrom, Parish Administrator

Leslie Nystrom, Verger

Carla Strott, Director of Worship Arts

Gustavo Romero, Director del Coro

Ted Ruchalski, Media Engineer & Technology Consultant

William Paesewe, Treasurer

Diane Van Slyke, Assistant Treasurer

Magalie Nemorin-Nonez, Bookkeeper

Nicole Harrison, Chancellor

The Vestry of Saint Edward's

Jennifer Khaleel, Senior Warden

Darcey Tatum, Junior Warden

Brendalyne Tamba-Dahn, Alma Hurtado, Martha Cuenca,

Teresa Guzmán, Ruth Mannah, Lorenzo Clarke, George Herrin,

Kathy Yukishige, Charmaine Mitchell, Lee Ann Sipe.

Youth Representatives to the Vestry: Lawrence Toomey

III

& Emmanuel Mitchell.

Mary Lu Rogers, Clerk of the Vestry.

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Parish Personnel

The Rt. Rev. Robert C. Wright, Diocesan Bishop

The Rev. Fabio Sotelo, Rector

The Rev. Alyssa Sali, Deacon