

O God of grace and glory, we remember before you this day our sister Gail. We thank you for giving *her* to us, *her* family and friends, to know and to love as a companion on our earthly pilgrimage. In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see in death the gate of eternal life, so that in quiet confidence we may continue our course on earth, until, in our time we too are joined into the fullness of your love. *Amen.*

I always enjoyed seeing Gail at various public events in Stamford. She moved so easily and gracefully amidst the cacophony of this fundraising cocktail hour or that post-concert soiree. And more often than not when you saw her, she possessed a mischievous little twinkle in her eye. She had an idea. She had a plan. She needed you to meet someone whom she knew you would hit it off with and with whom you could further the work you both were involved in. Call it social. Call it civic. Some of you, I know, would call it exhausting. Always something to do, something to work on, something to improve her beloved city. Gail's relentless movement to connect people and create activities and efforts that would improve the life of everyone in Stamford was, perhaps, her life's work. Howard Thurman once wrote, "Don't ask what the world needs. Ask what makes you come alive, and go do it. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive." Well, Gail was alive. And what made her come alive was working to improve Stamford and enjoying that work with so many of you along the way. Whether it was the Ferguson Library, ARI, Stamford Rotary, the Interfaith Council, the Bartlett Arboretum, or any number of other organizations, Gail was deeply involved and committed to improving life for everyone in Stamford.

We joked that Gail's church was Stamford itself. Part of the congregation is gathered here. So many of the congregation probably never even knew her, but their lives were made a little bit better because of Gail's ideas, plans, and connections. Furthermore, the sacrament of this church is not bread and wine or water. As it has been down the centuries, the sacrament is, in part, the people. Flesh and blood who offer us a window into the Holy. People like Gail and you who, though not perfect and we all have our foibles and frailties, find ways to embody elements of the divine: moments and actions of love, mercy, justice, and grace. Friends, colleagues, family, the larger creation all opportunities to recognize and participate in a bit of the holy present here and now. And I think that is how Gail engaged the world. Indeed, her ideas, plans, and connections were the ways she involved herself in this holy endeavor, left this time and place--this city--a bit better than she found it, and blessed us all in the process. Blessed be Gail's memory among us.