

## About the choral anthem

George Matheson, born 1842, wrote the text of our choral anthem. At age 20, he was engaged to be married but began losing his eyesight. When he broke the news to his fiancée, she decided she could not go through life with a blind husband, and she broke off their engagement.

George's eldest sister cared for him for the next twenty years. With her help in completing his studies, he entered pastoral ministry. His blindness forced him to memorize his sermons. Nonetheless, he had a prolific preaching ministry.

In time, George's sister was married, leaving him bereft of care. Although he did not begrudge her joy of living her own life, he undoubtedly felt very much alone. On the night of her wedding, he began to meditate on the unfailing love of God for him, penning his most famous hymn: *O love that wilt not let me go*.

It speaks of the Christian response to God's great love for us: that we are to dedicate our lives in service to him. In doing so, Jesus assures us of both earthly and eternal joy, saying in Matthew 16:25, "whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

I found tremendous comfort in this hymn during the years I cared for Mom. Amid the uncertainty of how long the season of caregiving would last and what difficulties lay ahead, I could sing "I give thee back the life I owe" not only to God, but to Mom, after a lifetime of love and care she gave to me.

Finally and ultimately, the text reminds us that no matter what trials we face in this life, we can be confident that God's promise in Revelation 21:4 is not vain: "He will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." Indeed, that morning in the new heavens and the new earth shall tearless be!

-Tim Graham



*Paula Jo Graham*

**October 7, 1953 - March 10, 2024**

**Memorial Service: March 23, 2024**  
**Church of the Saviour**

**A Worship Service of Praise to God  
for the Life of Paula Jo Graham**

Rev. Stephen Chang, officiant  
Andy Lenko, music director

**Prelude:**

*Be Still, My Soul*     *It Is Well With My Soul*  
*Fairest Lord Jesus*     Beverly Moore, organ

*Give Me Jesus*     *My Jesus, I Love Thee*  
Byron Hawthorn, piano

**Gathering song:** *Come To Me* by Dan Forrest

Allan Mosher, soloist (cousin)  
Jennifer Mosher, piano

Come to Me, all you who labor  
Come to Me, and I will give you rest;  
Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened  
And you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:28-29)

Come, my child, (2 Corinthians 6:18)  
Learn my heart: For I am gentle and lowly. (Matt. 11:29)  
See how great my love for you  
that I have called you my child. (1 John 3:1)

**Welcome, Introduction, & Invocation**

**Call to Worship:** from *Psalms 30*

**Hymn:** #262 *Holy, Holy, Holy*

**Hymn:** #233 *Alleluia! Sing to Jesus*

**Scripture Reading:** from *1 Corinthians 15*  
Allan Mosher

**Hymn:** #364 *My Jesus, I Love Thee*

**Hymn:** #80 *I Love You, Lord*

**Choral anthem:** *O Love* by Elaine Hagenberg  
Amy Walker, violin

O Love that will not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe,  
That in thy ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be.

O Joy that seeks me through pain,  
I cannot close my heart to thee;  
I trace the rainbow through the rain,  
And feel the promise is not vain,  
That morn shall tearless be.

**Remembrances:** Daniel, Robert, & Timothy Graham, sons

**Hymn:** *Yet Not I But Through Christ In Me*

**Scripture Reading:** Ecclesiastes 3:1-8  
Allan Mosher

**Homily:** Rev. Stephen Chang

**Unison Reading:** from the *Heidelberg Catechism*  
Question & Answer #1

**Hymn:** *Christ Our Hope In Life and Death*

**Closing Sentences & Benediction**

**Postlude:** *To God Be the Glory*  
Beverly Moore, organ

You can access a recording of this service at [thegrahamhub.com/paula](http://thegrahamhub.com/paula).