



**THE COMMUNITY OF ST. PHILIP
AT WORSHIP**

SEPTEMBER 28, 2024

A SERVICE OF WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION

IN MEMORY OF

VELMA GUY TOLBERT

FEBRUARY 18, 1931—AUGUST 23, 2024

PRELUDE

OPENING SENTENCES

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

✠ HYMN 1

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty

NICAEA

✠ PRAYER

Eternal God,
our strength and our comfort,
our hope and our help,
your love cares for us in life
and watches over us in death.
We praise you for the great company
of all those who have kept the faith,
finished their race,
and who now rest from their labor.
Especially we thank you for Velma,
whom you have now received into your presence.
We are grateful for all she gave us,
for the memories that will abide with us,
and for the assurance that she lives forever
in the peace and joy of your unending love.
Take from us now our regrets and sorrows,
and grant us your grace, we pray,
that as we face the mystery of death
we may see the light of eternity,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

silent prayer

Holy One, in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

✠ DECLARATION

REMEMBRANCES

CELLO VOLUNTARY

Lamentation for a Friend

Monique Gabus
(1924-2011)

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Psalm 23
Psalm 84
Romans 8:31-39
Revelation 22:1-5

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

✠ HYMN 450

Be Thou My Vision

SLANE

SERMON

SOLO

Pie Jesu (from Requiem)

Gabriel Fauré
(1845-1924)

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;
for Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

✠ **HYMN 649**

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound

AMAZING GRACE

✠ **COMMENDATION**

✠ **BLESSING**

✠ **POSTLUDE**

*I have fought the good fight;
I have finished the race;
I have kept the faith.*

- 2 Timothy 4-7

*Following the service, everyone is invited to a reception
in the Gathering Area adjacent to the Sanctuary.*

Worship Leaders

Rev. Dr. John W. Wurster

Matthew Dirst, organist
Barrett Sills, cellist
Julia Fox, soloist



VELMA GUY TOLBERT, 93, a bright, independent and spirited woman, grew up in the small town of Kinnear's Mills, Quebec, Canada.

As a young woman, her world would dramatically change after she was recruited by American Airlines in 1954. Based in New York City and Los Angeles, Velma was the first stewardess at American who was not a nurse. Eventually, Velma was promoted to Supervisor of Stewardesses (now known as flight attendants). Her job included interpreting union contracts, orienting and training flight attendants and serving as their first-line manager. For the remainder of her life, Velma enjoyed her association with the KIWIs, a group of former American Airlines' flight attendants.

In 1966, Velma was hired by the New York Stock Exchange, where she became Supervisor of the Wage, Salary and Benefits Division. This rank was an extraordinary feat for a female at that time (and especially considering that the New York Stock Exchange had 3,500 employees).

Attending evening classes, Velma obtained her Bachelor of Business Administration in Personnel Administration and Industrial Relations from the Bernard Baruch-City College of New York. Subsequently, Velma attended New York University and obtained her certificate in Personnel Management.

Velma traveled extensively for work and for pleasure. She could wisely converse about most countries. For a brief time around 1970, Velma enjoyed living in Nice, France (overlooking the Mediterranean Sea)!

In 1971, Velma became the Nurse Recruitment Administrator at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center in NYC (at the time the largest teaching hospital in the nation with 1650 beds). Hired during a crisis when the nursing shortage was closing hospital beds, Velma successfully generated a recruitment drive that significantly raised the number of nurses at the hospital.

Aramco Services Company hired Velma in 1978 and she relocated to Houston. For almost 20 years, Velma worked for Aramco, where she served as Senior Industrial Relations Advisor and staffed numerous Saudi Aramco medical facilities. Velma became a recognized authority on the recruitment of doctors, medical specialists and health care professionals in the Middle East. Throughout her career, Velma succeeded in business, at a time when few women were hired for supervisory positions.

At the age of 83 years, Velma began a new adventure with Leslie "Jack" Tolbert, a dashing pilot she had met 60 years earlier at American Airlines (where he served as a captain). Jack brought great joy to Velma's life and in 2014, they married. Subsequently, the "big city girl" Velma gave up the bright lights of Houston and moved to Jack's home in Keller, Texas. Although Velma and Jack did not have a lifetime together, they enthusiastically enjoyed the years they shared. Velma was extremely proud when Jack was honored by the Texas Legislature for his lifetime achievements in aviation.

Throughout the years, religion remained at the forefront of Velma's life. For 18 years, she was a faithful member of Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in NYC, where she served on the Visitation and Membership Commission and the Employment Advisory Counsel. After relocating to Houston, Velma served as Deacon and Elder at Central Presbyterian Church (which merged with St. Philip Presbyterian Church). Velma gave generously to Presbyterian churches, religious charities, and San Francisco Theological Seminary (where she endowed a preaching scholarship). Insightful sermons and uplifting music spoke to Velma's heart.

Her intellect was obvious to all. Each day, Velma would read the *New York Times* from cover to cover. Thereafter, in earnest, she would ask your opinions on the world situation, global matters, politics and the law. A great conversationalist, Velma loved spending time with her friends. Particularly, she enjoyed hosting dinner parties (which were often held on the patios of her favorite restaurants). To everyone's delight, Velma enjoyed ordering fine wines, exotic dishes and tasty desserts. At each dinner party, a great time was had by all!

Velma was predeceased by her husband, Leslie "Jack" Tolbert, her parents, Nelson Allan Guy and Della Patterson Guy, and her sisters, Aleta Guy Nesbitt and Delma Guy Newell (twin to Velma). Also, her beloved dogs, Lucy and Max, predeceased her. She is survived by her cousins, Patricia Taylor, Audrey Guy Allan and Erma Perry, and her stepson, Morgan Tolbert.

Memorial contributions may be made to Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church or San Francisco Theological Seminary – University of Redlands or a charity of your choice. May the memory of Velma's intellect, smile, laughter and joy of life remain with us always!