

Archbishop Stephen writes a tribute in today's [York Press](#)

When Her Late Majesty the Queen wasn't able to attend the Platinum Jubilee service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, where I had the unexpected honour of preaching, it was, I think, the first sign that her health was beginning to fail. Here we are, only three months later, mourning her death and giving thanks for her extraordinary life of service, and I have the honour of playing a small part in her funeral in Westminster Abbey.

Lots of words have been written and spoken in the past week, and all of them seem to me to centre around two things: Her Late Majesty's great faithfulness and service to our nation and the Commonwealth; and the way in which this flowed from her Christian faith. She, too, knew that she was one under authority.

In today's funeral, we will commend her life to the God she served so faithfully, and start looking forward to the reign of King Charles III, praying that as this grief has brought us together as a nation, so we may remain united across boundaries of difference. We face many challenges. We need to work together for the common good.

Things change. Endings lead to new beginnings. We look forward and we look backwards. Our hearts are thankful for what has been, and hopeful for what lies ahead.

Simon Armitage, our wonderful Yorkshire Poet Laureate has written a beautiful poem, *Floral Tribute*, to mark the death of the Queen. Realistic about change and death, the opening line is this: "Evening will come, however determined the late afternoon." And later on, he writes of the Queen, "A promise made and kept for life – that was your gift."

We have been brought together by her death and inspired by her service. Let's keep it that way.

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