

Lyttleton B. P. Gould Memorial Service ~ April 24, 2010 ~ A homily preached by The Rev'd Erl G. Purnell at Sis Gould Center for Therapeutic Riding, Old Lyme, CT

Remember Me; 1 Corinthians 13; Psalm 23 (Mariner's version); *The Dance of Love*; Matthew 18.1-5, 12-14; St. Francis Prayer; *The Ship*

Among the myriad hymns, readings and words we hear today to describe and celebrate my cousin, Lytt Gould, are two that cut the shape of his jib in my eyes: happy and good.

Lyttleton Bowen Purnell Gould, Jr. was a *good* man, a very good man. This adjective—*good*—most commonly rests at the beginning of good, better, best, or, between bad and excellent. But, in fact, the good I'm considering is so much more.

Good actually means of high-quality, first-rate, enjoyable, skillful, helpful, well-behaved, virtuous, kind, honorable, nice, favorable, able, positive, worthwhile, genuine, healthy, decent. You see where I'm going now, don't you?

Lytt Gould was such a good man that neither the word "good" nor any of these definitions alone can adequately capture who he was. And together, the litany of them only begins to point toward the essence of his character and spirit.

This incarnate goodness I'm talking about, Lytt manifest everywhere he went and in all that he did. Each of us knew it and experienced it real-time with every encounter—at Hotchkiss and Yale, on the deck of a sub-chaser and Tamaqua, in a classroom and boardroom, in Maryland, New Jersey, Maine, and Connecticut, on the dock at Long Cove and here at High Hopes.

To me, Lytt's expression of simple and sincere goodness was always accompanied by the indomitable spirit of his happiness. It's not that Lytt was happy sometimes or even most of the time. It's that happiness was Lytt. He embodied happiness and it spilled out wastefully no matter where he was or what he was doing. Remember that wonderful mouth-full-of-teeth smile when he greeted you? Remember the laugh?

Again, it's not just that things made Lytt happy, although that's certainly true, but that his own happiness at *Being* made things happen.

Everything was possible to this man with heart-filled happiness. He founded Purnell School and helped start this place. Even at 90 and in his final days at Essex Meadows, he infected his fellow residents and the staff with the sincere happiness that simply was his nature.

When we strip away the incredible achievements—back to what was bred in the bone—we find Lytt's blessed, divine individuality. A child of God who was all he was created to be. Lytt was so very good at *being* Lytt Gould and his happiness made all the difference.

I don't want to stop, to stop thinking about and talking about Lytt. But, I must. There's more for others to say in a few minutes. Now, it's time to tack, Lytt, and go for that broad-reach with the wind on your starboard quarter and your Bride at your side. Blessings & Peace my dear friend. Godspeed. Godspeed.

Amen.

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