

A Life Well Lived



Court Demas

December 11, 1972 - July 28, 2002



*Thou child of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts,
thou happy Shepherd-boy!...*

The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee...

*What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now forever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind.*

Ode on Intimations of Immortality
—William Wordsworth

Court Demas

Celebration of a Life Well Lived
September 14, 2002

The Unitarian Society of Ridgewood
113 Cottage Place
Ridgewood, New Jersey

Opening Words
Readings from Kalil Gibran

Rev. Sarah Lammert

Music

Alex Demas, Court's uncle

Reflections on Court's Life
Written by Beatrice Cronin, Court's mother

Rev. Sarah Lammert

For the Beauty of the Earth

Congregation

Remembrances
You are invited to share brief remembrances of Court.

Music

Carole Demas, Court's aunt

Closing Words
Reading from Pearl S. Buck

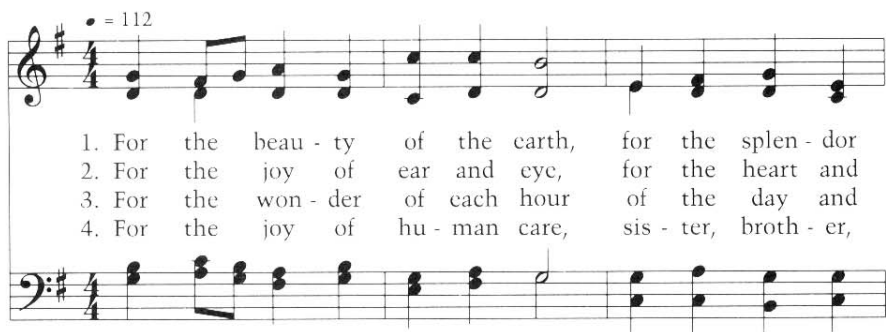
Rev. Sarah Lammert



Please join Court's family for refreshments
in the Fellowship Room.

For the Beauty of the Earth

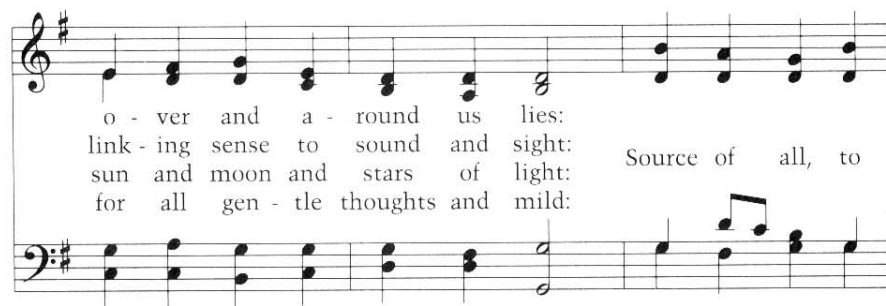
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1. For the beau - ty of the earth, for the splen - dor
2. For the joy of ear and eye, for the heart and
3. For the won - der of each hour of the day and
4. For the joy of hu - man care, sis - ter, broth - er,



of the skies, for the love which from our birth
mind's de - light, for the mys - tic har - mo - ny
of the night, hill and vale and tree and flower,
par - ent, child, for the kin - ship we all share,



o - ver and a - round us lies:
link - ing sense to sound and sight: Source of all, to
sun and moon and stars of light:
for all gen - tle thoughts and mild:



thee we raise this, our hymn of grate - ful praise.

Words: Folliot Sandford Pierpoint, 1835-1917, adapt.
Music: Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872, abridged

SONG

*You're wondering if I'm lonely:
OK then, yes, I'm lonely
as a plane rides lonely and level
on its radio beam, aiming
across the Rockies
for the blue-strung aisles
of an airfield on the ocean.*

*You want to ask, am I lonely?
Well, of course, lonely
as a woman driving across country
day after day, leaving behind
mile after mile little towns she
might have stopped
and lived and died in, lonely*

*If I'm lonely
it must be the loneliness
of waking first, of breathing
dawns' first cold breath on the city
of being the one awake
in a house wrapped in sleep*

*If I'm lonely
it's with the rowboat ice-fast
on the shore
in the last red light of the year
that knows what it is,
that knows it's neither
ice nor mud nor winter light
but wood, with a gift for burning*

—Adrienne Rich



From a letter Lisa wrote in 1993: *“Court said to me once that he couldn’t understand all of this because family is always supposed to stick together. No matter how much I have ever fought with him and we had both sworn never to speak to the other again, we are brother and sister. We love each other. I wouldn’t be complete without him.”*

A LIFE WELL LIVED

“We share in your sorrow. The pain this terrible loss brings you is unimaginable and nothing we say can diminish it. Yet, even at such a tragic moment, the beauty of the spirit is able to shine. This picture of Court is more eloquent than any words. It tells the onlooker...look at this beautiful boy, look at his sweetness, look at his love and look at the joy in his eyes...look and be happy for a life well lived.”

—Sergio Sedita (Court’s uncle)

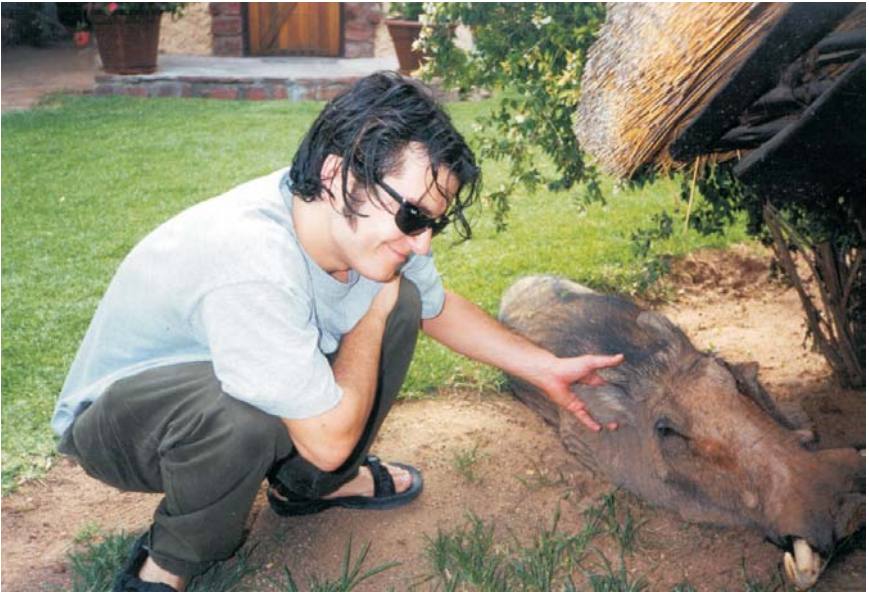


REFLECTIONS ON COURT'S LIFE

My son, Court Demas, came into the world the morning of December 11, 1972, at Valley Hospital in Ridgewood, New Jersey, weighing in at 9 lbs. 4-1/2 oz. He joined his two-year old sister, Lisa, whom he adored instantly.

Court developed an intense interest in computers when he was very young and loved math (he gave one wrong answer on his math SAT). His other interests while growing up included Boy Scouts, chess, a few years of piano and violin lessons, camping and soccer. He's been an avid reader all his life. Court attended Ramsey High School, which he completed in 1990 in three years by taking college courses. While in high school, he was in the Marching Band, playing baritone saxophone. Court was a band fag, a computer geek, brilliant, popular, and a cut-up - hard to categorize.





Court attended RPI and then transferred to Carnegie Mellon University his sophomore year and joined Phi Kappa Theta. Although he was a few credits shy of a degree in Math and Computer Science from CMU, he was hired to work in their Robotics Institute. (While there, he created a Java Tutorial and presented it at a conference in New Zealand at age 23.) He stayed with the Robotics Institute in Pittsburgh through 1996. He was hired by Trilogy in Austin, Texas in January 1997 and then by Kiwi Consulting in San Francisco in March 1999 where he lived until his move to Prague in February 2001. He then became a consultant for Komera and was able to work remotely from his laptop, allowing him to pursue his love of travel.

Over his lifetime, Court visited St. Croix, Mexico, Italy, including Sicily and Sardinia, New Zealand, England, France, Germany, Amsterdam, Prague, Namibia, South Africa, Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, Bolivia, and Peru. He also traveled extensively in the United States (Grand Canyon, Arizona, Indiana, Nevada, Washington State, Washington DC, California from LA to San Francisco and

north). While overseas, Court learned a bit of Czech and learned to read and write Spanish while in South America. During his travels, he enjoyed living among the locals and avoided American tourists. He loved to dance, and the last time he was home (a surprise visit in January 2002 during his maternal grandmother's 90th birthday party), he and I danced the Salsa. Court loved the outdoors and enjoyed hiking, climbing, snorkeling and scuba diving.

Court had a special way with women - he loved them and they loved him. He was very respectful of women. He was gallant and chivalrous. While not ready for a permanent relationship, Court had several meaningful relationships with women during his life. He was honorable, honest and loving with his partners.

Most recently, Court was in Peru trekking in the Andes with Raquel Paredes, whom he had met while hiking in Ecuador a few months before. He was due home to New Jersey around July 29 to have a short visit and go on to attend the weddings of friends on the west coast. He was reported missing August 1



and an intense search effort for the couple began. All those involved with the search effort worked tirelessly for over one month (including his father, George Demas). Sadly, the bodies of Court and Raquel were found on September 2, two days after George returned home. They had been killed and robbed according to the Peruvian police.

We all hoped until the very end for another outcome, of course. To think of Court's having died this way is so incomprehensible; he was such a generous, sweet, peaceful individual who would gladly have given anyone anything they desired. For such a gentle life to have ended with violence is heartwrenching.

Throughout the horror, we have been sustained by the outpouring of love and support from family and friends. It has been heartening for my family and me to see Court through the eyes of his many friends around the world who have been communicating with us through all this. He spread so much joy and zest for living; he was loved and admired by so many; and for many, knowing Court was a life-changing experience.

Some comments from his friends follow:



“Court has been an inspiration and source of tremendous joy to me since the moment I met him...Like so many people touched by his gentle spirit and inquisitive mind, I will be forever changed by my experience with such a profound soul. He was a friend endowed with an unbelievable capacity for love, an unconventional and amazing approach to life, an unquenchable thirst to learn and a radiant presence that affected all who came in touch with him. I sit here now...with a sad and heavy heart wishing to see my friend just one more time to tell him how much I loved him and how much he changed my life for the better. Court Demas is my hero - a beautiful spirit like no other.”

—Seth Frank



“Thank you for the exceptional relationship you developed with your son; through him I have felt your love...one of the many ways Court has changed my thoughts and actions permanently for the better.”

—Rose Goldman

“Court meant the world to me and I will carry his spirit and love in my heart always, until we meet again. I LOVE YOU COURT!!!!!!”

—Christopher Robin

“So I sit and I cry selfishly and mournfully and stare at the candle we’ve lit and dig through pictures and my beloved Jessie, more astute than I in these matters says, I hope the universe appreciates what it’s gotten back...”

—Eric Peterson



“My younger brother James died ten years ago this month; I met Court two and a half years later and he became part of the process that helped me to handle his death. Please know how many lives Court touched, how many people loved him, and how many will miss him now that he’s gone. He was a remarkable man and I’ll miss him more than I can say.”

—Andrew Houghton



“Court meant a lot to me and to everyone he touched and he will be greatly missed.”

—Rachel and Stew

“Court Demas is one of those developers who could really pick apart almost any design and expose its flaws - a unique quality that only a few developers I know have.”

—Ed Roman, in the preface of the book, Mastering Enterprise JavaBeans.

“I am devastated to hear the news about Court. He was so special to me. A couple of weeks and weekends I have spent with him in the last couple years have left me smiling, enlightened, and awakened.

I spent only a week with him recently in June in Bolivia, but from the day we said goodbye his presence and radiant goodness have been something I feel I’ve carried around with me. This will never go away.”



—Ryan Donnelly

"I have known Court for almost ten years from my first year at Carnegie Mellon. He is the person whose life I always bragged about to other people I know. His brilliance, freeness, his friendship...he meant more to me than I knew. He will always be with me, whether I am out in the world adventuring or geeking out in front of the computer."

—Fred Sabb



"I first met Court about four years ago. I had actually heard about Court from a friend who bragged

constantly about him. The first thing I noticed about Court when I first met him was his smile. He invited a bunch of people over to his house in Twin Peaks (as he always did) to celebrate his return from South Africa. His bouncy hair made me giggle. I found him to be so fun and so intoxicating. We were friends instantly. I am proud to say that I knew and loved Court Demas...I want you to know that I am one of many out there who was immensely touched and honored by your son. I want to thank you for giving us Court."



—Staci Scheibel

"Court was a truly wonderful person. We will always remember how smart, kind, generous, caring and funny he was. He embraced life and truly cared about the little things. Court was a truly wonderful person. We will miss him dearly."

—Barbara and Billy Wendt

"I met Court about 4 or 5 years ago through his numerous friends at Carnegie Mellon. He is a radiant soul that is loved by

so many. His zest for life has and will continue to inspire me. He has made a significant impact on my thinking and behavior in life. I can only wish to be more like him in every way. He is awesome, a wellspring of human potential and happiness. I'm going to miss him greatly."

—Bryan Appleton

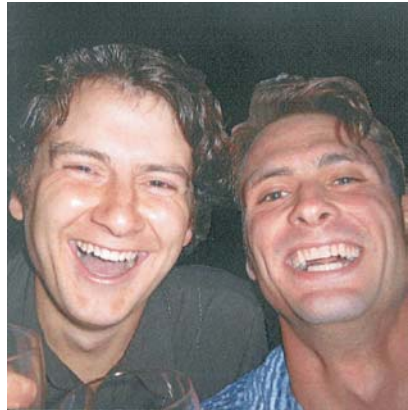


"My wife and I hesitated a lot before telling the children what had happened. They remember a Court who was very free-spirited, so approachable that they were asking him all kinds of questions

about his life, girl friends, etc. I know a Court working incredibly hard..., so confident in his ability that he told me...he could write programs to do almost anything so long as the problem was well-defined. We argued on every single point throughout the product development cycle. A lot of work...was done and there were truly amazing accomplishments."

—Etienne Baranshamaje, Komera

"This morning I awoke from a particularly vivid dream...there was a massive party. Court approached on foot from the distance and I excitedly welcomed him and barraged him with questions as to what had become of him. He expressed his gratitude at being back...he said he'd come back for the party but needed to find his family and loved ones first."



—Jan Sobel

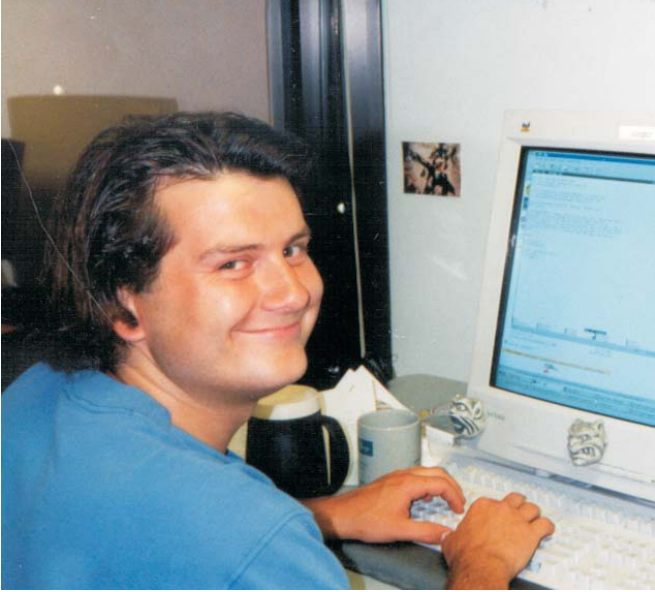
“I know that Court was deeply devoted to Burning Man...it represents a disproportionate concentration of things that are right about humanity and our world. The pictures of the Temple of Joy will be my offering to Court, who now lives in my heart.”

—Mark Alexander



My beautiful son, Court, lived life as he wanted, owning little in the way of possessions, but much in the way of experiences, friendships, self-knowledge and inner peace and contentment. His spiritual journey left him happy and self-assured. Court was highly-principled, a good citizen of the world and a gentle and loving human being. We will all miss him very much.

—Beatrice Cronin



For those wishing to make a donation in Court’s honor, his family recommends any organization involved with environmental issues or one of the following two organizations:

1stSRG (Special Rescue Group)
PO Box 230
Moffett Federal Airfield
Moffett, CA 94035-0230

ACLU Foundation
125 Broad Street
18th Floor
New York, NY 10004