**A Good Word for
Jenneane Buchanan
January 12, 2017**

 A eulogy is literally a Good Word. And Jenneane Buchanan certainly deserves more than one Good Word. But if I only got one word, this is what it would be – *Classy.* (I even put that in italics just so it would look right when I read it.) Jenneane Buchanan was one *Classy Lady.* Yes, you could tell it in her style and in her dress. She wouldn’t go out if she was not dressed to the nines. I remember her a make-uped, jeweled, and furred, and as Lissa mentioned – shoes! But none of this was ever in any pretentious way. Jenneane could simply pull it off. Rusty said she even got dressed up to sit in her chair to watch her beloved Panthers! When I got dressed today, I pulled out the only thing I own with a tiny bit of “fake fur” around the collar and cuffs. I’ve been about to burn up all morning, but it just seemed fitting for such an occasion as this – to the remember, to celebrate, and to honor the life this *Classy Lady.*

This *Classy Lady* came from the mountains of Sylva, N.C., and she never outgrew her raising. She was always a mountain girl at heart. She stayed in the mountains to attend Western Carolina Teachers College and later served her time in the classroom and then a social worker and worked with the Board of Education. So she gave her life’s work to educating and teaching and improving the life of children. But clearly her other life’s work started when she met Jack in a soda shop – or that’s at least the story Lissa knows! And her family began which included their beach trips and life at this church. You can tell a lot of about a woman’s life when her describes her as the “Matriarch” and it is said with affection and admiration. And then Rusty and Lissa rattled off that in addition she was gregarious and outgoing and friendly. And smart. In addition to being smart, she was always right – or at least she thought she was – and only in the maturing lives of adult children can they agree . . . she really was always right.

 Jenneane loved her Panthers and her Braves and her Hornets – having season tickets for many years to Charlotte’s home teams. There were Sundays she couldn’t make it to church, but she didn’t miss the Panthers. We weren’t offended. I love a woman that loves sports and I don’t think there is any Panthers fans that can outwear Jenneane in their Panther swag. But I didn’t know until a friend told me that she herself was a good golfer.

 Jenneane loved her friends. For the last 18 years her friendships centered more around her home at the Cypress. She was a proud member of the Purple Ladies Lunch Club – also know as the Red Hat ladies. Not every can rock purple and red together, but I have no doubt that Jenneane could. But before her Cypress days, close friendships formed at church. Especially with three other families. I wish I could have known them all back then. I can’t even imagine the fun they had on their travels and their golf trips and their cruises! The best part of planning a service like this is the things you learn that you never knew. This Pastor was intrigued to learn that this group of friends, I hate to call names, but the Blankenships, the McDonalds, and the Kinnairds were known to the Buchanans as their “trashy friends.” I plan to explore this a bit more with those that are left among us – the confession booth will be open! So the “trashy friends” of Park Road Baptist Church, after Jack’s death, would often include Lissa in their excursions. I do believe it was this group that was on one of their trips when Russ and I were voted on to become the Pastors here and we didn’t meet these folks until well after we had settled in a bit. So now we know – if you have not been pleased with the pastoral leadership of Park Road Baptist Church for the last 16+ years – you can blame it on the “trashy friends.” Like I said, Jenneane was a *Classy Lady* and I like thinking of her as bringing a bit of class to the trash. Having been to many of this groups Super Bowl parties of which Jenneane was a part for many years, I can cut them a bit of slack. They are the most fun group in our church and the people with whom we would choose to hang out anytime!

 Rusty and Lissa had many wonderful memories of their lives growing up in this church. Jenneane served her time as an angel in the Tableau before being promoted to the kitchen. They always worked Christmas Eve. Jenneane was active in VSP for many years and as it was told to me, Jenneane was responsible for the new name. The senior adult group of the church was known as The Elders for many years. Until, I’m guessing that sounded too old, and it was decided to have a contest for a new name. It was Jenneane’s entry that won: “Very Special People” or VSP! And it has stuck. Jenneane always worked the Wassail Party at the end of every year. We’ve never been tempted to duplicate this effort, but apparently, before there was even such a thing as a drive-thru, Park Road opened its own. At the end of the year, the call was made – drive through the semi-circle driveway, the pastor would serve you wassail and in turn you would help the church meet the year-end financial needs. And Jenneane was there to do her part to make sure there was plenty of wassail to go with plenty of money!

 Of course, I don’t eat a Lance cracker without thinking of Jenneane, who kept our office supplied at Christmas with crackers. Just a small token of her husband’s life and work with the Lance Corporation. And that work helped them to build family together. Two children. 4 grandchildren with one great grand and another great grand on the way, Jenneane and Jack built a life together that would be up to her alone to finish. I’d say she finished strong. So proud of both of you, Rusty and Lissa, she started a good work in you that will now be up to you to finish strong. Gregarious, outgoing, friendly, smart, lover of sports – I’d say you have a great start! *Well done, good and faithful servants,* in bringing so much joy to your mother’s life. You’ve not just lost a mother, but a good friend and buddy. It’s every parent’s dream to have that kind of relationship with their adult children. Now you can only hope and dream to pull of *Classy* as well as she did.

 And so today we gather here to give thanks to God for Jenneane Buchanan. And to trust in the God who gives us life will sustain us in our grief. And we hold to a Blessed Hope in the Forever Presence of God. And however and wherever that is, Jenneane has surely classed it up a bit. Thanks be to God. Amen.