

Memorial Service
for
Rosina Christiana "Chris" Gilbert
December 25, 1926 - June 26, 2026



Saturday August 15, 2026, at 1:00pm

Celebrant: The Reverend Dr. Shawn Bullock
St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church
220 West 8th Street (corner of Chesterfield & 13th)
North Vancouver, BC V7M 1N1
tel: (604) 986-1151 / www.stjohnnv.ca

ROSINA CHRIS GILBERT (December 25, 1926 – June 26, 2026)

1 Rosina Christiana Guada was born in the British Colony of Trinidad

Rosina Christiana Guada was born to her parents Peter Guada and Gladys Guada (nee Montenegro), on December 25, 1926, in Guaico, Trinidad. As a Christmas baby, Rosina was given the Spanish name Christiana. She was known by family and friends as Chris, for most of her adult life.



In the 1920s, Guaico was a small, rural village in northeast Trinidad. The economy was dependent on cocoa production, which surpassed sugar as the most valuable export crop.

The community expanded the road network and relied on the Trinidad Government Railway for transportation. Sangre Grande was the main market town for the cocoa industry in Trinidad.

2 Gladys Montenegro and Peter Guada get married



Gladys Montenegro was 17 years old, when she met Peter Guada, who was a tailor and wayside preacher in Sangre Grande. A wayside preacher was a street evangelist, who spreads a spiritual message in public spaces like sidewalks, parks or transit hubs.

Under British colonialism in Trinidad, the Shouter Baptist religion was banned. The loud sounds of shouting, singing and clapping were a threat to colonial order.

Born in Venezuela, Peter grew up in a Venezuelan community in Trinidad, called Sadoo River. Peter did not speak English, when he went to school at age 12.

3 Chris Gilbert was educated by Canadian Missionaries

Chris Guada began her formal education, at the age of four, at the Canadian Mission Presbyterian school in Guaico. The mission spread Christianity, by establishing schools in smaller villages for the Indian population. The ringing of the bell at the Canadian Mission school in Guaico, often set the daily schedule for the surrounding estate labourers.

After the abolition of slavery in the British empire in 1834, more than 140,000 Indian indentured labourers were transported to Trinidad to fill a shortage of labour on sugar and cocoa estates. Afro-Trinidadians like Chris, also attended these missionary schools. In Guaico, the school was a half a block from the Guada's home.

The image below shows Peter Guada and Chris. It was taken from a group photo at the wedding of Matilda Guada and Desmond Hoyte, on May 6, in 1939. This is the earliest photo of Chris at the age of 13 and the only photo of her father Peter.

Gladys and Peter exhausted their financial resources to prepare Chris' sister Hannah to win a scholarship to attend Bishops High School. Gladys' sisters Irene and Ineze Montenegro read about the scholarship in the newspaper. The sisters arrived unannounced on the train from San Fernando to Guaico to visit Chris and her family.

They invited Chris to live with them in San Fernando and attend high school. Irene and Ineze arranged for Chris to attend Naparima Girls' High School, which was founded by Canadian Presbyterian missionaries.



Peter owned a house in Guaico, but he rented the land. His dream was to own a house, while being able to use his own land. Peter died of a heart attack, at the age of 44, after buying an acre of land and starting to build a house.

After Peter died, Gladys began to work for the Mortons, who established the Canadian Presbyterian church in Guaico. Gladys was able to finish building the house. She also earned an income by renting half the house and living in the other half. Gladys found other jobs to earn income, such as work on road construction projects and selling charcoal, which was used as fuel for a portable stove called a coal pot.

When Peter died, Chris was 14 years old and was in the early years of high school. The Montenegro sisters returned to Guaico and convinced Gladys to let her daughter Orina come to live in San Fernando. Orina was about five years old. The sisters were not interested in helping Donald, who was eight years old. Donald stayed with Gladys in Guaico.

Chris was depressed by Peter's death and the breakup of her family. Life with the Montenegro sisters was difficult. She had to do housework and focus on her studies. She had a breakdown and was found at the San Fernando railway station trying to get to Guaico.

However, Chris was determined to stay with the Montenegro sisters and finish high school. After she graduated in 1944, Aunt Irene arranged for Chris to train as a nurse at the Colonial Hospital in San Fernando. Irene was the head nurse or Matron of the hospital.

In this position, she was instrumental in the development of health care in Trinidad and was a co-founder of the Trinidad and Tobago Nursing Association. She was honored as an officer of the Order of the British Empire, which is the medal in the photo above.



4 Chris migrates to London, England to work as a Nurse

Irene arranged for Chris to emigrate to England in 1945, as a young nurse with experience working in the British Colony of Trinidad. Chris found that training as a nurse at Mile End hospital in east London was disgusting. The main duties were handling vomit, urine and faeces, emptying/cleaning chamber pots, making beds, as well as washing patients and dead bodies.



Chris sent a letter home to Irene to complain. A few weeks later, Chris was called into the Matron's office and was not sure why she was there. Then she noticed a letter on the desk, with Aunt Irene's writing. After that meeting, Chris never again complained about working as a nurse. Instead, she trained to be a midwife, an operation theatre nurse and then worked at the Royal Eye Hospital.

One of Chris' favourite shows was *Call the Midwife*, which is a British period drama television series about a group of nurse midwives working in the East End of London in the late 1950s. In real life, Chris was doing this work in the late 1940s.

While conducting an eye examination, Chris met a young law student named Peter John Valentine Gilbert (February 12, 1932 – June 26, 2021). After the war, Peter was in the National Service. When he left the military, Peter pursued a Law degree at King's College in London. While attending university, the Bureau of Labour sent Peter to work at a train station as a Janitor. Peter did not like sweeping or carrying bags, so he told the supervisor he had dirt in his eyes and went to the Royal Eye Hospital.

5 The Gilbert family migrates to Regina, Saskatchewan

Peter and Chris got married in 1954 and lived with his parents John and Ida in London. Soon after, Clifford and Frances, were born on July 29, 1956, and November 2, 1957, respectively. Despite his qualifications as both a barrister and solicitor, Peter had great difficulty finding a job as a lawyer in London.

As a result, he started looking for work in Australia, New Zealand or Canada. Peter decided to take job in Regina, with the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office (SGIO).

Peter arrived at the airport in Regina in 1958 and went directly to SGIO for his first day of work.



Once Peter was established in Regina as a lawyer, he sent for Chris, Clifford and Frances. After migrating to Regina, Chris and her family had to adjust to Canadian culture and cold weather. Peter and Chris had two more children. Chris decided to go home to Trinidad, so Gladys could help her with the birth of Valerie. She was born in Trinidad on April 30, 1961. Richard was born in Regina on September 5, 1964.

Once the children were old enough, Chris went back to her career as a nurse. Based on her British experience, she accepted a position as the Head Nurse of the Childrens' Ward, at Grey Nuns (Pasqua) Hospital. The Hospital served the health care needs of southern Saskatchewan.



On her first day, Chris asked anybody who did want a Black woman as their boss to transfer out of the department. Several nurses decided to work somewhere else in the hospital. Chris worked closely with doctors to update and improve nursing practices. She initiated progressive policies which treated patients as children.

Chris was active in the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association (SNRA). In the photo on the left, Chris is speaking at an SNRA conference.

The SNRA included nurses in management roles, so it was deemed ineligible to act as an official collective bargaining agent. This led to a movement that created the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN) in January 1974.

6 The Gilbert family moves to Vancouver, British Columbia

In Regina, Peter became a partner in a private law firm called Blakeney, Griffin and Gilbert. He decided to take a job with the City of Vancouver in the Civil Litigation department in 1974. The Gilbert family moved to Vancouver and Chris was hired to run the children's ward at St. Paul's Hospital.

However, St. Paul's decided to close the department. As a result, Chris was given a position as the Head Nurse of the Central Supply Department (CSD). CSD was responsible for cleaning, decontaminating, sterilizing, and distributing reusable medical devices and surgical instruments. The department was a vital hub of a St Pauls' hospital.

Chris observed the CSD staff at work and learned their responsibilities. After using her holiday to take training on sterilization procedures, Chris produced a manual of procedures and restructured the department. When Chris retired in 1987, she turned the CSD manual into textbook to teach an original course for nurses at Vancouver Community College (VCC).



In 1989, Chris was presented with an award of excellence from the Registered Nurses Association of BC. Chris was recognized for her work in enhancing the quality of her department through staff training. She developed a six-week training program at St. Paul's hospital, which is credited with being the core of a similar course at VCC. The award was presented in Vancouver at a special banquet, held in conjunction with the annual convention of the nurses' association.

In the below photo, Chris is holding the plaque she was awarded for excellence in nursing. In 2024, Chris donated the plaque and her high school graduation photo to the archive at Naparima Girls' High School in San Fernando.



Chris was awarded a certificate on December 3, 2025, from the Surrey City Council and Mayor Brenda Locke, to recognize her upcoming 99th birthday on December 25, 2025.

"May you find a few moments of reflection that allows you to celebrate the wealth of knowledge and insights that you have built from your life experience," said Locke on the certificate.

At that time, it was believed that Chris was the oldest Trinidadian in the Lower Mainland and possibly BC. Chris got dressed to receive the award at a banquet held by the Trinidad and Tobago Cultural Association. However, she was too tired to get out of bed and travel to the event.

Rosina Chris Gilbert died peacefully in bed, early in the morning on June 26, 2026, at her apartment, on fifth street and Lonsdale, in North Vancouver. When Chris bought the apartment in 1988, she had a plan to age in place, in her apartment, until she died. Chris also had a plan for what she would like to happen, after she dies. This plan revolves around a memorial service, just up the road from her apartment, at St. John the Evangelist Anglican Church. Peter died on June 26, 2021 (Written by Richard Gilbert).

Musical Prelude

Piano - Galina Martynioug

Violins - Margaret Thompson, John Thompson

*Choir - Christie Smith, Janet Harris, Cathy Dallimore,
Leeann Price, Yasmine Bia, Donna Lawrence,
Maurice Beasant*

Welcome - The Reverend Dr. Shawn Bullock

Hymn - This is the Day the Lord Hath Made
(printed on following page)

Eulogies for Rosina "Chris" Gilbert

✧ Richard Gilbert

✧ Rodney Gilbert

Hymn - This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made

Sentences of Hope

"I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.
Whoever has faith in me shall have life, even though he
die. And everyone who has life, and is committed to me
in faith, shall not die for ever.

John 11: 25-26

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God,
believe also in me. In my Father's house there are
many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have
told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go
and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will
take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may
be also.

John 14: 1-3

I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor
principalities, nor things present, nor things to come;
nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in
all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of
God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8: 38-39

The Collect

Presider Let us pray.

**All O God, the maker and redeemer of all,
grant us, with your servant Chris
and all the faithful departed,
the sure benefits of your Son's saving
passion and glorious resurrection;
that in the last day,
when you gather up all things in Christ,
we may with them
enjoy the fullness of your promises;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God for ever and ever. Amen.**

The Proclamation of the Word

The First Reading: Read by Susan Romeo-Gilbert

A Reading from the Book of Ecclesiastes:

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:

a time to be born and a time to die;
 a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted;
 a time to kill and a time to heal;
 a time to break down and a time to build up;
 a time to weep and a time to laugh;
 a time to mourn and a time to dance;
 a time to throw away stones
 and a time to gather stones together;
 a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;
 a time to seek and a time to lose;
 a time to keep and a time to throw away;
 a time to tear and a time to sew;
 a time to keep silent and a time to speak;
 a time to love and a time to hate;
 a time for war and a time for peace.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

The reader ends the lesson saying:

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people.

All Amen.

Psalm 23 - The Lord's My Shepherd

The Second Reading: Read by Barbara Backer

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians.

If I speak in the tongues of humans and of angels but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions and if I hand over my body so that I may boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable; it keeps no record of wrongs; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part, but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see only a reflection, as in a mirror, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love remain, these three, and the greatest of these is love.

The reader ends the lesson saying:

Hear what the spirit is saying to God's people.

All

Amen.

Gradual Hymn - Precious Lord, Take My Hand

We sing verses 1 & 2 of the Gradual Hymn, after which the Gospel is read. At the conclusion of the Gospel, verse 3 is sung.

The Gospel

Gospeller The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

Gospeller The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

All Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

John 13:34-35

Gospeller The Gospel of Christ.

All Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

At the conclusion of the Gospel, we sing the remainder of the Gradual hymn facing the altar.

Sermon The Reverend Dr. Shawn Bullock

Musical Anthem - I Have A Dream

Apostles' Creed

Celebrant Let us confess the faith of our baptism, as
we say,

**All I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the
power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right
hand of the Father.
He will come again
to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the People

Celebrant Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have knit your chosen people together in one communion, in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Give to your whole Church in heaven and on earth your light and your peace.

All Hear us, Lord.

Celebrant

May all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection die to sin and rise to newness of life, and may we with him pass through the grave and gate of death to our joyful resurrection.

All Hear us, Lord.

Celebrant

Grant to us who are still in our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that your Holy Spirit may lead us in holiness and righteousness all our days.

All Hear us, Lord.

Celebrant

Grant to your faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all our sins and serve you with a quiet mind.

All Hear us, Lord.

Celebrant

Grant to all who mourn a sure confidence in your loving care that casting all their sorrow on you, they may know the consolation of your love.

All Hear us, Lord.

Celebrant

Give courage and faith to those who are bereaved, that they may have strength to meet the days ahead in the comfort of a holy and certain hope, and in the joyful expectation of eternal life with those they love.

All Hear us, Lord.

Celebrant

Grant us grace to entrust Chris to your never-failing love which sustained her in this life. Receive her into the arms of your mercy, and remember her according to the favour you bear for your people.

All Hear us, Lord.

Celebrant

All this we pray in Jesus name.

All Amen.

The Peace

(We acknowledge and share the Peace of Christ with each other.)

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All And also with you.

Preparatory Hymn - Softly and Tenderly

The Great Thanksgiving

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Celebrant Blessed are you, gracious God,
creator of heaven and earth;
we give you thanks and praise
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
whose victorious rising from the dead
has given to us the hope of resurrection
and the promise of eternal life.

Therefore with angels and archangels
and all who have served you in every age,
we raise our voices to proclaim
the glory of your name.

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full
of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest,
Hosanna in the highest.**

Celebrant We give thanks to you, Lord our God,
for the goodness and love
you have made known to us in creation;
in calling Israel to be your people;
in your Word spoken through the prophets;
and above all in the Word made flesh,
Jesus your Son.
For in these last days you sent him to
be incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the world.
In him, you have delivered us from evil,
and made us worthy to stand before you.
In him, you have brought us out of
error into truth,
out of isolation into community,
out of death into life.

On the night he was handed over to
suffering and death,
a death he freely accepted,
our Lord Jesus Christ took bread;
and when he had given thanks to you,
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples,
and said, "Take, eat:
this is my body which is given for you.
Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine;
and when he had given thanks,
he gave it to them, and said,
"Drink this, all of you:
this is my blood of the new covenant,
which is shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it,
do this for the remembrance of me."

Celebrant Therefore, Father,
according to his command,

**All we remember his death,
 we proclaim his resurrection,
 we await his coming in glory;**

Celebrant And we offer our sacrifice
of praise and thanksgiving
to you, Lord of all;
presenting to you, from your creation,
this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God,
to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts,
that they may be the sacrament
of the body of Christ
and his blood of the new covenant.

Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice,
that we, made acceptable in him,
may be sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

In the fullness of time,
reconcile all things in Christ,
and make them new,
and with your beloved disciple Chris,
bring us to that city of light
where you dwell with all
your sons and daughters;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
the firstborn of all creation,
the head of the Church,
and the author of our salvation;
by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory are yours,
almighty Father, now and for ever.

All Amen.

Celebrant As our Saviour taught us, let us sing:

**All Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those who sin
 against us.
 Save us from the time of trial,
 and deliver us from evil.
 For the kingdom, the power,
 and the glory are yours,
 now and forever. Amen.**

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ

**All We, being many, are one body,
 for we all share in the one bread.**

The Communion

Celebrant The Gifts of God, for the people of God.

All Thanks be to God.

Please be seated as the Communion is prepared.

All who love God and desire Christ are welcome to receive communion.

If you want to come forward for a blessing, please line up for the minister and cross your arms over your chest.

Gluten-free wafers are available. Please let the Eucharistic Administrator know if you wish to receive one.

Please note intinction, (dipping the bread into the wine), is not permitted.

Hymns will be sung during the Communion.

Prayer after Communion

Celebrant Let us pray. God of love,

**All you have fed us
 at the table of your kingdom.
 Teach us to trust, without fear,
 in your eternal goodness and mercy.
 We ask this in the name of
 Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.**

The Commendation

Celebrant Give rest, O Christ,
to your servant with your saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting.
You only are immortal,
the creator and maker of all;
and we are mortal, formed of the earth,
and to earth shall we return.
For so did you ordain
when you created me saying,
"You are dust, and to dust you shall return."
All of us go down to the dust;
yet even at the grave we make our song:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Into your hands, O merciful Saviour,
we commend your servant Chris.
Acknowledge, we pray,
a sheep of your own fold,
a lamb of your own flock,
a child of your own creation.
Receive her into the arms of your mercy,
into the blessed rest of ever lasting peace,
and into the glorious company
of the saints in light.

All Amen.

Blessing

Hymn - Blessed Assurance

Ministering today are:

Celebrant: The Reverend Dr. Shawn Bullock
Musician: Galina Martyniuk
Choir Director: Christie Smith
Eulogists: Richard Gilbert, Rodney Gilbert
Readers: Susan Romeo-Gilbert, Barbara Backer

We would like to thank you for being present at this memorial service for Rosina "Chris" Gilbert. Please join us in the lounge downstairs for fellowship and refreshments.



The community of St. John's acknowledges that we live, work and worship on the ancestral and unceded land of the Coast Salish Peoples: The Musqueam, Squamish, and Tseil-Waututh Nations. May the reconciling love of Christ be reflected in our words and in our actions.