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Friends, family, colleagues, and all who loved Trevor Grant Campbell—Trev—thank you for gathering with us today at Kelvin Grove, here in Newlands.

We meet to mourn a loss we feel in our bones,
and to honour a life that steadied, surprised, and quietly uplifted so many of us.

My name is Jason, and I stand here as Trev's son.
What began as a respectful father–son relationship became, in my adult years, a deep friendship.
I was lucky enough to learn his principles at the dinner table,
and even luckier to test them with him over long drives and longer conversations,
until I realised they weren't rules at all—just the way he moved through the world:
with integrity, fairness, service to others, and time for family.

Trev was born on 22 November 1958 in Cape Town.
He left us on 17 March 2026, aged 67.
Between those dates lay a life of discipline and warmth.
He grew up in Rondebosch, walked the same streets many of us know,
and somehow made them feel fresher because he noticed things—little things:
a neighbour's new stoep, a thriving aloes patch, a child learning to ride a bike.
That attention to the ordinary became his kind of excellence.

He studied accounting at UCT and qualified as a CA(SA),
not because numbers were an end in themselves,
but because he believed they were a language—one that, if spoken honestly,
could build trust, create opportunity, and keep promises.
He went on to build a respected practice in Sandton,

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a place where the office kettle was always just as important as the boardroom table.
Many of you knew him there—as the partner who checked the footnotes twice,
asked the question nobody else wanted to ask,
and then stayed late to help you frame the right answer.

He mentored young professionals with the same meticulous care he gave a set of accounts.
There are people in this room whose first audits felt bearable
only because Trev leaned over and said, “Let’s walk through it together.”
He served with Rotary, quietly doing what needed doing—never for a photo,
always for the person in front of him.
And he carried a particular passion for education as a pathway.
He helped bursary students not only with fees, but with time, with references,
with the gentle nudge that says, “You belong in this room.”
It is fitting—more than fitting—that a scholarship fund in his name
will now support accounting students from under-resourced schools.
It is the exact kind of legacy he would have chosen:
practical, dignified, and facing forward.

At home, he was married to Margaret—our Mags—for 42 years.
A partnership sturdy enough to weather long weeks and long odds,
soft enough to hold a family.
He was Dad to me and to Amy,
and Grandad to Joshua and Lily, who lit up his later years.
He was the older brother to Colin, the one who could be trusted with the spare key
and the hard conversation.
Family time was not a slogan for him.
It was fish and chips with the paper still warm,
a chessboard permanently out on the side table,
and Sunday roasts that began with him checking the radio for test cricket scores
and ended with classical music filling the house.

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If you knew Trev, you knew his character before you knew his CV.
He was principled. Thoughtful. Quietly humorous—the kind of humour that relied on a raised eyebrow and a well-timed pause.
Meticulous, yes, but never pedantic; generous without publicity; deeply loyal.
He could weigh a decision like a judge,
then disarm the tension with a line that began with a twinkle in his eye.
People will miss that twinkle.
They will miss the steady counsel he offered when choices were heavy,
and they will miss something that sounds small but isn't:
his Sunday evening check-in calls.
"Just touching base," he'd say, "Are you winning?"
Those five words could put a week back together.

He had passions that rounded his edges and shaped his days.
He was a road runner—proudly a Two Oceans finisher—who taught us that endurance often looks like patience.
He loved chess, because it sharpened the mind without hardening the heart.
He gardened fynbos with the precision of a ledger and the hope of a farmer,
delighted when a protea he'd moved finally took to its new soil.
Test cricket on the radio was his steady metronome;
five-day stories told in overs and silences.
And on Sunday evenings, he'd turn to classical music—never making a fuss about it,
just turning the volume to a level that invited listening.

My favourite memory?
A beat-up Kombi on the Garden Route, windows down, the map half-folded on Mags's lap,
Johnny Clegg on the tape deck,
and the four of us belting out choruses while the wind bullied the curtains we'd clipped across the back.
We stopped at farm stalls for koeksisters—still sticky, still warm—
and he would count out change with that faint smile that meant he was doing the maths in his head,

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and also doing something else: keeping us all present, all content, all together.
He loved that stretch of road.
He loved the way the ocean appeared and disappeared between milkwoods and dunes,
the way a journey keeps offering you reasons to pause.

Trev believed that ethical business was more than compliance.
He believed it was ordinary fairness, repeated.
He'd say, "A clean set of books is a clean night's sleep," and you knew he meant it.
If he was meticulous, it was because he had decided long ago what kind of man he wanted to be,
and then made a hundred small choices each day to stay that way.
He gave pro bono time to NPOs that could never repay him,
and in return, he collected thank-you notes like treasures.
He kept them in a drawer—not for the acknowledgement, but to remind himself that numbers could serve people,
and that service, done quietly, is the most reliable kind.

He was not loud in his convictions, but he was steady.
If you asked him what mattered, he could tell you in a handful of words:
integrity, fairness, service to others, education as a pathway, and making time for family.
He did not perform those values; he practiced them.
In meetings, on pavements, at the kitchen sink, in the garden with a mug of tea, pruning back a stubborn branch while the radio whispered from the stoep.

To Mags:
you and Dad showed us that love is kept by habit as much as by sentiment.
To Amy and me:
he gave us room to try and fail, and then to try again—with better questions.
To Joshua and Lily:
your Grandad loved watching you discover things—snails after rain, sums done in your heads, big words pronounced bravely.

He would want you to know that curiosity is a kind of courage.
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To Colin:
the bond of brothers is one of the reasons he believed in loyalty the way he did.

We will each carry our own version of him.
Some will remember the partner who stayed for your final draft,
and brought in coffee at 6am because you were “nearly there.”
Some will remember the Rotary projects he made possible simply by knowing whom to phone and when to listen.
Some will remember a man in a faded cap, inspecting a young restio and pronouncing it “promising.”
I will remember all of those,
and I will also remember the Kombi, the Johnny Clegg choruses,
and the way a box of koeksisters made us feel like the journey itself was the destination.

There is grief in this room, and it is right that there is.
A faithful presence has stepped away, and we must learn how to stand without it.
But there is also gratitude, which is its own kind of strength.
We are grateful for 67 years that touched Cape Town and Johannesburg,
UCT lecture halls and Sandton boardrooms,
Rotary halls and family tables,
and that long ribbon of the Garden Route where a father taught his family how to travel lightly and arrive whole.

If you are looking for a way to honour Trev,
I think he has already given it to us:
make the call on a Sunday evening.
Offer the counsel that steadies rather than dazzles.
Do the ethical thing when nobody is watching.
Mentor the junior who is still bluffing confidence.
Plant something indigenous and wait for it to take.
And when given the chance, invest in a young person’s education—

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not only with money, but with time and belief.
The scholarship fund that now bears his name will carry those instincts forward, turning his values into someone else’s beginning.

Trev did not ask to be celebrated.
He asked to be useful.
He succeeded, again and again, in ways that were rarely public and always personal.
And when he smiled—especially when he was just about to tell a joke he had carefully prepared his way into—
you felt the room soften.
That is what we will miss.
That, and the dependable voice on a Sunday evening asking,
“Are you winning?”

Dad,
thank you for the maps and the margins,
for the neat columns and the untidy singalongs,
for the fairness you practised and the time you made.
Thank you for the belief that education opens doors,
and for the example of how to walk through them with humility.

We release you with love.
We will carry you—not as a monument, but as a way of moving:
steady, generous, principled, and just a little bit mischievous at the corner of the eye.

Go well, Trev.
We will keep the music playing on Sunday evenings.
We will keep the radio tuned for the long game.
And we will try, as you did, to make the numbers add up to a life that serves.

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