Good morning, everyone.

Thank you for being here to honor my dad, Robert James Walker—Dad to me, to Emma, and to Grace; “Grandpa” to little Noah; and “Bob” or “Robert” to so many friends, neighbors, and colleagues who knew the quieter hero he was.

Dad was born on March 5, 1958, and he left us at 66. But his story isn’t measured in years. It’s measured in the way he grew up in Cleveland with a mind that always wanted to know how things worked, the way he studied mechanical engineering and somehow made the most complex things feel simple, and the way he fell in love with his college sweetheart, my mom, Elaine, and built a life with her that was steady and warm and generous for 38 years.

He was patient. He was humble. He was quietly funny—the kind of funny that sneaks up on you and stays. He was dependable in the way we all hope to be remembered: he showed up, again and again, when it mattered and when it was inconvenient. And he gave his time like it was the most natural thing in the world.

He loved to solve problems at work, but I think his favorite problems were the ones that ended with teaching. He loved mentoring younger engineers, handing over a wrench and a little wisdom and stepping back so someone else could feel that satisfying click of getting it right. “We’ll figure it out together,” he’d say. I heard that sentence my entire life. Sometimes it meant we’d actually take something apart on the dining room table. Sometimes it meant he’d just sit on the edge of my bed while the world felt too big and remind me that we only needed to do the next right thing.

And that was another one of his simple truths: “Do the next right thing.” He didn’t preach. He didn’t need to. His faith lived in how he treated people—he

Create your own personalized speech at funeralspeechai.com

attended a non-denominational church, but mostly he practiced a faith of showing up with a hammer for Habitat for Humanity, or a casserole, or a set of shelves he'd make in the garage without ever calling attention to himself. His kindness was not a grand gesture—it was a daily habit.

Home with Dad was wood shavings on the floor from his latest weekend woodworking project, classic rock vinyl humming in the background, and the comforting sound of him fixing something with a wrench. Sunday hikes that ended with muddy shoes and deep breaths. He'd point out the way a bridge was designed, or stop to admire the grain of a piece of oak. He taught us to see the world as something crafted, something worth caring for.

I have so many memories, but one rises to the top like a lantern in the dusk: learning to ride a bike as the sun was going down, the street warm and quiet, and Dad jogging beside me. He promised he wouldn't let go until I believed I could do it. Not until he believed—until I did. When I finally felt that balance, I shouted, "Don't let go!" and he called back, laughing, "You're already doing it." I looked over my shoulder and realized he had let go a few moments earlier, and yet, somehow, I still felt him there. That's exactly how it feels today. Even in this deep ache, there's a steadying hand that remains.

To Mom—Elaine—you were his anchor and his joy. He loved saying your name. He carried your love like a compass, and it guided every choice he made. To Emma and Grace—my sister and me—he was our steady guide and our biggest cheerleader, the one who celebrated the little wins and stood quietly with us in the storms. And to Noah—his eyes lit up when you toddled into the room; he became softer and sillier in the best possible way. He was so proud to be your grandpa.

To his colleagues and friends from the shop and the job sites: thank you for letting him be who he was—a teacher, a problem-solver, and a listener. He always came home proudest when someone else got the credit because he'd helped them get there. And to the Habitat for Humanity crew: your shared sweat and laughter meant the world to him. He believed a well-built house could hold

more than walls—it could hold hope.

Create your own personalized speech at funeralspeechai.com

What people will miss most about him are the small, essential things: his reassuring voice on the phone that could make the worst day feel manageable, the careful craftsmanship that showed up in every corner of our home, and the way he made everyone feel safe simply by standing nearby and saying, “We’ll figure it out together.” If you ever called him with a rattle in your car or a rattle in your heart, he met both with the same calm focus.

Today is heavy, and it’s okay for it to be heavy. But I know Dad would want us to notice the light, too. He’d want us to remember the Sunday trails, the smell of sawdust, the way a well-loved record sounds at the end of Side A. He’d want us to laugh at the way he could fix anything mechanical but would still hold the instruction manual upside down to make us smile. He’d want us to take care of one another in the ordinary ways: show up with a tool belt, send a text that simply says “You good?”, or take a slow walk and point out the shape of the clouds.

His life was a love letter to the people he cared for—Mom, me, Emma, Grace, and little Noah; our wider family; his Cleveland roots; his church; his coworkers; and the neighbors whose doors he gently knocked on when a fence needed mending or a porch step was loose. He built so much more than machines and cabinets. He built trust. He built a home that still stands.

So where do we go from here? Maybe we start where he always started: do the next right thing. If it feels impossible, do the next small thing. And do it together. Let’s keep calling each other with the good news and the hard news. Let’s teach a kid how to use a wrench. Let’s volunteer on a Saturday and come home tired and grateful. Let’s put on a record and let the room soften. Let’s keep each other safe.

Dad, thank you for your patience, your humility, your quiet jokes that made us snort-laugh, your hands that could fix anything, and your heart that made room for everyone. Thank you for jogging beside us at dusk until we believed we could

do it on our own. Create your own personalized speech at funeralspeechai.com

You kept your promises. You built a life that holds.

And we’ll figure it out together—just like you taught us.

We love you. We always will.

This speech was created with funeralspeechai.com.Answer a few questions and generate your own personalised speech now atfuneralspeechai.com

Create your own personalized speech at funeralspeechai.com