



Reverend Stephen R. Billings

July 1, 2015

The Rev. Stephen Robb Billings of Haverford, PA died after a long illness at his vacation home in Falmouth, MA on July 1, 2015. The son of Elliot A. and Priscilla Robb Billings, he was 74 years old.

As a youth growing up in Coral Gables, Florida, he occasionally entertained the notion that he might be called to the ordained ministry in the Episcopal Church. He dismissed the idea of ordination, however, because he felt unworthy of such a calling. Only later did he come to understand that it was not a matter of his worthiness, but rather of God's purposes and Grace.

As he approached graduation from Yale University in 1963, he was prepared for graduate school there. Meanwhile, he was nominated to receive a one-year fellowship to seminary to test his vocation. He took a deferment from Yale, went to the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, MA and then Clinical Pastoral Education at Worcester State (Mental) Hospital, which laid the foundation for a fulfilling and challenging life following Jesus Christ, as a priest.

Living out his calling as a priest has always been grounded in the ministry of local congregations. From 1966 to 2006 he served as curate at Church of the Messiah, Gwynedd, PA; Assistant Rector at St. Mary's Church, Ardmore, PA; Executive Director of Community Youth Services NGO (a drug and alcohol

abuse prevention effort), Bryn Mawr, PA; Rector of the Church of the Holy Apostles and the Mediator, Philadelphia; and Director of the Department of Church and Community Ministries at Episcopal Community Services, the social services arm of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. While holding these positions, he derived great joy from serving as a volunteer chaplain at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and the Institute of Pennsylvania Hospital, a part-time psychotherapist, and a teacher of pastoral care. He cared deeply about people, and advocated for those who were oppressed or in need, recovering from addiction, incarcerated, mentally ill, or marginalized.

He received a post-graduate certificate in Marital, Family and Sex Therapy from Marriage Council of Philadelphia (now Council for Relationships) and was a clinical member of the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. He served on the Board of Trustees of Episcopal Community Services, North Penn Visiting Nurse Association, Family Service of Montgomery County, Montgomery County Child Day Care Association, Florence Crittenton Services, Family Support Center, Red Cross Disaster Relief Services, and Haverford Civic Association.

While at Yale he sang in the Glee Club, served as manager in his senior year and organized the Glee Club's European tour in 1963. In later years he contributed to his reunions by organizing memorial services for deceased classmates and the singing by Glee Club members from the class.

An active member of Church of the Redeemer, Bryn Mawr, he enjoyed singing in the choir, teaching 4th and 5th grade Sunday School, serving on the Outreach Grants Committee and participating in the African Children's Committee, which he chaired. Since 2004 he had been inspired by and engaged with this ministry to the poorest of the poor in Malawi, Africa - AIDS orphans and others affected by HIV, malaria, and food insecurity. He made mission trips to Malawi in 2005, 2007 and 2009.

He was an avid gardener, swimmer, runner and in his early years, bicyclist. As someone with high energy, it was routine for him to mow the lawn, trim the hedge and then announce he'd be going for a run or swim.

He, along with his father and brothers, raced sailboats year-round on Biscayne Bay in Florida in the winter and on Buzzards Bay in Massachusetts in the summer. He was a life-long member of the Quissett Yacht Club in Falmouth and taught sailing there.

Handy around the house, he loved to repurpose found objects, perhaps using a piece of wood he discovered to create a material for the Sunday School or to make a repair.

Stephen is survived by his beloved wife and chief collaborator, Barbara Morrison Billings, his daughter, Melissa J. Billings (Richard J. Soedler), grandchildren Richard, Grant, Neil, and Jade, brothers Charles (Sharon), George, and John (Bridget), sister Cynthia Billings Atwood (Wallace) and sister-in-law Ruth Billings. He is also survived by many nieces, nephews, great nieces and great nephews. His daughter, Laura Elizabeth Billings, and his brother, Roger Billings, predeceased him.

A memorial service will be held at Church of the Redeemer, 230 Pennswood Road, Bryn Mawr, PA at 10:30 am on Saturday, July 11. A graveside burial service will take place at Church of the Messiah, Woods Hole, MA at 10 am on July 25.

In lieu of flowers contributions may be made to Episcopal Relief and Development, P. O. Box 7058, Merrifield, VA 22116-7058, Episcopal Community Services, 225 S. Third Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106 or African

Children's Mission, Church of the Redeemer, 230 Pennswood Road, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010.

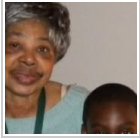
Previous Events

Memorial Service

JUL 11. 10:30 AM (ET)

Church of The Redeemer
230 Pennswood Road
Bryn Mawr, PA

Tribute Wall



“ He was a great mentor and inspirational pastor. I'm so sorry to hear about his passing years later. I'll always have fond memories of him. I'm also sorry to hear about his daughter's passing. He gave the faith and strength to believe in God again. He was one the unsung heroes in the world. May his soul rest in peace.

Andre Hinkson - December 20, 2019 at 07:52 PM