



Rev. Judith N. Mitchell, PhD.

December 2, 2018

Judy died peacefully at home on December 2, 2018. Married to Raymond E. Mitchell for 55 years, she was mother to Jeremy (Patricia) Mitchell, Jonathan (Helen) Mitchell; Naomi (Paul) Cummings, Fiona McDevitt (Dustin Freeley), and Matthew (Maria) Brown. Judy had three grandchildren, Julia, Brian and Kevin. Her parents were Raymond and Mary (Salisbury) Naughton. She is survived by her sisters Sharon (David) Homan, Nora Naughton, and Dana Naughton (Stephen Rubin), and her brothers Raymond and Michael Naughton. Her sister Mary and brother Brian are deceased.

Judy had two professional careers. First, beginning in 1972, she joined the faculty of Rhode Island College where she had received her BA, majoring in English and History and in 1967 her MAT from Brown University. [Judy had begun as a part-time instructor in the English Department in 1962] In 1982, Judy was tenured after receiving her PhD from the University of Connecticut. Her dissertation was entitled "Changes in Adolescent Literature with Homosexual Motifs, Themes or Characters". Judy eventually attained full Professorship and retired as Professor Emerita. Judy loved teaching, and continued as an Adjunct for a number of years after retirement.

During her years at RIC, Judy taught a range of courses, wrote for a wide range of publications and professional journals, presented papers at numerous conferences, and provided workshops for teacher and other educators in Rhode Island and throughout New England. Judy received the Paul Maixner Distinguished Teaching Award for Arts and Sciences for 1987-

88. From 1990-1999 she held a joint appointment in Secondary Education where she could influence the training of student teachers. In the spring of 1995 and fall of 1996, Judy participated in a project at John Hopkins University where she presented papers and participated in discussions on "Spiritual and Therapeutic Uses of Children's Literature." Judy was also a long time member of Dodeka, an organization of clerical, academic and other professionals who met regularly at Brown University to hear and present papers on a variety of topics. Judy was a frequent presenter.

Throughout her life, Judy had a strong spiritual component to her life and the call to ministry led to her ordination to the Episcopal priesthood in December, 1992 while still teaching at RIC. In 1993, she was called to be Rector of The Church of the Advent, a small church in Pawtucket. Eventually, the call to ministry overtook the passion for teaching, and Judy retired from RIC and soon after, accepted the call to be Rector of St. Matthew Church in Barrington, where she served for ten years. One of Judy's lasting gifts (with much support and hard work on the part of the two congregations) to St. Matthews was the joyous merger of St. Matthew and St. Mark Churches to form Sts. Matthew and Mark of Barrington. Part of the merger agreement was that Judy would assist the new full-time rector for a few months and then leave.

After leaving Barrington, Judy accepted the call to be Priest in Charge of Saint John the Divine in Saunderstown. At the time, she thought that St. John's would probably be her last long-term assignment. However, in 2014, Judy was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer, myelofibrosis, a disease for which there is neither treatment nor cure. So, when her five year assignment ended Judy, at the recommendation of Bishop Knisely, retired. However, several months into retirement, Judy joyfully accepted a quarter-time assistantship at St. James Church in North Providence. This eventually led to Judy becoming Vicar of St. James and once again joyfully and gratefully, as she articulated it, "ministering to the people of God".

In late winter of 2017 Judy was asked by the Bishop to become Priest in Charge at All Saints Memorial Church in Providence, which she did in

February of 2018. The understanding was that in June, Rev. Julie Hannovan would be Priest in Charge and Judy could be her assistant. All went well at All Saints, with a happy congregation and a happy clergy. Then, Judy's health once again crashed, and this time, unlike the many times before, Judy could not overcome the new disease. So, after a grand finale Thanksgiving week in which she rejoiced surrounded by love and joy with all of her extended family, Judy slipped into a coma on Nov. 25 and died peacefully in her bed on Sunday, December 2, 2018.

A memorial service to celebrate Judy's life will be held on Saturday, December 15, at 10:00 a.m. at All Saints Memorial Church in Providence. All are welcome.

If you wish to do so, donations, in lieu of flowers, could be made to the Shinn Study Abroad Fund at Rhode Island College; or to the Episcopal Conference Center Scholarship fund; or to the Pawtucket Library.

Tribute Wall

RR

“ *Whoever said Judy could light up a room, I think said it best. That's how I remember her and that's how I will always remember her. I served with Judy for six months at St. Luke's Pawtucket, when I was looking to be received as a priest in the Episcopal Church and she was looking to ordination. Between the two Sunday services we took walks and we shared our minds and our hopes. After the services we went for breakfast with Garland Teasley, the rector, and his wife. Always an upbeat way to spend a Sunday. I remember the support she continued to offer me after I became a priest of the diocese. The good things she said about me were over the top. What a friend she was to me. What a priest and pastor she was everywhere she served. What a light she was. All these things, but I have to say that I remember most how we laughed, how she made us laugh. Some of the best laughs I have ever had were with her and because of her wonderful insights into our human everyday experience. I thank God she was in my life and I thank God for the memories I have of her. Alleluia! Ray, I remember you too, and I remember how lovingly she talked about you. There was always a special something I thought whenever she even said your name. God bless you, and bless you all and everyone who knew and loved her. Alleluia!*

Rev. Russell G. Ruffino

Vicar

Anglican Church of the Holy Cross

Palermo, Sicily

Russell Ruffino - January 12, 2019 at 03:21 AM

EH

“ *Rev. Judy Mitchell was my surgical patient for several years! She was a wonderful friend. some of her surgeries were complex but she was real trooper! over the course of time, we became good friends. We had many discussions of her Prudence Island days! May she be at peace!*
Dr. Eugene Healey

Eugene Healey - December 14, 2018 at 03:12 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Rev. Judith N. Mitchell, PhD..*



December 12, 2018 at 09:15 AM

BM

“ *Brian Mitchell lit a candle in memory of Rev. Judith N. Mitchell, PhD.*



Brian Mitchell - December 08, 2018 at 06:31 PM

BM

“ I was the only one of Judy's grandchildren to call her "Nini". When she tried to tell me to call her nana, I was a little kid who liked bananas, but could not pronounce bannana. I called bananas, nanas, so I would not call my grandmother a banana. She also inspired a lot of my reading, in Johnny Tremain, Across Five Aprils, and the Harry Potter series. She was such an amazing person with her kind heart, incredibly wits, and an amazing personality that could light up any room
R.I.P Nini

Brian Mitchell - December 08, 2018 at 06:30 PM

GO

“ My deepest sympathies to Ray and Judy's extended family. Judy was a beautiful soul and influential woman. May she rest in peace. Namaste. Blessed be...

Grace Osediacz - December 07, 2018 at 09:26 PM

NB

“ We offer our condolences to Mitchell family -
Nora Brown & Rod Annis



Nora Brown - December 07, 2018 at 05:57 PM

ED

“ I have known Judy and Sharon since St. Patrick's High School, and wish to send Sharon and the entire family my deepest sympathies. Judy could light up a room with her smile, her wry wit, and her ability to include everyone. Her kindness was available 24/7. Always. She will be missed by many, and certainly by the small group of us from old St. Pat's who gather whenever we can to remember "those days" and bring each other up to speed. Judy was, and will continue to be, treasured by us all. Peace becomes you.

Elda Dawber - December 07, 2018 at 01:06 PM

JP

“ My deepest sympathies to the Mitchell & Naughton families on Judy's passing. She was a bright light in my college days at RIC. I considered her a friend as well as a professor. We spent many good moments after classes talking of our common friendships and family ties, the fun and craziness of growing up in a big Irish family, the nuances of our common faiths and always ways for me to become a better writer. She inspired and encouraged all my attempts at children's literature. Such a good person ... and a life, truly well lived. Rest in peace Judy, I know you're going to be missed by an awful lot of people.
xo
Joan McQueeney Pucino
North Kingstown, RI



Joan Pucino - December 05, 2018 at 10:57 AM

RR

“ My deepest sympathies to all of Judy’s family and her many friends. I worked with her as Assisting Priest at Saint James North Providence. She was my mentor when I was received into the Episcopal priesthood last year. I will never forget her warmth, wit, iron determination, and steadfast faith. May she Rest In Peace and Rise in Glory!

Rev. John Reardon - December 05, 2018 at 10:33 AM

TB

“ Judy was a dear friend and colleague for many years. She will be remembered during the prayers for the deceased at my parish this Sunday.

The Rev. James Robert Bocchino - December 05, 2018 at 06:27 AM

TS

“ Tomasina J. Sinnott sent a virtual gift in memory of Rev. Judith N. Mitchell, PhD.



Tomasina J. Sinnott - December 04, 2018 at 04:05 PM

TS

Pastor Judy Mitchell, I'll miss & love for all of Eternity, see you Heaven & pray for Tomasina J. Sinnott with Unconditional Hugs, Love & Prayers2you

Tomasina J. Sinnott - December 04, 2018 at 03:09 PM

AS

Judy was a dear colleague of mine at RIC for many years in the 1980s and 1990s. A friendly soul, she was well-respected as a teacher and mentor. RIP, Judy Mitchell!! Amritjit Singh, Ohio U, Athens, Ohio.

Amritjit Singh - December 04, 2018 at 06:27 PM

C(

I have known Judy since I was born. She was the greatest, dearest friend to my mom, Mary Lucas. I will always remember her as one of the kindest souls I ever knew. She was an angel to my family. Never to forget she showed me the love for Winnie the Poo💖💖💖 and children's literature. I will miss her and I know in my heart my mom has her arms wide open for her🙏🙏🙏

Christine Branch (Lucas) - December 11, 2018 at 12:11 AM

MA

“*Judy was the first rector I ever called my own...she presided over St. Matthew's in Barrington when I joined, and prepared me for confirmation 11 years ago. She was an amazing woman who lived a life of faith and showed me how to do it, too. Her impact will be felt for many years to come.*

Michele Adamo - December 04, 2018 at 02:32 PM

PG

The attendees in the summers at the Union Church of Prudence Island were fortunate to have Judy as a regular minister. Each summer for many years she inspired us with her gentle humor and loving reminders that God loves us. I personally always remember her sermon in defense of Martha, the worker bee who made it possible for her sister to sit at the feet of Jesus. She will be very much missed by me, personally, and by the congregation. I am grateful that I had the opportunity to know her and the opportunity once a year to listen to her share her wisdom.

Priscilla Gill

Priscilla Gill - December 04, 2018 at 07:30 PM

SL

So loved by many, Judy you lived the dream to be priest . prophet & queen. May you bless us from that place as we keep trying to be worthy. Pet Lester, rsm (high school classmate)

Sister Perpetua Lester - December 05, 2018 at 03:48 PM

DV

Mr. Mitchell and family,

Our deepest sympathy on the passing of Judy. She was so pleasant to talk with at the Pawsox games. We knew she was not feeling well this past year when she did not go to any games. May you keep the memories of her close to your heart.

Judy, may you Rest in Peace with the Lord.

*Arthur & Diane Vincent
Rumford, RI*

diane r vincent - December 05, 2018 at 06:21 PM

FW

My condolences and those of the Walker family go out to Ray and the family on the loss of his wife and their dear mother. God's strength and blessings be with you.

Frank Walker

FRANK WALKER - December 06, 2018 at 08:57 AM