

Nancy Pettice Smith Bartoes Memorial Service ~ August 2, 2010 ~ A homily preached by The Rev'd Erl G. Purnell at Old St. Andrew's Church, Bloomfield, CT

Revelation 2-7; Luke 12.22-31

Our celebration of Nancy's life began with the hymn *For the beauty of the earth*. It's such a good summary of Nancy and her 80 years of life.

Indeed, she loved the beauty of the earth and spent long hours coaxing plants into the sunlight so they could spread their beauty among us all. Likewise, she reached out with a love that inspires and never excludes—brother, sister, parent, child, friends on earth and friends above.

Nancy was a stalwart Episcopalian, faithful from start to finish. If she had been born at a more recent time, she may well have gone to seminary and sought ordination. Be that as it may, she put her very feminine foot through the church door early and in myriad ways.

At Church of St. Andrew the Apostle in Rocky Hill, Nancy sang in the choir, as either an alto or a tenor, depending upon the need. Also there, it was Nancy who insinuated herself onto the Church Rectory Building Committee at a time when only men ruled such sacred ground. At Buck Mountain Episcopal Church, Nancy was one quarter of the choir and she often finished the offertory anthem and then scooted to the altar to serve as Chalicist. In fact, she was probably the first female Chalicist at Rocky Hill.

When Nancy arrived at OSA after she and Dick sold their nursery business in Virginia, she held down a pew regularly. Although not a member of the choir here, her lovely voice could still be clearly heard. And, she had plenty of observations to make, like this one to Liz Miller about the growth of our choir this year: *"So, what are you feeding your choir? There seem to be more every Sunday."*

Nancy was a pip. Her dry sense of humor almost always caught people off guard and yet endeared her to all. A week ago Sunday, Nancy was dressed to the Nine's in a starched white skirt and a white blouse with black piping. She looked terrific. Because she had hearing aids, but I could never be sure she was wearing them, I'd usually say something to test her. *"Good morning Nancy. Hot day today isn't it."* To which she replied, *"Yes, a beautiful anthem."*

The shock of Nancy's death came only four months after Dick's. Ouch. It's hard enough for one parent to die, but for both to die within four months

is really tough. Nancy, of course, loved her children and grandchildren. And, they loved her. She will be sorely missed. And yet, as the hymn so aptly says, "*When we have run with patience the race, we shall know the joy of Jesus.*"

Nancy, thank you for being among us these 80 years. We wish you blessings, peace and Godspeed.

*Amen.*

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