



## The Rev. Canon Stephen Charles Casey

January 19, 2021

The Reverend Canon Stephen Charles Casey, of Landisville, PA died on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. Born in Hull, England, he was the son of the late James and Hilda Casey of Hull. He is survived by his wife of thirty-seven years, Rayelenn Sparks Casey, and his two daughters, Emily Clare Casey and Elizabeth Casey Stauffer.

A priest of the Episcopal Church, Stephen served in the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania for twenty-six years. In Lancaster, he was rector at St. Edward the Confessor Episcopal Church from 1998 until his retirement in 2018. He was also a leader in the church, active on diocesan committees and representing the church at General Convention twice. He was a member of the Confraternity of the Episcopal monastic community of St. Gregory's Abbey in Three Rivers, MI. Among the clergy and laity of the diocese, he will be missed as a counselor, teacher, mentor, and friend.

Stephen was a man of many parts. Born in England at the end of the Second World War, he grew up in the northeast port city of Hull, in Yorkshire. The youngest of three children, he is predeceased by his sisters, Olga Margaret Engle and Christine Cunningham. As a boy, he was a violinist, a member of the Air Training Corps—Britain's youth organization for those interested in careers in the Royal Air Force—and an avid airplane spotter. With his love of airplanes, he had hoped to become a pilot; however, his life-long migraine

condition prevented the fulfillment of that dream. So, like many children of his social class in the 1950s, he left school at fifteen to enter a trade, undertaking a seven-year apprenticeship as a painter/decorator and sign-writer, achieving the status of master painter. In Hull and the surrounding area, one can still spot his handiwork on buildings and signs that he worked on nearly sixty years ago. Throughout the rest of his life, Stephen painted out homes of friends and colleagues, but he was most happy when turning his house-painting skills toward his family, painting and decorating his own and his daughters' homes. At the age of 23, he left his work as a painter sign-writer to enter the airline industry, selling tickets. Eighteen months later he was a station manager, and from that time to 1987, Stephen rose in management ranks to become one of the highest-ranking managers at Dan-Air, Britain's second-largest airline at that time. Respected for his leadership, judgment, empathy, and spirit of collaboration, Stephen was particularly valued for his ability to improve the management of airports that were struggling with finances and logistics. Later, he would bring these skills to bear on advising many churches of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania in their administration and finance.

Stephen and Rayelenn met in 1982, through a fascinating and complex family connection. In a transatlantic whirlwind romance, conducted before the age of email and texting, they courted by letter, phone, and telegram between the US and Britain. They were married in 1983 at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. They moved to England, where their elder daughter Emily was born, living in the town of Alnwick, the seat of the Duke of Northumberland, where they were committed and active members of the parish church of St. Michael and St. Paul.

Stephen was a true auto-didact, and had a lifelong love of learning, reading, and culture. Despite having left school as a teenager, he read widely in history and literature, with a particular love for English writers such as Thomas Hardy,

D.H. Lawrence, J.R.R. Tolkien, and C.S. Lewis; and for English history and church history, especially of the Northern saints. Despite the demands of his airline career, his personal aspirations continued to draw him toward education and an ever-deepening spiritual life. With his call to the priesthood in 1985, Stephen finally had an opportunity to devote himself to both. He and Rayelenn moved to the United States, where at the age of forty-four Stephen graduated magna cum laude from Gettysburg College with a dual degree in Philosophy and Religion and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. For Stephen, the rolling green hills of the Gettysburg battlefields recalled beloved landscapes of England, and he would often walk them, puffing on the signature pipes he smoked in those days. Their second daughter, Elizabeth, was born in the Gettysburg years, just before the family moved to Alexandria, Virginia, for the continuation of Stephen's training for the ministry. He earned a Master of Divinity from Virginia Theological Seminary in 1995 and was ordained to the priesthood at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Lock Haven, Pennsylvania in 1996, where he served for three years. He was subsequently the beloved rector of St. Edward's, Lancaster, for 20 years. During his tenure as rector, Stephen served not only the people of the parish and the diocese, but also the wider Lancaster community through his civic engagement.

With his retirement from active ministry in 2018, although Stephen continued to serve the Church as an assistant and interim priest, he was also eager to devote himself to those interests and pastimes that were always at the edges of his busy professional life. This included conducting genealogical research on his and Rayelenn's intertwined family trees, turning to his always long and diverse list of books to read, exploring more of the United States and Canada with Rayelenn, and birdwatching—either at the feeders he devotedly kept filled at home, or at Middle Creek Wildlife Management. As he eased into retirement, Stephen could often be found at home, always in a shirt and tie and well-polished shoes, usually with a cup of tea nearby, as he tended the

garden, kept up with the BBC news or weather forecast, and followed the fortunes of the England cricket team. In the past year, a great blessing added to Stephen's days was the love and care of his new grandchildren, Elizabeth and her husband Kevin's twins Sadie Raye and Emma Michele.

A gentle man of faith and humor, he will be dearly missed by all those who knew and loved him. We are grateful that we had him in our lives, and that he formed such an important part of ours.

"... that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts  
Of kindness and of love."

from "Tintern Abbey" by William Wordsworth

Adhering to the guidelines of the CDC and safety for all, a private family service will be held at St. Edward's Episcopal Church, 2453 Harrisburg Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601 on Saturday, January 30, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. The public is welcome to view the service on Youtube.

Please go to St. Edwards website at [sainteds.org](http://sainteds.org) and click on the Youtube channel to view. A private family interment will take place at Hope Episcopal Church Cemetery in Mount Hope, PA.

In lieu of flowers, the family would be pleased if donations in his name be made to St. Gregory's Abbey, 56500 Abbey Road, Three Rivers, MI 49093.

# Tribute Wall



“ *The Rev. Canon Stephen Charles Casey*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *I had the privilege and honor of sitting next to The Rev. Canon Stephen Casey at a December 2019 brunch of the Hershey and Hummelstown ministeriums. Up to that point, I had only exchanged pleasantries with him at meetings at the Country Meadows retirement community.*

*The food was unmemorable, but I shall never forget his kindness, gentle humor and genuine interest in my life, ministry and interest in how Victorian homes are painted. (Who knew I would get a complimentary side order of authenticity, compassion and full presence with my egg and biscuit! Thank you, Jesus!)*

*Months later, he spent a generous period of time on the phone with me providing insights into the interim ministry work I was doing. His love and passion for God, family, his ministry and congregants was so clear. What a wise and gifted man!*

*I grieved to hear of his death but said prayers of gratitude that I got to spend those brief few hours with him. I celebrate that blessing. Please know I am lifting in prayers his family, friends and congregants.*

*In Christ's love,  
The Rev. Thomas W. Caruso  
Church of the Redeemer UCC/Hershey PA*

Rev. Thomas W Caruso - February 13, 2021 at 11:48 AM

VG

“ Veronica Greer lit a candle in memory of The Rev. Canon Stephen Charles Casey



Veronica Greer - January 31, 2021 at 04:46 AM

VG

May God In Jesus's Name Comfort You During Your Time Of Need !!!  
Raelynn, Emily & Elizabeth!!!!  
Also May He Wrapp His Loving Arms Around Fr. STEVEN.....  
Keeping All Of You In My Thoughts & Prayers !!!



Veronica Greer - January 31, 2021 at 05:43 AM

VG



Veronica Greer - January 31, 2021 at 05:48 AM

CB

“ Dear Rayelenn, Emily and Libby. We are sending you our deepest condolences from across the pond. The abiding memory I will have of Uncle Stephen is his infectious laugh - a loud, belly-laugh that you couldn't help joining in with. He was a light soul, who enjoyed life. I have many happy memories from my childhood of the time I spent with him in Dunlop and Alnwick, lovely simple days in beautiful surroundings. I always enjoyed being there with the family. I know his passing will leave a huge hole in your lives, but I hope this service gives you some comfort as he passes to the next stage of his journey. We are with you in spirit.

Catherine Bentley-Gouldstone - January 30, 2021 at 01:24 PM

AC

“ Sincere condolences to Rayelenn and my cousins in the US on the sad loss of our uncle Stephen, our thoughts are with you at this sad time,  
Love Andy Sally Dan James Jennifer X

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**andy cunningham** - January 30, 2021 at 01:20 PM

GS

“ Deepest sympathy to Rayelenn, Emily and Libby on the sad loss of Uncle Stephen. As a latecomer to the Casey/Cunningham family I unfortunately got to meet Stephen only once but heard much about him, particularly from his sister, Christine, before she passed. Our thoughts and prayers with you all at this sad time.

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**Graham Southard** - January 30, 2021 at 01:04 PM

JC

“ Rayelenn, Emily, Elizabeth, I am so very sorry for the loss of our dear Stephen. I was lucky enough to be invited to live with your family for a summer while I was in college, and I remember his lovely calm demeanor and his English ways and traditions. I have loved your family my entire life, I consider myself blessed to have been in his presence. Recently, I tuned in to hear Rev. Stephen conduct evening compline during a difficult time in my life, and his soothing English accent and comforting spirit helped me get through. May this blessing help to get you through.

*May the road rise up to meet you.*

*May the wind be always at your back.*

*May the sun shine warm upon your face;*

*The rains soft upon your fields and until we meet again,*

*May God hold you in the palm of his hand.*

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**Jennifer Croft** - January 30, 2021 at 09:14 AM

MM

“Fr. Casey was my priest. I will never forget him. I first met him years ago and he seemed like a long-lost uncle. I appreciated his charm and charitable spirit right away. I was pleased when he came to All Saints. I appreciated his intelligence and no-nonsense approach. He was a first-rate priest.

*My last memory of him in person was at a Lenten parish dinner I suggested. Then, he dutifully spent several hours a week on video for us. I also remember how happy he was for me to wish him a happy feast day on St. Stephen's day last month.*

*He is seeing God now, and I know he is happy.*

*John 16:22 "For I shall see you again, your hearts filled with joy, a joy no one shall end or take from you."*

*-Marty McCormick, Hershey*

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**Martin J McCormick** - January 30, 2021 at 09:03 AM

AM

“My name is Anne Marcarelli and I waited on Stephen at Backyard Birding Company. Mark Wilkerson (the owner) and I had a better day when Stephen stopped by to buy his birding supplies. We will remember his smile and gentle manner. Our last chat was about his retirement. He was looking forward to spending more time with his family and enjoying his birds. Please know that you are in our prayers.

*Sincerely,  
Anne*

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**Anne Marcarelli** - January 30, 2021 at 07:39 AM

CA

“ I’m am so sorry to hear about the loss of Rev Casey. He was one of my favorite customers to wait on at Landisville Post Office. Always had a smile and kind words and always told me to behave. I will really miss seeing him there. Sending you all lots of love and prayers.  
Chastity

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**Chastity Amlong** - January 27, 2021 at 11:58 AM

EJ

“ Dear Rayelenn, Emily, Elizabeth, spouses and grandchildren, my heart is breaking for you as I write this. While I have only known Father Stephen for a year, he was the light that guided us through our grief and desolation upon the death of my father, David, this summer. His warmth and understanding was a balm, especially for my stepmother, and I will never forget him standing by Dad's bed, giving Dad his last rites and speaking to him man to man about the start of his next journey. May all of you receive the comfort peace in this difficult time that Father Stephen gave to others every day of his ministry. My father will welcome him upstairs. My thoughts and prayers are with you. Elizabeth McConahy Jenkins (Louisville, KY)

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**Elizabeth McConahy Jenkins** - January 27, 2021 at 11:52 AM

TI

“ Dear Rayelenn, Emily and Elizabeth...please know that Fran and I are holding you in our prayers that you may know the consolation of God's mercy and love as you grieve the loss of your dear husband and father. Stephen and I shared numerous diocesan ministries when I served as Rector of The Church of the Nativity and St. Stephen, Newport and Thompsontown, plus (at least until I finally quit nearly 12 years ago) the quaint habit of enjoying puffing on a pipe. We were saddened deeply to learn that he had died as a result of the COVID-19 virus which has literally scourged and taken the lives of millions of people in our nation. May our good Lord receive Stephen with open arms, provide him with eternal rest and peace, and, who knows, perhaps ask him to paint a few "heavenly" signs as he continues his journey in the "Way of Love". Peace be with you. The Reverend Canon William T. Warne, II and Frances D. Warne.

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**The Rev. Canon William T Warne II** - January 26, 2021 at 11:06 PM

RS

“ I am heartbroken at this sad news about Rev. Canon Stephen Casey. As a fellow minister in the Hershey, PA area, I only met him less than a year ago. Rev. Casey was a faithful follower of our Lord and his leadership will be greatly missed. My condolences and prayers are with his family and the church family of All Saints Episcopal Church. Rev. Ursula E. Schreffler, Zion Lutheran Church of Union Deposit, Hershey PA.

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**Rev. Ursula Schreffler** - January 26, 2021 at 10:34 AM



“ Peace, Prayers, & Blessings- Lavender and White was purchased for the family of The Rev. Canon Stephen Charles Casey.



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January 25, 2021 at 08:51 PM



“ Deepest sympathy to my Aunt Rayelenn and cousins Emily and Libby on the sad loss of Uncle Stephen .Often remember he was the first person to greet us with a smile on our return to England after living abroad many years ago .Uncle Stephen was a funny ,wise and knowledgeable man and very supportive when we lost our Mum 22 months ago .As Grandma would say ...goodnight and God bless and keep singing .Love niece Sue ,husband Dave and family xxx

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**DavenSue Elvin** - January 24, 2021 at 03:57 PM



*Hi Rayelenn,  
I just wanted to express my sympathy in your loss of Stephen. We always enjoyed our Episcopal visits to St. Thomas. Both you and Stephen felt like friends. I'll miss his humor. When he proclaimed that they (new English clergy and he) were reclaiming the colonies, I was overcome with laughter. I'll miss the joy he brought to a gathering. Just know that I'm a phone call away. You and family are in my prayers.  
Much love,  
Mary Ellen Baxter.*

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**Mary Ellen Baxter** - January 25, 2021 at 03:18 PM



*With many fond memories and prayers for Stephen and for the family, Stephen will be missed and I will miss him.*

*The Rev. John F Hoover*

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**John Hoover** - January 26, 2021 at 11:09 AM

LP

*Dear Rayelenn, Emily and Elizabeth,  
It has been so many years since I last saw you in Gettysburg. I have just learned the sad news of Stephen's death and feel so sorry. I have such happy memories of Stephen's and your arrival in Gettysburg, and Stephen's lively presence in the Philosophy Department at Gettysburg College and in my classes. We had so many wonderful conversations. I am glad to have been a part of your lives in that time. I wish you and Emily and Elizabeth the comfort and warmth of the many memories of your life together and all the people Stephen's life has graced. With sympathy and hope for all that is to come, Lisa Portmess*

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**Lisa Portmess** - February 14, 2021 at 11:23 PM