



Rev. Brown Wood

May 12, 2011

The Reverend Dr. Erica Brown Wood; who was variously an academic, economist, reporter, activist, pioneer, priest, wife, mother and friend, died Tuesday afternoon, May 10, 2011 at her home in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She was 65. Born in Hartford, CT she was the daughter of the late Winston and Edith Knapp Brown.

Erica never strove for recognition or praise, but earned both in quantities that were more often than not surprising to her. Her unselfconscious aptitude, quiet intelligence, playful sense of humor and earnest compassion won her friends around the world and success wherever life took her.

Erica, blessed to do the work she loved, had a varied career. Upon graduating with a BA in English Literature in 1968 from Bard College: research assistant, newspaper reporter for the Hartford Times, and finally, Episcopal Priest. She obtained her Ph. D. in labor force economics in 1983 from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY, having completed her MA at CUNY Queens. Born an Episcopalian, she was already moving towards attaining priesthood, obtaining her M.Div. at Bexley Hall, of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, in Rochester NY.

She served in four dioceses. In the Diocese of Central New York she was a postulant, then chaplain, then assistant rector. In the Diocese of Washington,

DC she served first as Director of Studies, then in 1992 the first woman to be the President and Warden of the College of Preachers at the Washington National Cathedral. She remained at the College until 2001, also serving as a canon of the Washington Cathedral. She then worked in the Diocese of Eastern Massachusetts as Visiting Scholar and Acting Anglican Director of Global and Ecumenical Studies at Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Ma. and then as Interim Rector of Emmanuel Episcopal Church in West Roxbury, Mass. She completed her career in the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania as Rector of St. Luke's in Mount Joy having previously served as Priest-in-Charge for St. James Episcopal Church in Lancaster where she had been Associate Rector.

In the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania other duties included membership on the Board of Directors at School of Christian Studies, Examining Chaplain in Theology and Contemporary Ethics, the Bishop's Advisory Board on Clergy Misconduct, as a Judge of the Ecclesiastical Trial Court. She served as adjunct faculty at The Lancaster Theological Seminary teaching Ministerial Ethics. In the Diocese of Washington, DC she had been on the Executive Committee of the Metropolitan Dialogue, and Trustee of the Theological Consortium. A particular pride accompanied her trusteeship of the Anglican Theological Review as an institutional representative for the College of Preachers.

In all her professional and academic success, Erica never lost sight of the things that she loved and that made her most happy. Erica loved to travel. She had been to Russia, Israel and Costa Rica, to name only a few of her more exotic destinations. Her favorite places in the world were closer to home, however. She loved the sea, and spent many happy summers on Cuttyhunk Island, Massachusetts. She also found special solace in the west, especially the Grand Tetons. She was inspired and awed by the vistas of the American occident. To paraphrase Wallace Stegner, the largeness and the clarity took

the scales from her eyes.

Erica loved animals. One of her special pleasures during the course of her liturgical career was to officiate the Blessing of the Animals. While she loved all of God's creatures, great and small, she had a special affinity for terriers. There were very few points in her life when Erica did not have a funny, devoted and occasionally bizarre little dog as her companion.

Erica was a voracious reader. Thrillers, philosophy and ethics were her favorite topics, but her interests were wide. She was energized by sailing, running and simply enjoying the places she lived. Erica loved gadgets; from smart phones to e-readers and laptops, she never outgrew the simple joy of a new toy.

Most of all, Erica Brown Wood loved her family. She was their greatest advocate, supporter and friend. Nothing brought her more joy than to spend time with her sons; whether on a ski trip or simply watching cable at home. Christmas was always her favorite holiday both for liturgical reasons and because it allowed her to indulge her two favorite things in the world: her family and her love of giving.

Erica lived with cancer for nearly two years, and while she put tremendous energy into fighting her disease, she never let it get in the way of living. To the very end of her time on Earth, Erica maintained a glowing sense of humor and an easy grace that many never achieve at the height of health. She left this world on a beautiful May day, being held by her loved ones. Her last words were "I love you" and her last conscious action, when she could no longer say the words, was to squeeze her sons' hands.

Erica is survived by her two loving sons Leet W. Wood of Falls Church, VA

and Chris C. husband of Krista Brown Wood of Lancaster, her former husband Wheaton Wood, MD JD and his partner Joanne McMullen of Athens, OH, her sister-in-law Tory Wood wife of Charles Nagle of NYC, NY, 2 nephews Jesse and Luke Nagle. She also leaves behind her funny, devoted and increasingly bizarre Welsh terrier, Maude.

Family and friends are respectfully invited to attend Erica's Funeral Service at St. James Episcopal Church, 119 N. Duke Street, Lancaster on Tuesday, May 17, 2011 at 11:30 am with The Rt. Rev. Dr. Nathan D. Baxter, Bishop of Central PA, as the Celebrant and the Rev. David W. Peck, Rector of St James, assisting. The family will greet friends from 10:30 am at the church until the time of the Service. Interment will be in St. James Memorial Garden. Memorial contributions in Erica's name may be made to the Lancaster General Health Foundation, ATTN: Cancer Campaign, PO Box 3555, Lancaster, PA 17604-3555.

Tribute Wall



“ *Rev. Brown Wood*

October 22, 2023 at 11:34 PM



“ *To Erica's family: It is with great sadness I hear of her passing. I hold Erica dear to my heart. She was a wonderful woman and priest, truly called by God to her vocation. I am so very grateful to have had a personal relationship to her as my priest - her ears and heart were always open, her perception astute, her compassion deep. She was a God-given gift to St. James Parish but most importantly, a gift for the hearts of its members. My deepest sympathies.*

Rachel Victor - May 17, 2011 at 04:38 AM



“ *To the Family of Erica Wood: we share with you our family's sympathies. Erica was a compassionated woman and concerned priest. She loved her life, her friends and her congregation. She was so helpful to our family in a time of great loss and distress. All we can offer in return is our prayers and support to Erica's family.*

Paul & Judy Ware - May 16, 2011 at 01:04 AM