

Ephesians 2:19-22

<sup>19</sup>So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup>built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. <sup>21</sup>In God the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Holy One; <sup>22</sup>in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Ephesians 2:19-22, *The Message Bible*

You're no longer wandering exiles. This kingdom of faith is now your home country. You're no longer strangers or outsiders. You belong here, with as much right to the name Christian as anyone. God is building a home and using us all - irrespective of how we got here - in what is being built. God used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. Now God is using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone that holds all the parts together. We see it taking shape day after day - a holy temple built by God, all of us built into it, a temple in which God is quite at home.

Today is All Saints Day in the church's liturgical calendar. We Protestants believe either we are all saints (and all sinners) or there is no such thing. So, we do not venerate named saints, but do see all followers of Jesus Christ, that is to say, all who seek to share God's love, as being saints. This is why, on this All Saints Day, we are remembering and lifting up our loved ones who have died; those who shared the love of God with us and we with them. Never forgetting all our loved ones who have died, today we remember especially those who have died this past year.

I chose to read in this service the passage from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians because I am so grateful to those members and

friends of Amicable Church who have gone before us and made this faith community possible for us, as well as all those who have touched my life and my faith from my birth till today.

Although we have never been perfect, Amicable Church has tried to make all who seek shelter from life's storms feel welcome and loved. We have tried to make real Paul's words: "you are no longer strangers

and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God."

I know the stories of many of the saints of this church, past and present. Their stories inspire and challenge me. I have experienced their love, directly and indirectly. For those, who lived long before I did, their love continues to be reflected in the lives of the next generation. The love they shared is how, in Paul's words, "God is building a home and using us all - irrespective of how we got here - in what is being built."

Today we come to mourn, recognizing the pain of the loss of a loved one. Through worship we offer one another comfort and support and the love of God. These are the moments, when we allow ourselves to reflect on God and our faith, that Paul's words ring true. For when we look, "We see it taking shape day after day - a holy temple built by God, all of us built into it, a temple in which God is quite at home."

And where God is, there also is heaven.

So we gather together as church in worship to remember; to remember the loss that weighs so heavily on our hearts and to remember the love that keeps us connected to one another, those walking with us, physically, today and

those, now past, whose love continues to accompany us; both of whom are helping to build us into the supportive community of the Body of Christ, the church; a temple in which God, who is love, resides.

May God, the Master Builder, touch our hearts, ease our grief, and hold us in the love which builds us into a holy temple of welcome and support and comfort. Amen.

### **A Time of Remembrance**

#### **Frederick Malcolm Bodinton, Jr.**

March 16, 1937 – November 2, 2019

Fred Bodington, Jr. was born, raised, and lived his whole life as a proud Little Compton-ite. He was a member of United Congregational Church in Little Compton. Fred is on our list because he married Muriel Burns, who was born and raised in Tiverton and Amicable Church. They were married in Amicable Church. Once connected to Amicable, always connected to Amicable. I found out shortly before Fred died that he had worked as a plumber's assistant on Amicable's 1950's addition to our church building. I was honored to give the homily at Fred's funeral service.

#### **Leonard Sanford Chace, III**

July 5, 1929 – November 22, 2019

Len Chace, III, was born, raised, and lived most of his life in Tiverton and was a life-long member of Amicable Church – as was his mother, Loreen Chace. He raised his family in Amicable Church and held leadership position here. He was a strong supporter of our church's ministries.

#### **Martha Callista Wordell Wood**

April 20, 1945 – February 18, 2020

Martha and her family were neighbors of Amicable Church. The Wood family lived just south of our church building on Main Rd. Martha served several years as our custodian. When she became ill with cancer, it was her wish that I officiate at her funeral, which I was honored to do.

#### **Jane Lee Camara Thurston**

December 16, 1936 – March 4, 2020

Jane was born, raised, and lived her whole life in Little Compton. She, too, married someone connected to Amicable Church – John Thurston. While Jane was a proud member of St. Catherine's Roman Catholic Church in Little Compton, we grew close when her husband, John, had a serious automobile accident and she faced many years fighting cancer. I was honored to be asked by her children to give the eulogy at her funeral service.

#### **Wendell "Russ" Russell**

January 15, 1931 – June 15, 2020

Russ, as he was known, is Victoria Glover's grandfather. He was a strong and loving support of Victoria and her family. Even though living almost 90 years well is a good life and gives us much to be thankful for, losing a loved one's physical presence never feels good. Russ is missed.

#### **Ruth Elizabeth Hathaway Manchester**

September 10, 1921 – June 26, 2020

Ruth was born, raised, and lived her whole life in Tiverton, all within the community of Amicable Church. She was a leader extraordinaire. A loving wife to her husband, Andrew (also a life-long Tivertonian and Amicable member), a caring partner to Del DelDeo, after Andrew's death; a loving support to her siblings, her many nieces and nephews, and her extended family. A phenomenal teacher, loved by her students. A worker and leader at Amicable Church her whole life. She was Sunday School superintendent for years, organized Amicable's monthly dinners for decades, and her financial support has made many of our ministries possible. She was even an environmentalist and fitness guru long before it was popular.

#### **Matthew Edward Ouellette**

September 4, 1978 – July 20, 2020

Matt struggled; life was hard; he might have felt lost sometimes. But he was a positive person. Filled with joy, he celebrated life, loved life, and shared that love of life with those around him, especially his daughter, Molly. He could, would, and did lift people's spirits. Matt had many friends, because he was such a great friend. If you needed help, he was happy to help.

### **Michael Matthias Menges**

March 11, 1941 – August 13, 2020

Michael was a friend of mine. He was a German living in Little Compton with a green card. He returned to Germany not too long ago, when his health began to fail. Michael could be opinionated and abrasive, but what drew me to him was his generosity and his concern for the least among us. He was able to live a very comfortable life, sheltered from the stress of making ends meet, but he was very much aware of and concerned about those who had so much less than he and vocalized that concern in very strong debate, often, with just about everybody.

### **Richard David Hart**

November 25, 1929 – October 5, 2020

Known variously as Richard, David, or Dick, Richard Hart was born and raised in Tiverton and returned to Tiverton with his wife, Isobel, when he took early retirement. He and Isobel had green thumbs, growing a variety of fruits and vegetables. He was active in the Tiverton community, serving on a variety of town committees, including a stint as a town councilor.

### **Barbara Amy Alex**

February 1, 1936 – October 11, 2020

In some circles Barbara would have been labeled “developmentally delayed”. She was sheltered by her mother and then her sister most of her life. When Barbara's sister

passed, her niece set her up in an independent living apartment complex in Westport. Barbara blossomed in that setting, making many friends and, with the help of her niece, proving she could do so much more than her family had thought possible. She lived independently for over a decade, but with failing health, she moved to Hathaway Nursing Center in New Bedford. Barbara had a smile that could light up a room, and did.

Let us pray:

O God, our rock, our fortress and our might, across the ages you have sent us more witnesses than we could recognize, more help than we could seek, and more of yourself than we have been able to love. We thank you for the saints of our faith: those who have freed us to worship you, those who have revived our faith and spoken your calling to us, those who have taught us about the past that we might be prepared for the future, and those who have been Christ to us: listening, loving, teaching, and serving us.

Teach us to recognize the sources of wisdom, holiness, and love that you have sent us, whether we find them in the Bible, in history books, in our family stories, or next to us in the pew. Open to us the real, complicated, imperfect, and spirit-filled lives of your saints, so that we might see just enough of ourselves in them to realize that you call us too.

When you seem to be distant from our needs, our pain, and our joy, give us the eyes of faith to see your saints, who are all around us, and therefore so are you. For the gift of their witness and your Word, for care from your hands through theirs, we thank you.

All these things we pray in the name of Jesus the Christ, who lives here among your saints, sending the Holy Spirit to build us into a holy temple for you, O God. Amen.