

Over a year ago we lost someone whom we all loved so dearly. Alice Smith's death has left a heartbreaking hole in our lives. Alice was one of the first people to welcome me to St. Francis nine or so years ago. She sat down next to me after a 10:00 service, asked me about myself, and encouraged me to become part of the Altar Guild. I appreciated her welcoming me and helping me to become involved in my new Church. She took me under her wing during Landscaping and attempted to teach me about birds and plants; she even tried to convince me that worms are good for the earth after hearing me squeal when I unexpectedly encountered the slithery creatures. Sitting with Alice and Bruce at their dinner table and watching the beautiful birds in their backyard, I began to appreciate the feathery friends more than I normally would. The other day I felt Alice watching over me when I was on a walk and looked into the sky to see a beautiful bird flying overhead. Alice loved nature and recognized that all creatures, great and small, are needed and important. Alice's curiosity and love for her family, friends, and nature were precious gifts to each of us.

Alice taught me so many things...least of all to have an open mind, enjoy the journey, and ask for help when I need it. I miss her emails, her "toodles", bringing her and Bruce to church, her presence at book group and retreats, and caroling for her at Christmas. Her friendship, encouragement, smile, loyalty, support, laughter, and incredible faith both in and out of Church, are held deeply in my heart. She was a mentor and someone whom I would be honored to be like "when I grow up"! I celebrate her and the fact that she has brightened our corner of the world. I am so grateful to her, to Bruce, and to our Parishioners whom I know keep her joy-filled spirit alive.

In keeping with this, I invite you to click on the link below to play Josh Groban's "To Where You Are" in honor of OUR beloved Alice.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8CWGq8e3Bo>