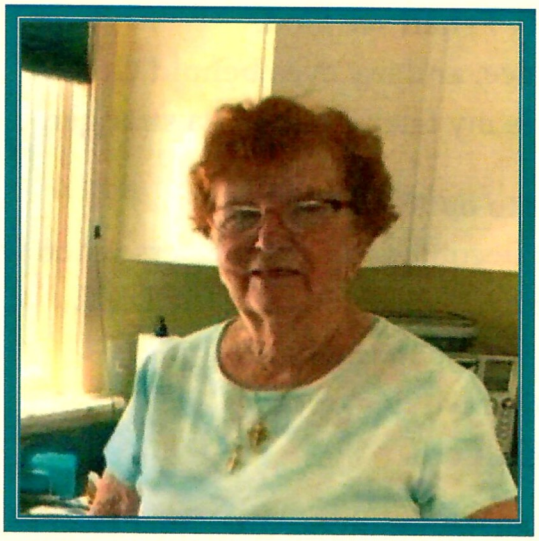
Celebrating the life, love, and faith of

Lois Stiles

We were blessed by your presence

July 18, 1936 – June 4, 2026



Now, Lord, you have filled your servant with your peace.

Service on Saturday, October 17, 2026, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Locustwood Cemetery, Cherry Hill, NJ

*** Please join in all text marked in bold.**

After a brief time of greeting each other, consoling each other, and sharing memories, the priest will open the service with words of welcome.

Priest: We have come here today to remember before God our sister Lois Stiles, to give thanks for her life; to commend her to God our merciful Redeemer and Judge; to commit her body to the earth; and to comfort one another in our grief.

The priest will invite everyone to affirm Lois's faith using the acclamation on the next page:

All: **I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.**

Those who believe in me shall have life, even if THEY die.
And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.

As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives.
And at the last, my Redeemer will stand upon the earth.
After my awakening, He will raise me up;
and in my body I shall see God.
I myself shall see, and my eyes behold God,
The One who is my friend and not a stranger.

We do not live to ourselves,
and we do not become our own masters when we die.
For if we have life, we are alive in the Lord.
and if we die, we die in the Lord.
So, then, whether we live or die,
we belong to the Lord.

Happy from now on are those who die in the Lord!
So it is, says the Spirit, for they rest from their labors.

Priest: May God be with you.

All: **And may God also be with you.**

Priest: Let us pray:

Eternal God, your mercy is without end and your steadfast love never ceases, accept our prayers for Lois and receive her into the land of light and joy, and into the company of your saints. For the sake of Jesus the Christ our Redeemer, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

All: **Amen.**

Our First Lesson is from chapter 3 of the Book of Lamentations:

This is what I called to mind
whenever my life was bereft of peace,
whenever I forgot what happiness was,
whenever I thought my strength and hope
had perished before the Lord:
The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.
The kindness and mercies of the Lord never come to an end.
They are renewed every morning,
So great is the Lord's faithfulness.
I say this with a full heart:
"The Lord is my portion, therefore I will hope in him."
The Lord is indeed good to all who trust in him,
to all those who seek him.
It is, therefore, good to wait patiently
until rescue comes from the Lord.

Here ends this reading of God's Word.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

The priest will extend an invitation to pray Psalm 23 responsively

1 The LORD is my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.
2 He makes me lie down in green pastures *
and leads me beside still waters.
3 He revives my soul *
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.
4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.
6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Our Second Lesson is from chapter 21 of the Book of Revelation:

I saw a new heaven and a new earth,
For the former heaven and the former earth had passed away,
and the sea was no more.
I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem,
Coming down out of heaven from God,
Made ready as a bride, beautifully dressed for her husband.
And I heard a loud voice from the throne say,
"See, the home of God is among mortals.
He will dwell with them as their God;
they will be his peoples,
and God himself will be with them;
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.
Death will be no more;
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,
for the first things have passed away."
And the One who was seated on the throne said,
"See, I am making all things new."

Here ends this reading of God's Word.
All: **Thanks be to God.**

Priest: This reading is from the Gospel according to Matthew *Matthew 11:25-30*

At that time Jesus prayed,
"I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth,
because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent
and have shown them to babies.
Indeed, Father, this brings you happiness."

[And turning to the people, Jesus said,]
"My Father has handed all things over to me.
No one knows the Son except the Father.
And nobody knows the Father except the Son
and anyone to whom the Son wants to reveal him.

So come to me, all you who are struggling hard and carrying heavy loads,
and I will give you rest.
Put on my yoke, and learn from me,
for I am gentle and humble of heart.
And you will find rest for yourselves,
for yoke is easy to bear, and my burden is light."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All: **Praise to you, Lord Christ!**

The God who befriends humans… the God Lois knew
(Gen's Reflection)

Priest: Let us pray for our own needs and for those of God's people everywhere.

Litanist: Lord, you consoled Martha and Mary in their distress; draw near to us who mourn for Lois, and dry our tears and the tears of all those who weep for any reason this day.

All: **Hear us, Lord Jesus.**

Litanist: Lord, you were anguished and wept openly at the grave of your friend Lazarus; comfort us in all our sorrows and grief, and teach us to comfort all who suffer.

All: **Hear us, Lord Jesus.**

Litanist: Lord Jesus, time and again, You raised the dead to life. Give the fullness of Your life and Love to our beloved Lois.

All: **Hear us, Lord Jesus.**

Litanist: Lord Jesus, you promised paradise to the thief who repented. Give to each of us, as we know you gave to Lois, hearts always ready to repent. Give us the courage to repent, that like Lois and so many who have passed why before us, join you, our Lord and Savior, in your new creation.

All: **Hear us, Lord Jesus.**

Priest: May God, the Holy One, to whom all the desires of our hearts are known before we ask, hear our prayers for Lois and for all who mourn. Grant to each one the fullness of life and peace.

All: **Amen.**

Let us pray together that prayer that Jesus taught his disciples
and that Lois knew so well:



All: Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed by thy Name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us,
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
And the power, and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.

Priest: In sure and certain hope of the resurrection
to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ,
We will shortly commend to Almighty God
Lois Stiles, the beloved matriarch of this family and
a beloved member of our St. Peter's community.
We will commit the remains of her earthly body to the ground.
We do this with love for her and with trust in the Lord.

All: We trust that the Lord has blessed her and will keep her,
That the Lord's face will always shine upon her,
and that God will be gracious to her.
We believe that the Lord has given peace to Lois.

The priest will now bless the garden site
where remains of Lois's earthly body will be interred.

Priest: O God, whose blessed Son was laid in a sepulcher in the garden: Bless, we pray, this sacred place, and grant that Lois, whose earthly home is to be interred here, may dwell with Jesus in paradise, and may come to your heavenly kingdom; Through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

As the remains of Lois's earthly body will be interred
we will pray this together.

We believe that angels have already led you into paradise.
We trust that all the holy people who passed from this life before you came to welcome you on your way.
We trust that you now live forever in God's holy city, the new Jerusalem.

The priest offers this final blessing:

May the God of peace, who raised Jesus from the dead, make you perfect in every good work to do God's will, working in you all that is pleasing in God's sight.
As you leave here today, I pray for each of you.
May the road rise to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face.
May the rains fall soft upon your fields.
And until we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

And may the blessing of Almighty God – the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, descend upon each of you, give you peace and comfort today, and remain with you forever.

All: Amen.

Thank you for honoring Lois's life and faith by participating in this service.

The Life, Love, Faith, and Ministry of Lois Stiles
will be remembered and celebrated
for she indeed was a friend of the God-who-is-Love



Well done, good and faithful servant!
July 18, 1936 – June 4, 2026

When Lois Stiles' daughter invited me to lead Lois's graveside service, I knew immediately the words that should open her service: "I now see God. I myself now see, and my eyes now behold God, the One who is my friend and not a stranger." Lois certainly knew God as faithful friend.

If you were in this community before COVID, you would have known Lois Stiles. You would have seen her coming at any distance with her often-flaming red hair, her red lipstick, and her bright smile. You would have seen her with open hands and an open heart every single day.

Lois gave her whole heart to this community because she experienced it as a place where she met God. She knew it as a place where God was waiting to meet her. A quick glance at the photos in St. Peter's 2008, 2013, and 2017 directories reminds us that Lois served as warden, as a mission committee member, as an Altar Guild member, as the faithful driving force behind St. Peter's steady and substantial contributions to the food bank at St. Francis, and as a spirited member of the community, even sporting a festive Mardi Gras face mask at the Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner. Lois Stiles was unquestionably a force in God's ongoing work of creating and re-creating our community.

When I applied to the Diocese of New Jersey for admission as a postulant to the priesthood, I needed two letters from this community in addition to a letter from the mission committee. Mary Allen and Lois Stiles wrote those two letters. As I reflect today on Lois's life, it seems very clear to me that I should have been the one writing a letter for Lois. Lois Stiles had the heart of an Episcopal deacon. She could have been ordained. (I am sure she would have been shocked by that suggestion.)

Ordained or not, Lois unquestionably lived the life of a deacon. She served all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely. She helped our community to hear God's call to step out of ourselves to address the needs, concerns, and hopes around

us. She drove for Meals on Wheels for years, carrying food to strangers who came to see her as a friend. I see in all of that the heart and soul of a deacon.

As with all of us, Covid took its toll on Lois. She became very accustomed to life in her house alone with Lily, her quirky little dog, and occasional visitors. She came to know the peace in being in the presence of God in her own home. Surely that was a beautiful gift. But covid also took somethings from Lois that she would not have otherwise let go easily. Altar Guild was one of those things.

To Lois, Altar Guild service was a privilege, something she treasured. It was a paired service in pre-covid days, so Lois always partnered with another person when serving in this ministry. That paired service always reminded Lois that God was not only at work in her, but was at work in the whole of the community. Her service was never hers alone for she was an integral part of a whole community of service.

Aging took its toll and not everyone got to know the Lois of pre-covid days. But Lois was still Lois, no matter when you met her. In our Wednesday Lunch Bunch Lois shared stories that could make every one of us smile no matter where we had heard them before. She had stories of the one-room schoolhouse in which she studied, stories about her collection of high school friends, her marriage to Tom, and stories of her children... even a story about how God inspired in her creative ways to meet up with Tom on Friday nights when he was drafted shortly after their marriage.

No matter what story Lois told, I heard her underlying theme: God was always with her. God carried her through the hard times. God gave her the courage to speak up when she needed to do so, whether for the good of the community or for the good of an individual. God was with her from her first breath to her last, guiding her though the many challenges of life.

Let us learn from Lois how to walk with each other in peace and with genuine concern for all, so that on the day of our passing we may be confident that the God we will then meet will be our dearest friend, one who is in no way a stranger to us.

May our lives be lived ever more deeply in response to the God who is Love -

Genevieve