

**Report of the Committee on Memorials
To the One Hundred Forty-fifth Council
Of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic
Of the Reformed Episcopal Church**

October 17, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

The Committee on Memorials serves the Council and the Diocese by collecting memorials of notable saints departed since the last meeting of the Council. The memorials listed below have been submitted this year.

Bishop Leonard Wayne Riches, Sr., a beloved spiritual leader, scholar, and advocate for traditional Anglicanism, was born on March 21, 1939, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to A. Wayne and Enola (Gilbert) Riches. He passed away on December 29, 2024, in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. Riches is known for his extraordinary leadership in revitalizing the Reformed Episcopal Church (REC), renewing traditional Anglicanism, and being an integral part of establishing the Anglican Church in North America.

He graduated cum laude from Princeton University in 1961 with a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature. He then earned a Master of Divinity from the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Episcopal Church (now Reformed Episcopal Seminary) in 1964. Riches pursued further graduate studies toward a Master of Sacred Theology at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary). He was awarded honorary Doctor of Divinity degrees by the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in 1976 and by Cranmer Theological House in 1997.

Riches was baptized at St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. In 1946, his family joined the Reformed Episcopal Church, first worshipping at Memorial Church of Our Redeemer, a Reformed Episcopal congregation in Philadelphia. They later became members of Calvary Reformed Episcopal Church under the leadership of William H. S. Jerdan, who, like Riches, became a Presiding Bishop of the REC.

Riches was ordained as a deacon in 1964 and as a presbyter in 1965 by Bishop Howard David Higgins. Riches served as rector for three REC parishes: St. Luke's Church in Philadelphia, First Reformed Episcopal Church in New York, and St. Mark's Church in Jenkintown, Pennsylvania.

Riches married Barbara Martin, a fellow graduate of Reformed Episcopal Seminary, in 1964. Together, they had two sons, Leonard, Jr. and Jonathan, and were proud grandparents to four grandchildren, representing the fourth generation of Reformed Episcopalians in the Riches family. Riches was a teacher, professor, mentor, pastor, and bishop. He started teaching at Reformed Episcopal Seminary in 1965 as a lecturer and later became Professor of Liturgics and Theology. He was the seminary's president from 1982 to 1990 and 1995 to 1998. Upon retiring in 2015 after 50 years of service, he was named Professor Emeritus of Liturgics and Theology. He also held visiting professorships at Cranmer Theological House and Sangre de Cristo Seminary in Westcliffe, Colorado. Riches was proud that his son Jonathan completed a Ph.D. in

liturgics and served the seminary for 25 years, enhancing his legacy by achieving full accreditation in 2013 and introducing a Master of Arts degree along with other programs.

In 1974, Riches was elected bishop of the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic and was consecrated in June 1975 at the First Reformed Episcopal Church in New York. He served as Assistant Bishop, Bishop Coadjutor, and later Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese from 1984 until November 2008. He served as Presiding Bishop of the entire denomination from 1996 to 2014. He helped the Reformed Episcopal Church grow and reunite with other traditional Anglicans. Riches was Moderator of the Federation of the Anglican Churches in the Americas from January 2006 to April 2008 and worked with the Common Cause Partners, helping to lead the formation of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) in June 2009, contributing to the Anglican realignment movement in the United States.

Riches served as the most senior bishop in the ACNA, installing the first Archbishop Robert W. Duncan. Archbishop Duncan said:

“Without the commitment and statesmanship of Presiding Bishop Leonard Riches, it is hard to imagine how the Anglican Church in North America could ever have come together. His wisdom and presence were an abiding gift to me personally and to the whole movement that was the Common Cause Partnership of orthodox Anglican fragments, a movement that is now a growing and united Church of some thirty dioceses and more than 120,000 believers whose mission is to reach North America with the transforming love of Jesus Christ, recognized and in Communion with 60 million Anglicans worldwide.”

Bishop Leonard W. Riches, Sr.'s legacy is marked by his steadfast commitment to the principles of traditional Anglicanism, his love and compassion in the spirit of Jesus Christ, his pivotal leadership in Anglican realignment, and his dedication to theological education.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara, of Pipersville, PA; his sons Leonard, Jr. (Cecilia) of Florissant, CO., and Jonathan (Beth) of Horsham, PA; his daughter-in-law Corinna; his brother Ron (Carol) of Sparta, NJ; his grandchildren Leonard III (Devan), Sam (Rebecca), Allison, and Anna; his two great-grandchildren Nolan and Luca; his nephew David; and his nieces Jennifer (Chris) and Alice (George) and all their children; Catherine, Jocelyn, Kelly, David, Jr., Charlotte, and Penelope.

Riches deeply loved his family, the church, and all God's creatures. Fondly called the St. Francis of Four Brooks, he cherished his life in this area of Tinicum, Upper Bucks County, where he cared for numerous animals, including rehabilitated wildlife.

Florence Miller - On May 9, 2025 I, accompanied by Bishop and Mrs. Gillin, attended the funeral service for Mrs. Florence Miller at St. Mark's REC, Rydal, PA. Florence, the wife of Captain Bob Miller, passed into glory on Sunday, May 4, 2025. Both have been longtime members of St. Mark's, and Cpt. Miller remains a fellow servant on our NEMA Standing Committee.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality; then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the

victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 15:53-57)

Mrs. Elsie Weiss, mother of Carol Weiss Riches and mother-in-law to Mr. Ron Riches. Elsie was just shy of 103 years old and labored for God as his faithful soldier and servant. We are still reaping the fruits of her labors.

We thank God for these His children who have been a blessing to His Church for so many years.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. David A. France, Chairman