

## **Obituary for Daniel Gilbert Cox**

Bishop Daniel Gilbert Cox, a retired bishop of the Reformed Episcopal Church, and longtime pastor of Bishop Cummins Reformed Episcopal Church in Catonsville, MD, departed this earthly life and entered the presence of his Lord on October 16, 2021, a month short of his 90th birthday.

Daniel was born to Newton and Irene Cox on November 15, 1931, in Abington Township, PA. He was raised in the Cox family home in Roslyn, PA, along with his older siblings Irene (Sis) and Newton, Jr. (Newt). Seven years later, younger brother Alfred (Al) arrived, completing the household.

Daniel, or “Danny”, as his family affectionately called him, attended the Abington Township School from grade 1 till his high school graduation in 1949. During his high school years, he sang bass in “The Four Flats”, a barbershop quartet that gained fame on campus and beyond. Daniel retained a life-long love of music, playing the cornet, singing in church choirs, and fostering excellent music programs throughout his parish ministry.

Raised in a devout home, Daniel felt called to Christian ministry early in life. After high school, he entered the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, from which he graduated in 1952. That same year he moved to Baltimore, was ordained a deacon, and began ministering at Koontz Memorial Chapel (now Faith Church) in the Armistead Gardens community of East Baltimore. 1954 was an eventful year for Daniel, as he married Patricia Stiemly and was ordained a presbyter. Throughout the 1950s he continued to serve at Koontz Chapel, supplementing his modest income by working on a Brinks armored truck. He also attended the Johns Hopkins Evening School, from which he received a BS in social sciences.

In 1960, Daniel accepted a call to pastor Bishop Cummins Memorial Church, which was in the process of relocating from West Baltimore to Catonsville. During the early years at Cummins, he was assisted by the financial acumen of then Baltimore City Councilman William Donald Schaefer, who served as church treasurer and with whom he maintained a lifelong friendship. Governor Schaefer would later award Daniel the Governor’s Citation in 1990. Though Daniel did not engage in political activism, Schaefer was not the only well-known political figure with whom he had an association. In July of 1974, Daniel was the officiant at the wedding of Michael Ford, son of then Vice President Gerald Ford, who would assume the presidency within months.

In 1984, Daniel was consecrated a bishop in the Reformed Episcopal Church. He served as an assistant Bishop in the Diocese of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic, while continuing as Rector of Bishop Cummins Church. Both of these ecclesiastical roles enabled him to focus on one of his top priorities: the encouragement of young people in their Christian life, especially those who felt the call to enter the ministry, like he had so many years before. To this day, numerous men and women who were mentored by Bishop Cox remain active in various fields of Christian service, including Joni Eareckson

Tada, whose inspirational writings were among those he turned to the most, especially in the time of his failing health.

In the 1980s, Bishop Cummins Church began assisting in the relocation of Ethiopian and Eritrean refugees to the Baltimore area. During that period, Bishop Cox established deep friendships with members of the local Ethiopian and Eritrean communities. He supported the formation of the Tewahido Mekane Selam Eyesus Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which held services at Bishop Cummins before moving into their own church building in Gwynn Oak. Bishop Cox was also actively involved in the Billy Graham crusade held at Baltimore Memorial Stadium in 1981, delivering the invocation at one evening's rally.

Bishop Cox retired from active ministry in 1996. He came out of retirement briefly two years later, to serve as Interim Pastor of St. Stephen's Reformed Episcopal Church in Eldersburg, which he had helped to found in the early 1980s as a mission of Bishop Cummins. Even after concluding his stint at St. Stephen's, he remained active in service, making occasional episcopal visits to parishes throughout the diocese, performing confirmations, and encouraging others in a multiplicity of ways. After he became physically limited in his later years, he spent countless hours on the telephone, advising younger clergy and offering spiritual support to those in need of it. To the surprise of all he took up texting, and enjoyed exchanging messages with his nieces and nephews scattered throughout the country, and especially his little brother Al, who now lives in Broken Arrow, OK.

Daniel enjoyed following sports, especially the Orioles. In the glory days of the Birds, he and his family were regulars at Memorial Stadium, where he had a clergy pass that allowed him free entrance to the bleachers at any home game. Later, he enjoyed sitting in the box seats owned by Glen Haven Memorial Park, whose Harford Road office his mother-in-law managed for many years. When he was in good health, Danny loved vacationing at the beach and mountains with Pat and their son Stephen, who was born in 1972. Annual jaunts to Myrtle Beach, SC, Ocean City, and Deep Creek Lake, as well as the occasional trip "out west" to visit family, provided many happy memories. He and Pat traveled to Europe in 1971 when Pat, unbeknownst to either of them, was pregnant with Stephen. In 1984, the three of them were joined by Pat's mother Madeline on a train trip across the county to visit big sister Irene (by then Peterson) and her family in California.

Daniel rejoiced at the expansion of the family in more recent years, with the marriage of Stephen to Stephanie Engel in 2005, and then the arrival of grandchildren: Audrey in 2007 and Petra in 2012. Receiving the name "Pop Pop", he took on this new role with gusto, and even with waning physical strength looked forward to the annual Thanksgiving trips to Deep Creek, the lunches after church on Sundays, and the visits from the grandkids to the Catonsville home that he and Pat shared for 60 years.

More than anything else, Daniel Cox wanted to be remembered as a follower of Jesus Christ. The desire "to depart and be with Christ" took possession of him in his last days.

He longed above all things to hear those words from his Savior, "Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord!" Thanks be to God for a life well lived, a peaceful death, and the sure and certain hope of the resurrection.

Daniel is survived by his wife Patricia of 67 years, his son Stephen, daughter-in-law Stephanie, granddaughters Audrey and Petra, brother Alfred, and many nieces and nephews to the fourth generation. He is preceded in death by his father Newton Sr. (d. 1966), mother Irene (d. 1989), and older siblings Irene (d. 1995) and Newton, Jr. (d. 2016). *Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him.*