



Reverend Edwin Cabaniss Coleman

MAR 13, 2025



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The Reverend Edwin Cabaniss Coleman, a beloved minister of the Episcopal Church, died peacefully in his sleep on March 13, 2025 at the age of 95 in Nashville, Tennessee.

Born in Jackson, Mississippi and raised in New Orleans, Rev. Coleman was a drummer in his high school marching band and a self-professed “goof-off” until age 16, when he had a profound conversion experience. The young man who had never read a book eventually became a Greek scholar, graduating with a bachelor’s from LSU and a Master of Divinity from the University of the South at Sewanee.

On a blind date ordered by his bishop, the young seminarian met the love of his life, Mary Lou Alexandre Parker (“Alex”), herself the daughter of an Episcopal priest. Alex and Ed married in 1954, and remained in love, and best friends, throughout their 65-year marriage.

As a deacon, Rev. Coleman served as a priest-in-charge and chaplain in northern Louisiana. In 1958 he was called to be rector of St. John’s, College Park, a struggling church on the south side of Atlanta. During his seven-year tenure, that small congregation grew to over 1000 members.

Rev. Coleman was called in 1965 to be rector of St. Michael’s Church in downtown Charleston, SC, but he refused the call, since the church bylaws described the parish as a “white” church. Those bylaws were quickly changed, and Ed and Alex moved into the rectory at 76 Meeting Street along with their growing family of four children.

When the SCLC and the civil rights movement came to Charleston in 1969 to support striking Black hospital workers, Rev. Coleman became a quiet force for racial reconciliation. At a Sunday morning “pray-in” at St. Michaels—with The New York Times and Associated Press in attendance—Rev. Coleman refused to “lock the doors” (as some vestry members had urged) and instead welcomed the Black visitors, warmly inviting them to coffee hour after the service.



Obituary

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In the 1980s and 1990s, Fr. Coleman served as clergy advisor to two lay-led renewal movements, Education for Ministry (EFM) and Cursillo, both of which helped revitalize his own faith as well as the faith of the laypeople who led it.

After 20 years, the Colemans moved in 1985 to Nashville, Tennessee, where Rev. Coleman served as Associate Rector at St. George's, Belle Meade. He later served as Interim Rector—twice—during two periods of transition at St. George's. Semi-retired in the 2000s, he continued to serve as a priest at Christ Church Cathedral in downtown Nashville and to participate in local Bible study and prayer groups.

The defining character traits for which Rev. Ed Coleman are remembered—love and joy, peace and patience, kindness and goodness, faithfulness and gentleness—are the same "fruits of the Spirit" described in Galatians 5:22-23. Those who knew Ed Coleman will never forget him.

Rev. Coleman was predeceased by his wife Alex, who died in 2019, and survived by their four children—Edwin Cabaniss Coleman, Jr. (Todd), John Parker Coleman, Mary Alexandra Coleman, Stuart Holmes Coleman; five grandchildren: Coleman Butts, Callie Ban, Ali DeMoss-Campbell, Sarah Jane Coleman, Guy Alexander Coleman; and two great-grandchildren: Marigold Ban and Percy Ban.

His memorial service will take place Saturday, March 22 at 11:30 AM at St. George's Episcopal Church, 4715 Harding Pike, Nashville, TN 37205.

In lieu of flowers, donations in honor of Rev. Edwin Coleman can be made to his son Stuart's nonprofit:


WAI: Wastewater Alternatives & Innovations, 2927 Hibiscus Pl., Hon., HI 96815.


<http://bit.ly/waidonate>

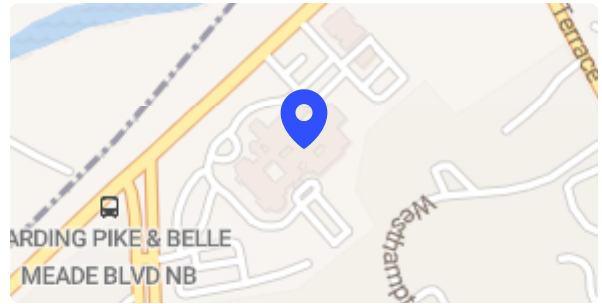


Memorial Service

 **Saturday**, March 22, 2025

 11:30 AM CT

 **St. George's Episcopal Church**
4715 Harding Pike, Nashville TN 37205





Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Edwin by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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