



Rev. Canon Lee Graham Jr.

August 2, 1920 - November 18, 2012

The Rev. Canon Lee Graham Jr. died Sunday, November 18, 2012 in Tallahassee, Florida at the age of 92.

Born in Gainesville, Florida on August 2, 1920 to the late Marion Harris Graham and Lee Graham Sr., he grew up in Gainesville, graduating from P. K. Yonge High School in 1938. Lee attended the University of Florida, where he joined the Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity and participated in the ROTC program.

Following graduation, Lieutenant Lee Graham served in China during World War II. He married his high school sweetheart, Betty Thomas on August 1st, 1945. Major Lee Graham was honorably discharged from the Army in the fall of 1945 and entered the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria VA. Lee was ordained in November 1948, 64 years ago last week. His first parish was

St. James Episcopal Church in Port St. Joe Florida, where he served until 1951. Lee was called to St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Birmingham Alabama, where he served for 13 years. This was a time of great expansion of this new congregation. When he left Alabama, St. Luke's had become the largest Episcopal Church in the state.

Rev. Graham was a firm advocate for civil rights based on his unshakable conviction that all people should be treated with dignity and respect. This same conviction led him to advocate for the right of women to be ordained and for the full rights of gay men and women. He clearly saw that when

society treats anyone with less than love and respect, everyone suffers. One of his many contributions was his ability to offer up this vision to others as they worked through these highly charged and emotional issues. Although his views were not universally shared in Birmingham at the time, St. Luke's later dedicated Graham Hall out of their love and respect for his service to the congregation.

Lee was called to St. John's Episcopal Church in Tallahassee FL. in 1964 where he remained rector for 19 years. During that time, he oversaw the construction of the preschool section addition to the church. He was one of the organizers of Tallahassee's Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service, which continues to this day. After serving as rector for 35 years, Lee accepted a call to Calvary Church in Memphis TN. in 1983 as an associate rector, and served at Calvary through 1990.

Everywhere that Lee and Betty went, they formed warm and lasting friendships with enumerable members of the congregations and the communities, which they have treasured throughout their lives. Lee and Betty retired to their beloved Tallahassee in 1990 and Lee immediately made himself useful by filling in as interim pastor both in Tallahassee and in Quincy, FL and Bainbridge, GA. After 64 years in the ministry, Lee Graham led his last service on November 8, 2012 at Westminster Oaks Chapel.

Five days later, Lee Graham entered the Margaret Dozier Hospice House at Big Bend Hospice in Tallahassee and passed away peacefully with family at his side on November 18. He is preceded in death by his parents, Lee and Marion Graham of Gainesville, his brother Dr. Henry Harris Graham, and his sister Marion Graham Rariden.

Lee is survived by Betty, his beloved wife of 67 years; his five children, Marion Graham, William Clark Thomas Graham (Christine), Lee Graham III (Linda), James Herschel Graham, and Robert Graham (Jennifer); and his beloved daughter in law, Beatriz Graham. He is also survived by five grandchildren, Jessica Scotchie (Jeff), Elizabeth Davis (Adrian), Ryan Graham, Gabrielle Graham and Cecilia Graham, all of whom filled him with joy immeasurable;

and four great grandchildren, Claire and Will Scotchie and Graham and Madison Davis.

The funeral will be held at St. John's Episcopal Church in Tallahassee at 2:00 PM, EST on Friday, November 23. An interment service will be held at Evergreen Cemetery, 401 SE 21st Street in Gainesville, FL, Saturday, November 24 at 2:00 PM, EST.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made in his memory to: Amnesty International 5 Penn Plaza, New York, NY 10001-1810 or St. John's Episcopal Church, 211 North Monroe St., Tallahassee, FL 32301.

BEVIS FUNERAL HOME of Tallahassee (850/385-2193 or www.bevisfh.com) is assisting the Graham family.

Previous Events

Service

NOV **23**. 2:00 PM (ET)

St. John's Episcopal Church
211 North Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32301