

# *Celebration of Life*

*Ifeanyi Chidubem Prince Anyoku*

*July 24, 2005 - August 5, 2023*

*Service*

*Saturday, September 23, 2023 • 10:00 a.m.*

**The Episcopal Church of the Advent**

555 Advent Street • Westbury, New York 11590

*Officiating: Rev. Canon Eddie Alleyne*

*Organist: Quincy J. Dover*

*Cantor: Sarah Ittoop*

*Tech Support: Rodney Mayers*

# Order of Service

The Opening Hymn.....“Immortal, Invisible God Only Wise” - H 423

Reception Of The Body

The Collect.....BCP 493

Reflections

The First Reading: Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33.....Chibuzo Emenike

Psalm 23.....BCP 612

The Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.....Chichi Anyoku

The Hymn ..... “Amazing Grace” - H 671

The Gospel ..... John 14:1-6

Eulogy ..... Ifeoma Anyoku

Homily ..... The Rev. Canon Eddie Alleyne

The Apostles’ Creed/The Lord’s Prayer .....BCP 496

Prayers Of The People .....Ikenna Anyoku - BCP 497

Offertory Hymn..... “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” - L 189

Closing Prayers and Benediction

The Recessional Hymns..... “Guide Me, Oh Thou Great Jehovah” - H 690

*Interment*  
Amityville Cemetery  
Amityville, New York

## *Eulogy*

It's hard to write about the people we love. Nearly impossible to encapsulate them in something as limiting as words. Words fail. I'll try. When Ifeanyi first decided he wanted to come to school in the U.S., my dad asked me to text him and offer any SAT tips. "Just anything that might help him prepare!" he'd said. I'm not sure why they asked me. I got a 28 on the math section of my ACT. But I did reach out. I told him to try his hardest, to take a few practice tests to prepare, and to remember that nobody ever does well on their first try, so don't worry if you need to retake it. A few months later, he got his results back. A 1550 out of 1600. No need to retake. I filed this information into my mental sorting system. Under the tab Ifeanyi, a new word: Unpredictable. Ify is unpredictable in the classic human ways, yes. But then Ify is also unpredictable in ways that are beautifully and uniquely his own. Waking up at 2 PM some days, and 7 AM on others, but always staying up way past the time everyone else has gone to bed. Informing me that he was reading *Walden* one afternoon, then talking to me about his thoughts on *Jennifer's Body* the next. He's a certified genius, the smartest boy I know, who is also deeply incapable of ignoring kiosk workers at the mall. I call him the human garbage disposal. In his time living with my parents, my mom and Auntie got into the habit of cooking double our typical amount of food. One batch of rice for everyone else, the other for him to finish on his own. I don't understand how he stayed so skinny. I'd often watch him eat in absolute wonder/horror as he insisted that he "could have another helping if there were enough." Then he would argue with me over who was going to wash the dishes that night, always eventually agreeing to do it if I agreed to watch *Grey's Anatomy* with him later. (In this way, we must all possess a level of predictability; it's what makes us who we are.) If you know Ify, you know he's the sweetest boy to ever live. We've been inundated with stories about his kindness, memories of his voice, his laughter, his love. Another word to describe him: Effervescent. I can't imagine him gone. It's hard because the very core of who he is, the only way I know to understand him, is alive. He's brilliant. He shines. Ify is the type of person you meet, and you feel innately changed by the encounter. You're better for it. In losing him, I've been comforted by the countless people who have reached out to let me know how much they love him. How greatly he impacted them, too. It's wonderful to know that we are all together in this, that we all carry evidence of his life within us. I miss him every day. I love him just the same. I'm afraid to come across as banal. There are only so many ways to describe grief. One last attempt to try: If you're like me, you believe the world's been here for over 4.5 billion years. Look it up, and scientists will cushion that prediction, providing a margin of error of approximately 50 million years. When you look at it this way, the world seems to reset every second. What is 18 years (and, subsequently, what is 50, 100, 50 million years) to a world that has persisted and persists and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future? Last week, my mom pulled out one of her mugs, with an inspirational quote on it: "It is not the years in your life that count, but the life in your years." Mom loves that quote. She smiles at me as she recites it, hoping to impart some deep wisdom. I'm so sorry, Mom. I don't like that quote. Everyone says it's Abe Lincoln, but I don't even think it is. Still, I believe it. In the deepest, most cliché, parts of my body. I know Ify would believe it, too (but he'd be proud

of it. One more word to describe Ify: Unpretentious.) I hold onto Ify so tightly, I grieve through memory. I try not to feel shame when I cry. I believe deeply that we create our realities out of memory. So much so that when I hear the Grey's Anatomy theme song, I hear his laugh. Or when I eat calamari I picture him in front of me. There is infinite time in memory. It folds in on itself, not a journey that is straight and linear but a million different points that all overlap and occur simultaneously. A million memories to pull from. An unlimited amount of life in these years. To borrow a cornier phrase, because I am my mother's daughter: You are forever in my heart. Or, I'm with you every time I blink. For as long as I remember you, I hold you. Dazzling, frustratingly smart, endearingly humble, silly, adventurous, hungry—for knowledge, for fun, for life—my little brother forever. The world may reset, but you will have left your fingerprints. Time cannot contain your life, and we are all the more thankful for it.

### *Acknowledgements*

*We the family could never adequately thank you for the expressions of love, kindness and sympathy shown through cards, calls, prayers, visits and words of encouragement. God's grace and your love has blessed and sustained us during this time. May God richly bless you all.*

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Final Arrangements Entrusted to:

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Amy Iheoma Nwoko • Jason M. Sheppard


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