



LISTEN to *The ChurchMouse*

*New Scotland Presbyterian Church
August 2022*



"Original Landlord Still Offering Sanctuary"

News Cycle Offers Skewed Perspective by the Rev. Holly Cameron

A few weeks ago, we read the familiar story of the Good Samaritan. It struck me that Jesus tells the story differently than our current news media would. After all, this story is about a robbery, and in today's media, the robbery would be the focus. How was he robbed? Where was he robbed? Was it in broad daylight? Who were the robbers? Where were they from? Where did they go? Are they still on the loose? And then there would be all the statistics of how many other robberies there have been this year. And, with the 24-hour news cycle, we would hear it over, and over, and over again, until it feels like the only reality there is.

Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber points out that we would probably not hear about the Samaritan. Violence is highlighted while mercy and generosity are ignored – because mercy and generosity don't make the news. In fact, most news now seems to be an Atrocity-of-the-Day Calendar of random shootings, hate crimes, and the devastation of war.

It's overwhelming. It can lead us to despair. Because there is never a shortage of bad news.

Stephen Gould wrote an op-ed piece just after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, which gives us another perspective on all our bad news:

"Good and kind people outnumber all others by thousands to one. The tragedy of human history lies in the enormous potential for destruction in rare acts of evil, not in the high frequency of evil people. Complex systems can only be built step by step, whereas destruction requires but an instant. Thus, in what I like to call the Great Asymmetry, every

spectacular incident of evil will be balanced by 10,000 acts of kindness, too often unnoted and invisible as the "ordinary" efforts of a vast majority.

We have a duty, almost a holy responsibility, to record and honor the victorious weight of these innumerable little

kindnesses, when an unprecedented act of evil so threatens to distort our perception of ordinary human behavior."

And that is just what Jesus is doing in this story. The focus is not on the violence. The focus is on the mercy and kindness. Jesus speaks a dozen words about the robbers, but the Samaritan gets the rest of the story – over six times as many words.

Pastor Nadia says it this way: "evil may have the news cycle. But it does not have the victory. The darkness does not get to have our hearts. It does not get to fill our minds. It does not get to steal our joy. And to look for the love, the light, and the kindness in the world around us is not the same as pretending that evil is not evil.... Because we believe in the love of God – a God who defeated sin, and death, and the devil."

We believe in a God who created light in order to scatter the darkness. This good news illuminates all the bad news we hear, so that we are not stuck in the despair of the bad news. May God's good news root us and fill us, so that we will be beacons of light.



PRAYER LIST

Laurel & Mark Beavers

Melanie Thornton Capraro
(Karen & Tim Thornton's daughter)

Bill Carroll (Chris Gordon's father)

Danny Carroll (Chris Gordon's brother)

Linda Caruso (Tamara Shaw's friend)

Amy Chew (Holly Cameron's friend)

Randy Craft (Debbie Craft's husband)

Family of Carole Elmendorf

Carl George
(Christine Cameron's husband)

Dot Geyer (Judy Riopelle's friend)

Holly Huth (Joe Huth's daughter in law)

Joe Huth

Lynn Illingworth (Beth Illingworth's father)

Stephen Kohler
(Dorothy Kohler's son)

Aidan Lawson (Robin Shufelt's friend)

Linda Mabie (Peg Throop's friend)

Michael Manss (Robin Shufelt's friend)

Stephanie Markus

Tony Merritt
(Tim & Christine Gordon's in-law)

Gerald Minor (Joyce Schork's brother)

Family of Brenda Pease
(Mardell Steinkamp's sister-in-law)

Family of Rich Plant
(Holly Cameron's friend)

Family of Shirley Pline
(Holly Cameron's friend)

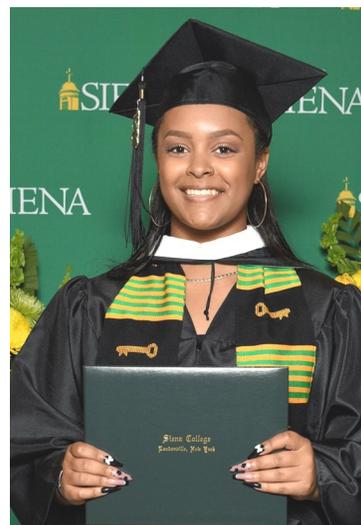
Family of Joyce Schork

Family of Karen Sotherland
(former member)

Bob Wagner (Don Wagner's brother)

Shirley Wright

Euni Yang
(Pastor Charlie Yang's wife)



Rachel Crawford

Rachel Crawford, daughter of Jennifer and Bill Crawford, made the prestigious Dean's List and received her BA in Psychology from Siena in May. She plans to attend the College of St. Rose in the fall to pursue a Master's degree in School Psychology.



Sean Gordon

Sean Gordon, son of Tim and Chris Gordon, graduated summa cum laude from SUNY Purchase. He received a Bachelor's degree in theatre & performance studies and a minor in playwriting. Presently, Sean is working at the Center for Disability Services.

He's there until late August, then he goes to Stratford, Connecticut for a Shakespeare residency with the Mighty Quinn foundation. There, he and the Glow-Worm Theatre Company are producing *Julius Caesar*. After that, he plans to move to Brooklyn.

August Anniversaries

Carol & Richard Wickham 8/11/1972
 Catherine & Jason Russell 8/18/2007
 Dorothy & Michael Matthews 8/26/1973

August Birthdays

Laine Miller 8/2
 Patricia Joyce 8/6
 Ted Whitbeck..... 8/9
 Cameron Miller 8/9
 Anna Norris..... 8/21
 Gwen Libby..... 8/23
 Karen Thornton..... 8/23
 Arlene Herzog..... 8/24
 Brenda Dwyer..... 8/24
 Jim Nicholson, Sr..... 8/25
 Hunter Smith..... 8/29
 Christine Cameron..... 8/29



Happy 100th Birthday Eleanor Gifford!

When Betsy Bates requested people send her mother, Eleanor Gifford, birthday cards for her 100th birthday on July 19, our congregants and others really stepped up! Open the flood gates: she received 170 birthday cards! Eleanor was very pleased, but noted she didn't know most of the people! Pictured here from left to right: are son John, daughter Lenora, Eleanor, and daughter Betsy.

Can you . . .

GUESS WHO?!



*Be strong and courageous.
 Do not be afraid;
 do not be discouraged,
 for the LORD your God
 will be with you wherever you go.*

Joshua 1:9



We Mourn the Loss of . . .

Joyce Minor Schork
August 22, 1924—July 20, 2022



Carole Sellnow Elmendorf
August 4, 1939—July 8, 2022



Joyce Schork passed from her earthly life on July 20, just shy of her 98th birthday. Joyce was a breast cancer survivor since 1991, but died of ovarian cancer. Her laughter and bright smile endeared her to everyone she met.

In her youth in Bethlehem, CT, she created the first newspaper there, serving as reporter, editor, typist, publisher and delivery gal. She began organ lessons in her teens and before long was the part-time organist in church.

As a cadet nursing student at Waterbury Hospital, she was the first married woman and young mother to be allowed to complete her nurse's training. Joyce worked at Danbury hospital in pediatrics but ultimately became head nurse at Bethel High School where she worked for 22 years.

At 86, Joyce joined New Scotland Presbyterian Church, participated in Bethlehem Senior Service programs, and initiated "game night" at her apartment complex. Amazingly, in her 90s, she began teaching Mahjong, a tile-based game developed in 19th century China.

She is remembered as a great traveler, storyteller, musician, caregiver, game player and kind soul. At 97 she was an amazing example of what a person with a positive outlook and a joyful demeanor can accomplish!

She was predeceased by two sons (Ricky and James) and her husband, and is survived by her brother Gerald, daughter, Marietta, grandchildren and great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Carole Elmendorf, a mother and grandmother who loved animals, died on Friday, July 8. She was 83.

"Carole was a communicant of New Scotland Presbyterian Church and always enjoyed visits by Reverend Holly S. Cameron," her family wrote in a tribute.

A lifelong resident of Voorheesville/Altamont, Carole loved animals more than people most of the time. She worked for the former Blue Spruce Farms and the University at Albany for many years, handling research animals.

She is survived by her sons, Thomas and his wife Daisy, Mark and his wife Mary Ellen; by her sister, Joan Lighthart and her husband Charles; by her brother, Paul Sellnow; by her brother-in-law, William Elmendorf and his wife, Nancy; by her sister-in-law, Lorraine Sellnow, and by her grandchildren.

***Father of all, we pray to you
 for Joyce and Carole,
 and for all those whom we love
 but see no longer.***

***Grant to them eternal rest.
 Let light perpetually shine upon them.
 May their souls and the souls
 of all the departed,
 through the mercy of God,
 rest in peace. Amen.***

A Trip Down (Sam Youmans') Memory Lane

During a videotaped interview with Sam Youmans in 2015, he reminisced about the early days of our church. "The church was going down during the worst part of the depression during World War I. Most of our members for support were farmers, and even though the farmers had plenty to eat, what they had to sell didn't bring very good prices." He went on to say that crop rotation wasn't practiced much back then. "This land had been worked for probably 200 years, and a lot of the farmers took all they could out of it and never put much back. Most of them just planted the same crop year after year.

"Our church was one room — the sanctuary, and men had to carry water and milk cans in for the holiday church suppers. [During the winter] on Sundays, we had two members come down at 4:30 am to start a fire in the furnace. And that would barely take the chill off the place by ten o'clock. Then the rest of the week there was no heat, until later on. If they had to have a meeting anywhere, it would be at somebody's house, or Sunday afternoon or evening, when it was still warm there.

"They had a women's Sunday school class that was the start of the "Opportunity Club." The women wanted to form an organization, a social organization, not connected to the church, but it was started here, a community club that would allow all the community women, regardless of church affiliation.

"Once a month they would go out and play games or go out to eat. Occasionally they would put on a square dance. I never figured out what the word 'opportunity' implied. Maybe it was just a chance to get away from their husbands! But then the men couldn't be outdone, so they formed the men's club in the early '30s. It was also a community organization and they're the ones that dug the ditch to bring in running water from the main.

"They also installed two fire alarms on either end of the village. They consisted of suspended big iron rings about six feet in circumference

that they struck with a sledge hammer. You could hear it for *miles*. There's one out in front of the New Salem Fire Department. [The alarms] were to draw the volunteers to come fight the fire. We didn't have fire trucks, but they'd pump water out of a well."

Referring to a local hotel, "There's a lot of pictures of it in the museum. It was bought by Charlie Bender, of the Bender Melon Family. Men would go there and get drunk and not show up [to work] the next day. So Charlie bought the hotel and turned it into apartments. But lo and behold, down the road, somebody built another tavern called The Sunset Rest. Then Charlie's men would go there [to drink].

The Rev. Cameron wanted to know about the very loud ticking clock that now hangs in the church library. With his characteristic good humor, Sam said that back then, the clock hung in the sanctuary and that they would "watch it faithfully during the sermon, along with the kids who got bored. One of the ministers thought it was a distraction so he took it down and it was hidden away for a while." Dorothy Kohler recalled that it was stashed away in the Deacon's closet way back under the stairs for some time. Sam joked, "Maybe we should put it back in the sanctuary!"

When reminiscing about the bell in the steeple, Sam recalled that one day Jimmy Gage wanted to ring the bell, "so we let [him] ring the bell and he turned it upside down. He pulled the rope too hard and it got stuck upside down. So somebody had to climb up there and turn it back over."

John Griffin interjected that the bell is cast iron and bronze and there was concern that the bell would become pitted from the striker. He explained that now the bell remains stationary and the striker moves, thus inverting the process.

We are grateful to John Griffin and Tim Thornton for having the forethought to interview Sam, the church's longest member, about his memories of the olden days.

*Memories, pressed between the pages of my mind.
Memories, sweetened through the ages just like wine.*

(Strange/Davis)

Your Family Will Thank You

If you haven't discussed your end-of-life wishes with your loved ones, planning your funeral may be more difficult for them. The more decisions that have already been made by you, the less stress there will be for your family.

Executing a will is first and foremost. Wills must be notarized by a licensed notary public but they don't necessarily have to be drawn up by a lawyer. Simple will formats are available on-line.

It is also important to fill out a Health Care Proxy. Put in writing exactly what you want done in the event that you cannot speak for yourself when it comes to healthcare decisions. Templates are available on line for free.

Don't forget about Durable Power of Attorney. Designate a person to be your voice to make legal decisions if you are no longer competent to do so.

Keep everything in one place. Start a file and inform your executor where the file is located. Consider the following when compiling your list of instructions for your executor:

- * Who should be notified of your death? Make a list of names, addresses and phone numbers of loved ones to be notified.
- * What bank accounts, life insurance accounts, credit cards and on-line social media accounts need to be closed? Compile a list that includes account numbers and passwords. If you don't want your executor to have this much detail before your death, give them a copy with the account numbers and passwords omitted, and tell them they will find the information in the file after your death.
- * Put the titles to cars you own in the file as well as the deed to any property you own.
- * Provide information that your executor will need to obtain a death certificate: Social Security number, date of birth, and full

names of your parents will be needed.

- * What items would you like to be included in your obituary? Depressing though it may be, you may want to write your own obituary.
- * What music would you like to be played at your funeral or memorial service? Make a list of songs and/or hymns.
- * Are there particular scriptures that you would like read?
- * Is there a particular funeral home you would like used?
- * Would you prefer to be buried or cremated?
- * If you prefer to be cremated, what should be done with your ashes?
- * If you prefer to be buried, do you wish to be embalmed?
- * In what outfit would you like to be buried, including any specific jewelry.
- * Do you prefer an open or closed casket?
- * Do you own a burial plot and, if so, where? Include the deed to the plot in your file.
- * Who will care for your pets?
- * Do you want the ashes of any cremated pets to be buried with you?

Talk with those closest to you and make all your wishes known. Talk to those whom you've designated, as well as those close to you whom you did not designate. There can be hurt feelings and miscommunication unless clearly laid out.

When the time comes, your family will thank you for your thoughtfulness during their time of heartbreak and stress.

*The September Newsletter
will feature a funeral
planning checklist/form.*



Session Meeting Notes, July 2022

Session met on July 28. We covered many topics.

The new Executive Presbyter, Robert Trawick, will be visiting our church on Sunday, September 18, as our guest preacher. We look forward to meeting him.

Delmar Presbyterian Church generously donated two boxes of pre-packaged communion cups to our church, and we graciously accepted them for our communion services.

We are happy to note that the PEO group has begun meeting in our building again, and welcome them on September 12th for their meeting.

Personnel Committee reports that they recently held their 90-day review with Adam Stefaniak, our new Sexton. Both he and the committee are pleased with the work he is doing. The committee also reported that Kat Pollan has taken a full-time job and will no longer be our media specialist.

Building and Grounds reports that our crenellated parapet at the top of the steeple is rotting and pieces are beginning to fall to the ground. John met with representatives from John G. Waite Associates on June 16, and has been in conversations with NYS Landmarks Conservancy Sacred Sites Program about possible grant money. The committee agreed to apply for the Sacred Sites grant, which was



SESSION MEETING

submitted on July 14. We have also contacted Albany Presbytery Trustees about possible grant money. Investigation of updating our sound system continues. Rev. Cameron is going to check with Albany Presbytery Trustees to see

if there is grant money available as new mics will make our worship services more accessible. The committee also reports that the parking lot has been restriped.

Covid-19 policies will stay in place for now, with recommendations to wear masks but they are not mandatory. We are hoping to start Coffee Hour again in the fall.

Rev. Cameron officiated at funerals for Sam Youmans, Karen Sotherland, and Joyce Schork. She also reported that she is currently serving on an Investigating Committee for Albany Presbytery. She has been asked to co-officiate at an interfaith wedding in September. She also got a certified copy of the Church's Articles of Incorporation; she suggested, and Session agreed, that we keep copies of our church charter and articles of incorporation, but send the originals to the Presbyterian Historical Society, which archives important records for PCUSA churches in an environmentally controlled archive; the Society already houses our records from 1795 through the 1900's.



General Assembly Biennial Meeting

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) meets every two years to make decisions about the life of our denomination. This June the Assembly had its first-ever hybrid meeting based in Louisville, KY. Our own "pastor in the pew," the Rev. Larry Deyss, notes that, for the first time, the Assembly took action to divest from five fossil fuel companies. The Presbyterian Peace Fellowship stated that when overtures first started coming to the Assembly in 2014, the main topic of debate was whether climate

change is real. At this Assembly, there was no argument about the threat of climate change, the debate is now about strategies for responding to the threat. The Assembly called for divestment from Chevron, ExxonMobil, Marathon Petroleum, Phillips 66, and Valero Energy, because the companies are not doing enough to slow global warming. If you would like to see other actions the Assembly took, check out their website: <https://ga-pcusa.org/ga-news/>

YOU CAN
Worry
 OR
Worship



Pastor Quincie Yamin

Our Joint Worship Services with First United Methodist Church of Voorheesville continue this month with Pastor Quincie Yamin taking to the podium here at New Scotland Presbyterian Church on August 7 and 14 at 10:00 am.

Quincie is originally from Louisiana. She graduated from Louisiana Tech University with a bachelor's in Communication Studies, Spanish and a minor in International Studies. She attended graduate school at Duke Divinity school and graduated with a Master of Divinity. Quincie moved to Voorheesville, NY the summer of 2021 following her marriage to Mathew Yamin, FUMCV associate pastor. She is passionate about social justice, youth ministry, and fostering community.



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 New Scotland Presbyterian Church
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"Original Landlord Still Offering Sanctuary"

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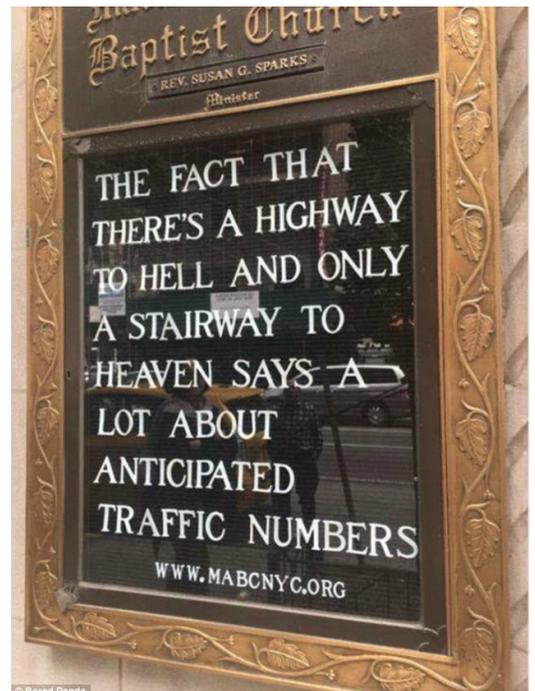
Puzzle!

Search for and circle all the bold words from Psalm 18:2, which reminds us where we find our strength.

The **LORD** is **MY ROCK**, my **FORTRESS** and my **DELIVERER**; my **GOD** is my rock, in whom I **TAKE REFUGE**. **HE** is my **SHIELD** and the **HORN** of my **SALVATION**, my **STRONGHOLD**.

S	T	R	O	N	G	H	O	L	D	T	S
O	L	O	B	K	I	E	Y	E	J	S	A
R	E	F	U	G	E	I	Y	N	T	V	L
R	O	G	H	A	R	L	Q	R	A	Y	V
S	X	C	T	T	I	M	T	K	K	M	A
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I	G	F	V	L	O	L	K	E	N	S	I
E	N	F	O	R	T	R	E	S	S	G	O
L	T	U	R	G	Q	A	C	K	J	Q	N
D	C	D	E	L	I	V	E	R	E	R	E
K	Y	U	X	O	C	N	O	O	Y	Q	S
X	H	X	A	R	K	L	R	C	N	H	Y
G	O	D	T	D	K	A	D	K	U	D	X

GOD ROCKS!



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