



LISTEN to *The ChurchMouse*

*New Scotland Presbyterian Church
February 2022*

"Original Landlord Still Offering Sanctuary"



An Optimistic Approach to Winter by the Rev. Holly Cameron

It is hard for me to believe that a new year has arrived. Another opportunity for a fresh start. It seems particularly puzzling because we've been living with this pandemic for almost two whole years, so, in many ways, I feel like we've been stuck in one place for that whole time.

This is how winter feels to me, too. Like we get plunged into the cold and the dark before Thanksgiving ever gets here, and we are stuck in the cold and the dark for what seems like an unending amount of time. We all get sick of it. Many of my friends say they have to get away for a week in January or February — get to some place where the sun is shining and they get warm all the way to their bones. That week or so of light and vitamin D makes it possible to come back home and survive the rest of the winter.

This winter I've been thinking about ways to experience it without escape hatches. What is there to be gained from winter? Is it just a time we have to endure until we can get back to the life we want? Or is there life within the winter?

For much of December and January, I have been involved with "sorting projects." I found that for most of 2020 and 2021, I was driven by the belief that everything was urgent. Having to pivot from over 20 years of doing ministry one way, to everything changing on a dime, meant I had to learn how to lead worship to an empty sanctuary, provide pastoral care without showing up in person, and hold meetings with people in little windows on my computer screen. I'm sure I learned more in the last two years than in all the years since divinity school.

But, the tyranny of the urgent meant that everything else fell by the wayside: papers were printed and stacked up for filing, projects got shoved into corners, emails that did not require an immediate response fell to the bottom of the screen. Lots of thoughts, ideas, intentions, tasks, and plans got buried, either physically or digitally. So, I've been taking some time to sort

through the piles and the boxes and the drawers, to see what can be revived, what can be put away, and what can be thrown out.

Sorting has become a form of meditation — just paying attention to the item that is in my hand, and deciding what to do with it — in the shredder, in the recycle bin, in a folder. I start on a pile, and trust that I don't have to get to the bottom before I can give myself a break. Winter is allowing me time to be inside and make peace with the chaos that has built up and taken over.

In her book, "Wintering: the Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times," Katherine May describes trees in winter. She notes that even as the leaves are falling in the autumn,

"the buds of next year's crop are already in place, waiting to erupt again in spring. [The buds are produced in summer, and they are] protected from the cold [of winter] by thick scales. We rarely notice them because we think we are seeing the skeleton of the tree, a dead thing until the sun returns. But look closely, and every single tree is in bud . . . It has eve-



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prayer Requests



- Laurel & Mark Beavers
- Family of Wayne Bevins(Dorothy Kohler’s nephew)
- Melanie Thornton Capraro(Karen & Tim Thornton’s daughter)
- Danny Carroll.....(Chris Gordon’s brother)
- Linda Caruso(Tamara Shaw’s friend)
- Francis and Tina Coons(Dan’s father and sister)
- Randy Craft.....(Debbie Craft’s husband)
- Bob DeLorenzo(Tom DeLorenzo’s brother)
- Holly Huth(Joe Huth’s daughter-in-law)
- Aidan Lawson(Robin Shufelt’s friend)
- Ed Lyons.....(Robin Shufelt’s friend)
- MaryEllen Marr.....(Peg Throop’s cousin)
- Tony Merritt.....(Tim & Christine Gordon’s in-law)
- Ray Milhan.....(Dorothy Kohler’s friend)
- Mary-Jean Riley
- Joyce Schork
- Shirley Wright
- Euni Yang(Pastor Charlie Yang’s wife)



Let us remember all the suffering which is being caused by the cold, snow and ice at this time.

For our military personnel and their families.

For doctors, nurses, first responders, police officers, fire-fighters, and all families dealing with COVID-19.

For students, teachers, staff, administration, and parents as children return to school.

The prayer list is maintained by the Deacons. If you have questions about anyone on the list, or would like to add or remove someone from the list, see or e-mail Sandy Warner (warnerho@nycap.rr.com) or any of our Deacons.



We are so pleased to welcome two new members to our congregation, **Mary-Jean Riley** and **Debbie Perez**. Thank you for joining our congregation!

Pennies for Haven (Homeless, not hopeless)

Our mission collection for February 2022 is “Pennies for Haven.” All money collected will be given to the Interfaith Partnership for the Homeless (located on Sheridan Avenue in downtown Albany).

Founded in 1984 by the Capital Area Council of Churches, it has expanded its non-denominational programming to include a continuum of services that assist over 2500 homeless and at-risk individuals and families each year, promoting life skills development and self-sufficiency. Please give to this worthy charity. ~Mardell Steinkamp,



Texts for Tough Times

By Larry Deyss, Pastor in the Pew

There is no doubt about it, these are tough times. Tensions are high, things are uncertain, anxiety abounds, and tempers are short. So what do we do?

We find our way forward by looking back. Looking back gives us a moment of relief from the present. In looking back, we see how others handled life in tough and difficult times. In looking back we draw upon the wisdom of the past and gain insights by which we can move forward.

I offer up for your consideration some Biblical texts forged in tough times. I refer first to the Letter of James. I will let James' words of the past speak to us today.

“My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.”

(James is saying, don't let the tough times break you, let them make you.)

“If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given to you. But ask in faith, never doubting, for one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.” (1:2-7)

Let me note, faith is not something that we create within ourselves by the dint of our sheer will. Faith is another word for Trust. We trust in God, and we trust ourselves and all that we love to God. We learn to be present before God and God becomes present to us. This is what the practice of spiritual formation is about in part.

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We love because he first loved us.



1 John 4:19



Staff Thank You Notes

Thank you so much for your generous Christmas gift. I am blessed to be part of such a caring community. It has been a challenging year as we continue to navigate our way through the ups and downs of the pandemic, and I am so grateful that we can support one another as we go through this together. I look forward to a better year for all of us in 2022.

Faithfully, Holly

What a lovely note and generous gift I found in my bookkeeper box right before Christmas. You are all so loving and caring. A very special place to work. Starting my 7th year, hard to believe. Wishing you a happy and healthy 2022.

Lisa Allendorph



Thank you so much for my Christmas gift. It felt great to put that in my wallet, I had a big smile on my face!

Ryan Dwyer



Thank you for the card and the gift. Hope everybody had a great Christmas and look forward to a good new year.

Kevin Lamica

Thank you so much for the Christmas bonus. I appreciate your generosity. It certainly went a long way in making my Christmas merry! You have all made me feel so welcome here in my new position. Best wishes to everyone for a happy new year!

Carolyn Barrett



thank
you

So grateful there are amazing people in this world . . . People like all of you

I would like to take a moment to thank everybody at the Presbyterian church for the wonderful retirement gift and send off into retirement.

In my 22 years (the best time) I always liked working at the church. It always felt like family.

*Yours truly,
Kevin Lamica*



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- Mary Ewart..... 1-5
- Carol Wickham 1-5
- Robert Fuglein 1-6
- Matthew Fuglein 1-7
- Gale Kohler..... 1-8
- Tommy Della Penta 1-9
- Dorothy Kohler..... 1-11
- Daniel Coons 1-15
- Pam Thornton 1-17
- Dawn Loux..... 1-19
- Stephanie Scaccia Haines.. 1-20
- Mitchell Joyce 1-20
- Judee Miller 1-21
- Denise Throop Riedy..... 1-22
- Homer Warner 1-27
- William Crawford 1-28
- Diane Bode..... 1-29
- Rebecca Terhune 1-29
- Bill Kerr 1-31

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- Jane Thornton 2-6
- Holly Cameron..... 2-9
- Lisa Allendorph..... 2-13
- Kevin Dwyer 2-16
- Wendy Kohler..... 2-18
- Bonnie Griffin..... 2-21
- Ann Putnam 2-22
- Ray Youngman..... 2-25
- Sharon Hildebrandt 2-28
- Tamara Shaw 2-28
- Mary-Jean Riley 2-29



Can you guess who this birthday girl is?



Watch for the “reveal” in the March newsletter!

Are You Missing Our Church Emails?



As you probably know, each of our office staff recently got new email addresses. This means our weekly emails are now being sent from the new office email, office@newscotlandpc.org.

Some of us noticed that we did not receive the message sent Friday, January 21, and then found it was in a junk or spam or promotions folder because of the change in email address.

Please check to be sure you received that email, and going forward, be on the lookout for our weekly emails on Fridays around noon.

If you need help, feel free to respond to this message, or call us in the church office, 518-439-6454.

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James also knew that in tough and trying times, patience become short, our anxiety can be outwardly directed, and we can speak in anger. He thus writes:

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger, for your anger does not produce God's righteousness.

I also share with you a short text from Isaiah who spoke to a very anxious and frightened people as they were threatened by an enemy. Isaiah said:

For thus said the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel: In returning and in rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength. (Isa 30:15)

During Christmastide and into the season of Epiphany we are also reminded of the words of St. John.

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. (Jn. 1:5)

Yes, there is no doubt about it, these are tough times. Tensions are high, things are uncertain, anxiety abounds, and tempers are short. So, what do we do? What we do is we take to ourselves the resources, the wisdom and the faith that has been provided to us and we go forth as God's people in Christ Jesus.

Christ's coming to us, and our celebration of Christmas, was not just about candy canes and colored lights, nice as those things are, they cannot get us where we need and want to be. However, the Word when it is embraced, trusted, and lived will get us where we need to be. The Word which became flesh and dwelt among us is now the Risen Christ who still dwells with those who will open their hearts and minds and receive him. He is the strong Word, and he is the light that guides us on our way, as we walk in his name and are strengthened by his Spirit.

Wishing you every Blessing throughout this season of Epiphany and into the months ahead!



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rything ready. Its fallen leaves are mulching the forest floor, and its roots are drawing up the extra winter moisture, providing a firm anchor against seasonal storms. Its ripe cones and nuts are providing essential food in this scarce time for mice and squirrels, and its bark is hosting hibernating insects and providing a source of nourishment for hungry deer. It is far from dead. It is in fact the life and soul of the wood. It's just getting on with it quietly . . . Life goes on abundantly in winter—changes made here will usher us into future glories."

Our season of winter will be over in a matter of weeks, and we cannot know exactly how much longer the season of pandemic will last, but it gives me hope to know that even in the dead of winter, life goes on "abundantly" and prepares us for what is coming. Winter is not just a time of cold and dark to be endured, but an opportunity to be present and open to the life abundant developing within us.

In Christ's Service, +Holly

February: Beyond Candy Hearts and Roses

The first half of February seems dominated by pink and red, cards and candy. But people not in a loving romantic relationship can sometimes feel left out of the festivities. Of course, all people need love — and certainly love is not limited to the romantic kind. Author Leo Buscaglia, who became known as "Dr. Love" for writing about the topic, said, "Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around."

Jesus taught that loving one another is second only in importance to loving God (Matthew 22:37-40), and that when we love one another, God lives in us (1 John 4:12). There are so many ways to do that — beyond candy hearts and roses! But Valentine's Day is as good a reminder as any.



New Scotland Presbyterian Church
2010 New Scotland Road
Slingerlands, NY 12159

February 2022 Lectionary Readings

February 6

Focus scripture Luke 5:1–11
Additional scriptures Isaiah 6:1–8 (9–13)
Psalm 138
First Corinthians 15:1–11

February 13

Focus scripture Luke 6:17–26
Additional scriptures Jeremiah 17:5–10
Psalm 1
First Corinthians 15:12–20

February 20

Focus scripture Luke 6:27–38
Additional scriptures Genesis 45:3–11, 15
Psalm 37:1–11, 39–40
First Corinthians 15:35–38, 42–50

February 27

Focus scripture Luke 9:28–36, (37–43)
Additional scriptures Exodus 34:29–35
Psalm 99
Second Corinthians 3:12–4:2



JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES
Meredith and Dan Coons, 1-19-2019

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES
Debra and Randall Craft, 2-6-1988



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The Rev. Holly S. Cameron Pastor
Pastor's office phone number:..... 518-478-0796
Pastor's email address.....Pastor@NewScotlandPC.org
Church office phone number..... 518-439-6454
Office email address:Office@NewScotlandPC.org
Newsletter Managing EditorDorothy Kohler



2010 New Scotland Avenue, Slingerlands, NY 12159

New Format for "LISTEN to the ChurchMouse"

It is with great delight that we present you with the new format of our newsletter, and to recognize the hard work of Dorothy Kohler throughout the many years (at least 23 years!) she has produced it single handedly.

Dorothy continues to serve as Managing Editor of "LISTEN to the ChurchMouse," so if you have a story to share or a relevant article, it should still be sent to Dorothy via email at DBK.30@att.net.