



## **LISTEN** to *The ChurchMouse*

*New Scotland Presbyterian Church*

*March 2024*

*"Original Landlord Still Offering Sanctuary"*



## **"Lenten Grace"** by Rev. Holly Cameron

I have been enjoying our Tuesday night gatherings to discuss this year's Lenten devotional. Each week there is a poem, a commentary, and a painting based on the readings for the coming Sunday. Poetry and art often feel like foreign languages to me, so I love getting together with a group to hear what others see in those media. It also helps that each painting is accompanied by a statement by the artist, which gives insight on what they were thinking as they created their artwork.

So far, we have looked at a river of abundant grace that flows all around us, and how most of it rushes right by; we just can't grasp all the grace that God is pouring into the world. We've also looked at a piece that reminds us there are no streetlights out in the ocean, and the depth of darkness in being out on a boat at night. That artist talked about the "luxury of stars," which reminded me of how delighted I was when I moved into the manse 26 years ago. I had been living in Boston, where I saw almost no stars, and when I came here, where there are also no streetlights, I loved sitting outside and looking up at a sky full of stars. It inspired me to travel to several different deserts for a look at even more stars!

Remembering that transition made me think of how often God is offering us beauty, to remind us of the joy in this life. And how often we are focused on our own tasks, so we miss the grace flowing all around us. The Rev. Sarah Speed wrote a poem for this week, called

"Praise the Mount," which seems to express the same idea.

### ***Praise the Mount*** by Rev. Sarah Speed

*I have stayed quiet before. / I have held my tongue / while passing mountains. / I have slipped my hands deep into pockets, / despite the music that invites me to dance. / I have glimpsed a new moon and a new love / and have acted as if it was something other than / a complete, God-given miracle. / But not today. / Not today. / Today I will dance. / Today I will tap my toes all the way to heaven's gates. / Today I will point out every shade of gold / and periwinkle that we pass. / Today I will talk about my faith like we talk about the / weather — / early and unprompted, comfortable and unashamed. / Today I will tell you that God did such a good job / with freckles, willow trees, / and your entire being. / And I will not be embarrassed by my own conviction. / I will not swallow my praise. / I have stayed quiet before, / but not today. / Today I will sing.*

As this Lenten season continues, I hope you have moments of seeing a rainbow, or the sun after the rain, or a night sky of stars, or hearing music or laughter that lightens your heart, and fills you with God's grace.

~Faithfully, +Holly

*We have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.*

*Colossians 1:9*



## Our March Mission is . . .

WALK. GIVE. CHANGE THE WORLD.

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2024

CROP HUNGER WALKS

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**N**o one in this world should be hungry. That's why the CROP Hunger Walk is more than just a yearly gathering. It's a movement that's 55 years strong, made up of compassionate people in more than 500 communities across the U.S.

CROP Hunger Walks are community-based walk fundraising events created to support the global mission of Church World Service, a faith-based organization transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster.

Twenty five percent of the funds raised will go to hunger-fighting programs in our local community. The remainder will go to grassroots development efforts around the world to help provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs.

Millions of people are on the brink of famine. The CROP Hunger Walk and the funds raised will feed the hungry. Donations will provide life-saving support like emergency food along with the seeds, tools, wells and water systems, and programs that will help families feed themselves in the future.

The key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, and their strengths and their needs. The steps we take - and the funds we raise together - will provide life-saving support that will help families feed themselves in the future.

**Albany's CROP Walk is Sun. May 5**

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ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME

## Holy Week Services

### **Maundy Thursday, March 28, 7:00 pm**

This is a joint service you don't want to miss! Experience a creative journey through "the way of sorrows" to the cross, through the eyes of Jesus' close disciple, Peter. Each station features scripture readings, special reflections, and congregational participation. This is a hybrid service – in person at First United Methodist Church of Voorheesville and live-streamed for those who want to attend virtually.

### **Good Friday, March 29, 7:00 pm**

Join us for a solemn joint service including communion and a ritual to lay our burdens on the cross. Featuring a combined choir with members of New Scotland and Voorheesville Methodist, this service is in-person only at New Scotland Presbyterian Church.

### **Easter Sunrise, March 31**

We'll depart the New Scotland Parking lot at 6:00 a.m. for those who want to drive up together, or meet us at Thacher Park Overlook at 6:15 a.m. for our joint worship service. Breakfast will be served after the service at 7:00 am at First United Methodist Church of Voorheesville, 68 Maple Ave.

### **Easter Sunday Service, March 31, 10:00 am**

Join us at New Scotland Presbyterian Church as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord! Bring a loose flower if you able to help transform the barren cross to a symbol of new life!

## Lenten Devotional Study

**O**ur weekly Lenten Devotional Study is meeting each Tuesday through April 2 at 6:00 pm. Each week is an opportunity to discuss and reflect on the Lenten devotional for "A Wandering Heart: Figuring out faith with Peter." Copies of the devotional are on the lobby table. We meet in a hybrid format; in person at the Methodist Church and on Zoom for those who prefer to join virtually. Please contact the Rev. Cameron for the Zoom link.



## A Brief Statement of Faith by Larry Dyess, Pastor in the Pew

**I**n 1983, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) was formed by the union of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and the Presbyterian Church in the United States. The two churches worked to clarify the common ground on which they stood as a new denomination. The result was “A Brief Statement of Faith.”

I was reminded of the existence of this document when I used the Presbyterian Daily prayer app for February 12, 2024 and was surprised to find a portion of the brief statement within the morning prayers. After reading it I felt a renewed sense of what it means to be the church in today’s world. I am sharing with you the section that spoke to me:

*We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life.*

*The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church.*

*The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the water of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.*

*In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all people to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom and peace.*

*In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!”*

*With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

In an age when the focus is so much on us as individuals, it is easy to forget about community. Even in the community of faith, when we gather for worship, I suspect the focus is on going “to church,” forgetting that we are individually and together the church. The text reminds us that we are all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church, and we are given work to do in a broken and fearful world.

The Brief Statement of Faith from 1983 has a lot to say to us in 2024. In it we find hope and strength and by taking its wisdom seriously and folding into our daily lives, we can, and I trust will, follow a way forward into lives which are sustained and led by the Spirit.

I have incorporated this Brief Statement of Faith in my daily prayer routine during the Season of Lent because it will aid me in the introspective work we are called to do during this season and then live out through the months beyond Lent.

I invite you to let this text settle down into your heart, mind, and soul as we seek together to be the body of Christ and together do the work we are called to do in a broken and fearful world.

## Stewardship Meeting

**T**he Finance Committee and Session agreed to focus on stewardship in 2024. In keeping with that goal, we have invited Rose Niles, our Representative from the Presbyterian Foundation, to assist us in that work.

She will be here Saturday, March 9, 9:00 am to noon, to build on the work we have done to follow the leading of God’s Spirit into our next chapter. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.





# Prayer List

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, contact Tamara Shaw, [CliftonRun@gmail.com](mailto:CliftonRun@gmail.com).

- Family of Joseph Albright .....(friends of our church)
- Family of Sherry Back .....(Pat Hammond’s sister-in-law)
- Marie Bailey ..... (Tamara Shaw’s mom)
- Laurel and Mark Beavers
- Dana Burden ..... (Don Wagner’s family member)
- Melanie Thornton Capraro ..... (Karen & Tim Thornton’s daughter)
- Danny Carroll ..... (Chris Gordon’s brother)
- Linda Caruso..... (Tamara Shaw’s friend)
- Randy Craft.....(Debbie Craft’s husband)
- Phil Darcy.....(John Relyea’s friend)
- Gina Domermuth.....(Lexi Donovan’s friend)
- Mark Elmendorf.....(Tom Elmendorf’s brother)
- Evelyn Fuglein
- Family of Pat George ..... (Ken George’s wife)
- Jimmy Kelly ..... (Bill Kerr’s nephew)
- David Kinerson..... (Larry Deyss’ brother-in-law)
- Steven Lampone ..... (Brian Nopper’s nephew)
- Aidan Lawson..... (Robin Shufelt’s friend)
- Stephanie Markus ..... (Robin Shufelt’s friend)
- Martha Oden
- Family of Debbie O’Shea .....(Bonnie & Brendan O’Shea’s sister-in-law)
- Norm Parks ..... (Gary & Betsy Bates’ friend)
- Manny Sanchez ..... (Sandy Warner’s brother-in-law)
- Brad Simon .....(Tim & Christine Gordon’s family member)
- Wayne Winchip .....(Patti DeLorenzo’s cousin)



*Gracious and loving God, we lift up all those facing difficulties this day.  
 Give them the hope and courage they need today and every day.  
 Comfort their pain, calm their fears, and surround them with Your peace.*

Please also extend your prayers for:  
 — the people of Israel, Gaza, & the Middle East  
 — the people of Ukraine  
 — our military personnel and their families.



## Staff Evaluations

Each year the Personnel Committee meets with staff members to review the past year. We value feedback from the congregation to tell us what is going well, and what has fallen through the cracks. There will be a feedback form available in March, and it would be most helpful if we could receive your feedback by March 31. If you have any questions, feel free to talk to any member of the Personnel Committee: Margaret Ewart, Bonnie O'Shea, or Kevin Dwyer.



Can you . . .

*Guess?  
who!*



## Birthdays

Anthony Scaccia	3-1
Carol Fuglein	3-4
Matthew Fuglein	3-4
Deann Della Penta	3-5
Ruth Von Haug	3-6
Patricia Whitbeck	3-8
Brianne Dwyer Roberts	3-9
Kathleen Rudd	3-9
Tristin Kirk	3-10
Timothy Thornton	3-10
Catherine Russell	3-12
Meredith Coons	3-12
Sandra Warner	3-14
Frances McCormick	3-15
Mark Rudd	3-17
Daniel Joyce	3-17
Scott Wright	3-18
Jordyn Miller	3-19
Kristina Norris	3-20
Emily Kohler	3-23
Erin Kohler	3-23

## Anniversaries

Arlene & Jake Herzog	3-25-61
Tom & Patti DeLorenzo	3-26-66
Van & Lynn Kohler	3-29-84





## Session Notes

Session held their regular scheduled meeting on February 15, 2024. The following items were discussed:

- The 2023 Church Statistical Report was reviewed and approved. The report was submitted as required on February 15.
  - A Congregational Meeting is called for Sunday, February 18, 2024 directly after service. The congregation will vote on a change to the bylaws to have six elders serving on session as opposed to nine.
  - Archtop met with members of the congregation and the church's attorney Carolyn Lemmon on February 15, 2024. They walked through the church grounds and placed flags where they would place their structure and discussed the digging for fiber lines. Based on questions raised, Archtop will redraw their plans for the project and have their attorney discuss items with the church attorney. *{Note: the week after the Session met, Archtop cancelled the meeting of the attorneys, saying they decided to move in another direction and would no longer be pursuing an easement agreement with our church.}*
  - The Earth Care Congregation recertification application was reviewed, approved, and submitted as required on February 15, 2024. We are very pleased that the church exceeded the needed point values for recertification.
  - Pastor Holly and Dorothy Kohler attended the church growth webinar on January 17, 2024. The webinar was titled "Albany Quick Leap: Grow Your Church in 10 Days." The overall idea is that it is great for churches to engage in activities to bring in neighbors from the community. Events like food drives, barbeques, turkey suppers, etc. are opportunities for connection with our neighbors to make the event a success, and to share their contact information so they can be included in future activities. This should be part of our conversation when we meet with our Presbyterian Foundation Representative on March 9 and we hope everyone will take part in sharing ideas.
  - Dorothy Kohler attended the last Presbytery meeting on January 25, 2024. At the meeting it was announced that the West Glens Falls Chapel had closed. The Presbytery is sending a Commission to Guatemala in March 2024. Lastly, changes were made at the beginning of 2024 to the health insurance used by retired ministers. They now have Humana, which is creating problems because many practices, including Albany Medical Center, will not accept Humana. Representatives from our Presbytery are working with the Board of Pensions to address this problem.
  - A number of Financial reports were reviewed in anticipation of a meeting with our Presbyterian Foundation Representative, Rose Niles. The reports were very detailed and assisted in understanding the church's current financial situation. We agreed to meet with Rose on Saturday, March 9, and encourage anyone an interest in our finances, stewardship, and next steps to join us from 9:00 a.m. to noon.
  - This year our church is participating in a joint Lenten study with the Methodist church. The discussions are held every Tuesday at 6:00 pm. Folks can attend in person at the Methodist church or via Zoom.
  - New officers will be installed on Sunday, February 25, 2024. Margaret Ewart and Kevin Dwyer will be installed as Elders; Margaret for a second term and Kevin for a first term. Debbie Perez and Diana Bremm will be ordained as Deacons, and Carol Fuglein will be installed for a second term as Deacon.
  - Beginning February 27, 2024, is the next book discussion on "Inconspicuous Consumption." The group will meet for five Tuesdays at 2:00 pm on Zoom.
  - The Automated Defibrillator Device (AED), is in need of a new battery and pads. The cost is approximately \$300.
  - Approved allowing school bus to turn around in our parking lot so children who live in the trailer park do not have to cross the street.
  - Our church sign at Font Grove Rd is bent around the pole it is attached to. Homer has agreed to remove the sign.
- The next scheduled Session meeting will be March 14, 2024 at 5:30pm via zoom.



## New Officers Elected

Our new officers were ordained and installed on Sunday, February 25. Thank you for accepting leadership roles in the church! Your service is greatly appreciated!

### Session

Class of 2024

Dorothy Kohler  
Bonnie O'Shea

### Session

Class of 2025

Jane Norris  
Holly Stefaniak

### Session

Class of 2026

Kevin Dwyer  
Margaret Ewart

### Deacons

Class of 2024

Alexandra Donovan  
Patti DeLorenzo

### Deacons

Class of 2025

Tamara Shaw  
Brenda Dwyer  
Tim Gordon

### Deacons

Class of 2026

Carol Fuglein  
Debbie Perez  
Diana Bremm



# 2024 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Scholarship

The Capital Area Council of Churches (CACC) is once again offering a scholarship in honor of the life and work of Dr. King and to preserve the legacy of the nonviolent human rights movement as it was expressed in his life and teachings.

The scholarship is awarded each year to graduating seniors who, in part, show a commitment to the ideals and teachings of Dr. King. Applicants are also rated on financial need, academic record, and evidence of service to school, faith community and society.

Please contact the Council's office at 518-462-5450 if you have questions regarding the application process. The deadline for applications is March 31, 2024.



# Tithes & Offerings

## Worship Through Giving

Thanks go out to Catherine Russell for creating a QR code that links to our website to allow for easier donations.

QR codes work by arranging a series of black and white pixels into a unique pattern that encodes a string of data. *When scanned, the pattern of the q-code provides a link to our web site to make an on-line donation.*

*Thank you  
Catherine!*



## Fish Fry Fridays are Back for 2024!

**March 8, 15 & 22**  
**4:30—7:00 pm,**  
**or until sold out**

Fresh haddock, French fries, homemade coleslaw and homemade New England clam chowder, cocktail and tartar sauce.

New Salem Fire Department  
694 New Salem Road, Voorheesville  
**Eat in or take out!**  
**Fish Fry, \$15**  
**Chowder, \$5**



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*New Scotland Presbyterian Church*  
*March 2024*



*"Original Landlord Still Offering Sanctuary"*

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