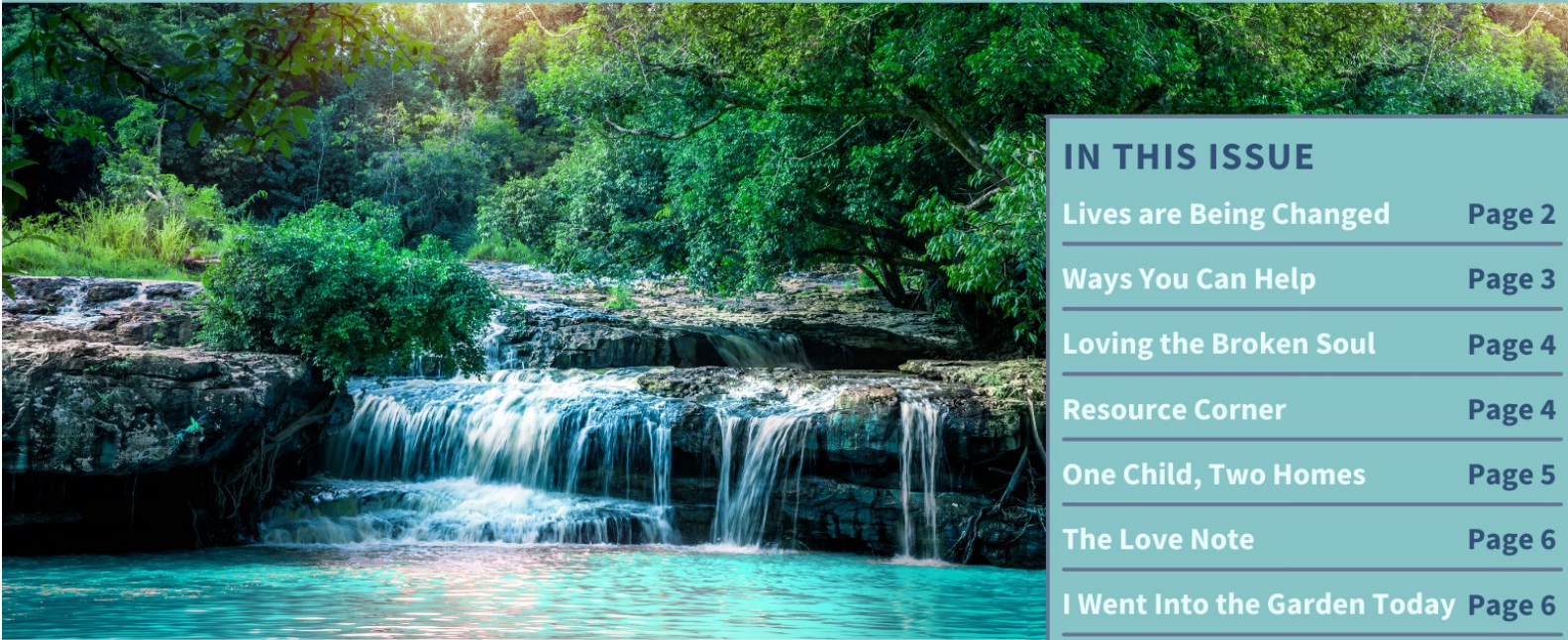


HEART & HAND

Reaching for a hand and touching a heart.



"I SHOULD" VERSUS "I AM"

BY CHAPLAIN LIZ DANIELSEN

On May 28, 2020, during the pandemic, my husband Arvid of 52 years and best friend of 57 years changed his address to heaven. Often Arvid and I would have long conversations about heaven. I recall the conversation we had not long before he died. I was wondering if he had an opportunity to live his life over, would he change anything. Without hesitating, he



said, "No, I would not change anything. God has been good to me, giving me you, our children, and grandchildren, our extended family and friends, and a job I enjoyed contributing to that made a difference in the world. The Lord has been faithful to me and to our family." He was prepared to die, and yet he lived every moment understanding Psalm 139:16 that says, "All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." I remember when the physician told us that he would have only one year to live. We came home and cried together on the couch. He gave me a hug and then we prayed asking God to give us the strength to not lose out on the moments we had together but to live life to the fullest and glorify God. Arvid lived four and a half years. When a diagnosis is given, it is hard not to feel fear. Life changed at that very moment for Arvid and me, but our trust in the Lord did not. It was a daily walk of faith, and I continue that walk even today.

I am still challenged with "I should" even after three years. I should be able to handle things on my own. I should be further along on my grief journey. I should have more answers to the many questions that are asked of me since I educate people on the

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journey of grief. I should understand what God is trying to teach me by now. I should be able to tackle all the challenges that single people face every day. I should be able to hold the tears back that continue to come so easily.

It is easy to stay with I should, but the good news is that I am beginning to understand who "I am" and have stopped focusing so much on where I should be. I am a woman of God. I am never alone as God is always with me. I am stronger than I have ever been before because He has shown me that there is more inside of me to be accomplished than I could ever imagine. I am more sensitive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. I am more aware of the suffering around me. I am more aware of God's love. I am not perfect. I remind myself that it is alright to mess up on this journey that I am on because when I go to Him, He shows me forgiveness, and I can begin again.

As you walk through your day, I pray you choose to focus on who God says you are. In doing this, you will find strength from God and peace in your soul.

"... I am beginning to understand who 'I am' and have stopped focusing so much on where I should be."

BECAUSE OF YOUR SUPPORT, LIVES ARE BEING CHANGED!

Dear Chaplain Liz,

This morning was truly a blessing.

My desire was to be around other women who are suffering from the loss of their husbands. We all had a story to tell, and it was in the telling of our stories that I realized I am not going crazy! It was tearful, painful, and at the same time, extremely validating. The validation is the part I feel I need the most right now.

The finality of my husband's death is excruciating, and although I know I can't expect my friends and family to "get it," I sure want them to.

As far as what I would like to see in the meetings to come, I would say a mix. All of the things you mentioned sounded great. The most important thing to me is being in the company of other women who are in the trenches and talking it out in a safe place.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your devotion to this ministry.

Warm Regards,
Pam Comer



Dear Chaplain Liz,

The Caregiver's Luncheon was a breath of fresh air! I have never had an opportunity to be supported, encouraged, and "loved on" in a group that understands what only caregivers know. Thank you.

I smiled, laughed, and even cried with one of the others as she shared the burden she was holding on to. I am so thankful to the donors who made the luncheon possible!

Sincerely,
Mary*

P.S. I have been caregiving since 2019. Some weeks were 60-hour weeks and others were 80-hour weeks.

*Name changed to protect privacy.

Dear Chaplain Liz,

When my husband passed away, I needed help to recover. The counseling, friendship, and caring that I received from SCSM helped me with the grief. I learned from SCSM that the only choice I had was to be strong! I greatly appreciate all that was done for me, so I like to volunteer because it is my way to say thank you and also to help support this wonderful ministry!

Carroll D.



Spiritual Care Support Ministries is very grateful for your donation. It is your generosity that makes it possible for SCSM to provide counseling, programs, and other services to help lead those who are suffering from heartache to hope.

Thank you.



Dear Chaplain Liz,

I'm not entirely sure that you would remember me. I met you a LONG time ago in Culpeper at the Reformation Lutheran Church back when Vici & Nadine were helping you.

I still get the SCSM newsletter. It has always ministered to me, but ever since your husband passed away, your front page articles have really touched me. You have ministered to others all these years, especially in the area of loss, and now you come from an even deeper place as you honestly share how you are experiencing one of your biggest losses. It has been on my mind for awhile to contact you. As I said, ever since you lost your husband, I've been wanting to let you know

how much I deeply care about the pain you are experiencing and how much your experiences are helping me!

I just read your Dec 2022 article on the front of the newsletter. Again, you ministered directly to me. I am currently experiencing those feelings of wondering if I'm an interruption and feeling that no one understands. How soothing to be reminded that God not only has time, but there are some times that He just wants me to come to Him to have conversations and get His perspective. The reminder to also praise Him for what He is doing is helpful and important.

Sincerely,

A Friend from Orange, VA

If you need help making a donation or wish to set up recurring donations, please call the Center at 540-349-5814 or scan the QR Code below!



Donate here!

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

1. Pray Regularly

2. Give monthly to help with

- Rent & Utilities
- Supplies & Training Materials
- Support Groups
- Community Events

3. Make a One-Time Donation



ENVELOPE



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WWW.SCSM.TV/BLOG

SCSM Mission Statement

Providing support and education with a Biblical perspective to those who are ill, dying, grieving and experiencing personal losses, and to those who journey with them.

SCSM Vision

To establish a local, national and international resource center to provide ministry, training, and a retreat for those who are ill, dying, grieving and experiencing personal loss, and to those who journey with them.

SCSM Values

- God's Word
- Prayer
- Every Human Life
- Integrity
- Confidentiality
- Excellence in Everything We Do

Heart's Cry

O Lord, my heart is all a prayer,
But it is silent unto Thee;
I am too tired to look for words,
I rest upon Thy sympathy
To understand when I am dumb;
And well I know Thou hearest me.

I know Thou hearest me because
A quiet peace comes down to me,
And fills the places where before
Weak thoughts were wandering
warily;

And deep within me it is calm,
Though waves are tossing
outwardly.

Myrna Brande

RESOURCE CORNER

BOOKLETS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE
WWW.SCSM.TV/RESOURCES

- SILENT PAIN OF CHRONIC ILLNESS
- UNRESOLVED ISSUES
- GRIEF & MOURNING

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

JOURNEY FROM
HEARTACHE TO HOPE

\$12



Filled with true stories of God's miraculous healing power told by SCSM clients and volunteers. Your spirit will be renewed by the faith of people in devastating situations that should have robbed them of happiness and comfort, but instead brought strength and courage to their lives.

Spiritual Care Support Ministries Hours:

Mon - Fri
9 am - 2:30 pm

Tues & Thurs
2:30 - 5 pm

LOVING THE BROKEN SOUL

BY CHRISTIE SCHWENK



People.

They are complex.

They can be difficult. Interesting. Unique.

Some are fountains of wisdom and love, and some are drains that pull and grasp and seek, desperately needing and wanting attention.

Each one is valuable. Each one has a soul, and each soul has an eternity. **God calls us to love His people, and it's our only call.** To love them--and everything else that we do and say and offer flows out from that love.

He calls us to see beyond the labels and the reputations. He gives us the spiritual vision to capture snapshots of each heart and to hold them close and safe, and to be a harbor for the hurting. People are valuable.

God gives us His passion that we can see beyond political stances. The extreme and subtle differences that so strikingly divide us in the mirror blur as we seek to understand and value the inside's soul.

The insecurity inside each of us fights against the call to love - saying, 'what about me? Who will fill me up?' The Lord faithfully answers that heart cry, too, as we sit at His feet daily and spend time with Him. Allowing Jesus to fill us up and then splash the overflow onto His people, we stay full by

some miracle.

Occasionally we link with another soul who has that same heart cry. We look up--our gaze is met and held. We are filled with wonder as another deep place that we didn't dare mention, one that exists only in hope. It is the gift of a friend to walk alongside as we scoop up the broken and bring them back to Jesus side by side.

This soul-friend is the purest of gifts.

But we don't stop for too long because we keep going. Separate but united--knowing that, at least for this season, we also have a safe place to land at the end of each day.

So, we continue to put on our cloak of peace and push away our insecurities. God gives us a new, fresh vision, and we notice that some of the broken souls require more, so we dare to stop. We wait, and we love, and we walk next to them slowly, slowly walking and pushing back against society's call to be fast and to check the box and to move on.

No. We wait. We love. We pursue.

We sit in silence, and we make the silence comfortable because it's all okay. No matter what, the world is screaming, and no matter how fast the world is waving its worldly arms around, that should easily capture our attention. God blocks it out. Our faithful God blocks it all out.

We focus on the broken soul, and we sit. In silence. Because people matter, souls have eternity, and eternity is forever.

Keep going. Keep going. Keep going.

.....

Christie serves on the dream team at Women Who Lead.

Check out their wonderful ministry at www.pmnwomenwholead.com



"It is the gift of a friend to walk alongside as we scoop up the broken and bring them back to Jesus side by side. This soul-friend is the purest of gifts."

ONE CHILD, TWO HOMES



Minimizing your child's stress when you have part-time custody

"Now I can finally unpack!"

The night before my nephew, Nathan, left for college, he spoke excitedly about how he finally would be getting a place of his own, even if only a dorm room. Nathan had been living out of a suitcase since his parents divorced when he was 11. Because his parents had shared custody of him, they divided his time between the two homes – a few days at Mom's place, a few days at Dad's, week after week, year after year.

"When Mom, Dad or the steps told me to unpack, I'd go upstairs and dump my bag out on the floor," Nathan says. "I thought, Why bother? I knew I'd be leaving again in a couple of days."



Transitions

Like many children from blended families, Nathan lived a life of constant transition. Life meant two sets of parents, two groups of siblings and two different beds. It meant switching between different rules and routines and having two homes, yet often feeling as if he were not a part of either. Parents are often unaware of the stress a child endures when he's shuffled between two homes.

Children crave stability. In its absence, they may become territorial about their belongings and their space. Their "things" become their security.

I remember a young boy named Josh I was working with in a day-camp program. His father had brought him to camp an hour before his mother dropped off his stepbrother. When the stepbrother walked into the room, Josh's eyes filled with tears.

"That's my new shirt he's wearing," he sobbed. "Dad gave it to me for my birthday. How could Mom let him wear it?"

To Josh, who shared his entire life with a new stepbrother, the loss of a simple shirt made him feel as if he'd been betrayed.



Stress Reduction

As a parent, you can help each child feel like a valuable, respected member of the family and take measures to minimize the stress of switching homes by doing the following:

- **Establish an arriving ritual.** Rituals provide an emotional connection so children can integrate themselves into a different environment. It could be something as simple as a special handshake, a high-five or a hug.
- **Value and protect each child's space and belongings.** Assign individual storage places, and instruct siblings not to touch other kids' belongings.
- **Give kids choices.** Choices empower children and allow them to feel as though they have some control over their lives.

- **Assign chores and responsibilities.** Children feel welcome and valuable when they contribute to a functioning household.
- **Keep a calendar** on the refrigerator so there is no confusion on who is coming and going.
- **Aim for a time** when all the kids are together for planning big family activities.
- **Allow children to spend** quality alone time with their birth parent.
- **Realize** that some extended family will be partial to their biological grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Explain what is happening to the children who may feel left out, and let them know that they are special to you.
- **Most important,** pray every day that you'll not overlook the needs of any child. Ask God to give you a deeper insight into each child's personality, talents and skills, as well as his likes and dislikes. By knowing as much as you can about each child, you'll be able to truly value him for who he is.

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"Like many children from blended families, Nathan lived a life of constant transition. Life meant two sets of parents, two groups of siblings and two different beds."

.....

SCSM is proud to announce that our Center will be hosting a support group later this year called "One Child, Two Homes." The group will be facilitated by Chaplain Liz Danielsen.

SCSM offers counseling services at no cost for families who are going through a divorce or separation. For an appointment in-person, by phone, or via Zoom, please call 540-349-5814.

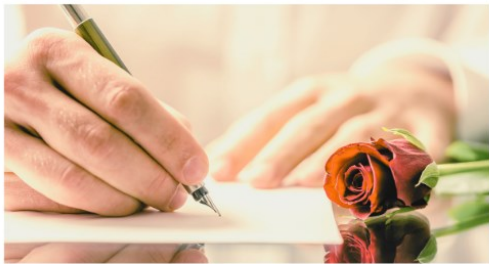
THE LOVE NOTE

BY HILBERT WILKINSON



Twenty-five years ago, our marriage had hit a rough patch. Cathy and I had been quarrelling almost incessantly for a number of years. To avoid separating, we decided to enter marriage counseling. Soon after, my wife began to write a daily message on a note card which she would put in my lunch bag. On one side of the card was a passage of scripture. On the other side, she would write a love note. These daily notes continued for over a year. Rather than wait until lunch to read her message, I would often read it as soon as I arrived at work.

The years passed quickly, our marriage survived, we grew in our faith, and we became very close. Sadly, Cathy died suddenly of a stroke this past November. I was devastated and numb as I stoically tried to carry on.



One day, while looking through my chest of drawers, I happened upon a stack of Cathy's love notes. As I read her love notes, something wonderful happened. I could almost hear her voice speaking to me, comforting me. What a gift!

I WENT INTO THE GARDEN TODAY

BY JUDY MARQUETTE



The winter garden is so cold and desolate. Flowers that bloomed so brightly have withered away. All that was green and growing has faded to brown and shriveled. Wind rustling dried leaves is the only sound heard. I often fear the beauty will never return.

Long before it is time, the calendar shows me spring is coming. Memories flood my mind reminding me that spring is the season that my son left this earth. A life so full of promise, just ready to bloom, was taken long before his time. The cold and desolate memories are often very overwhelming.

Oh, but when spring arrives it is so sweet to go into the garden. Peeling away the layers of leaves and remnants discarded from the seasons passed reveals new life just pushing through the earth. Tiny buds form on branches where leaves once blew away. Colorful flowers burst forth and

replace the brown of winter. Sweet songs of birds fill the air and the warmth of the sun is revitalizing. There is joy in seeing new birth in the garden that once seemed lost.

In this garden of life, winter will not last forever. Spring faithfully reappears with a freshness that symbolizes rebirth and new life. I am reminded that spring is the season of rebirth as Easter is the remembrance of the greatest rebirth-the resurrection of Jesus Christ. As He prayed in the garden, Jesus knew the sorrow of death was before Him but He chose to endure immense pain and suffering on the cross so that we could be reborn into eternal life with Him in Heaven.

Jesus gave the ultimate sacrifice to ensure that my son is now in the most beautiful and glorious garden for eternity. I will see him again in Heaven, the eternal



garden of paradise that will never fade or wither; where there is no more sorrow, sickness or pain; where the music of angels fills the air; where every day is sweeter than the day before. Thank you

Lord for stretching Your arms open wide and hugging my son into eternity. It is an honor to be reminded of Your love and peace, to feel the renewal of spring, to see and smell the flowers, and to listen to the birds singing in my earthly garden until the day I join You and my son in paradise.



"In this garden of life, winter will not last forever. Spring faithfully reappears with a freshness that symbolizes rebirth and new life."

PRAYER & PRAISE

WE PRAY FOR . . .

- More volunteers who could facilitate groups and lead inspirational studies.
- Volunteers who can assist Anna, our marketing coordinator. You do not have to live in our area but can help remotely.
- Our faith communities.
- Our service men and woman and their families.
- Those who are chronically ill and are challenged every day.
- Those who are grieving the loss of their loved one.

WE PRAISE THE LORD FOR . . .

- Having the privilege of serving God and those who come to the Center for help.
- The faithfulness of God and His direction every single day.
- The ability to offer free services because of the generosity of others.
- All our prayer intercessors.
- The truth found in scripture that guides us to make the right decisions for this ministry.
- Our financial supporters.
- Knowing that what we do makes a difference in the lives of the children and adults that come to us for help.
- All our volunteers who sacrificially give of their time.

MEMORIALS, HONORARIUMS, AND THANK YOU'S

IN MEMORY OF

Rita Hofer, given by Debbie Kuhn; Sgt. Jason A. Shaffer and Jennifer Nicole Shaffer, given by Roger and Gwen Shaffer; Rob Christiansen (son) and John McCarty (husband), given by Ann McCarty; Norman, Martha, and Wyn Koller, and Walter, Anita, and David Nigreville, given by Marianne and Doug Nigreville; HQ and Marsha Moody, given by Sharon and Sam Rizzo; Scott Neth, given by Joyce and Jack Neth; Joe Huryk, given by Ryan Owens; Nicholas Daymude,

given by John and Debra Daymude; Vincent Buonomo, given by June Buonomo; Joanne Moyer, given by Helen Danielsen; Peggy Stanley, given by Sandy Martin; Richard Furr, given by Pamela Reynolds; Richard Furr, given by Ellen Sisk; Joe Huryk, Clydelle Nana Coburn, Lelia Harding, and Sylvia Leggett, given by Kathy Huryk; Karen Gardner, Anne and Arther Eislele, given by Dorothy Vasi.

IN HONOR OF

Chaplain Liz Danielsen, given by Kathryn Crabtree.

THANK YOU

Melinda Butler for making the beautiful wreaths to raise money for SCSM; Beverly King for donating a cart to SCSM; Rose Hernandez for making the Easter/Spring

wreaths to raise money for SCSM; The "We Team," Dan Reckley and Jim Presley, for all of their help at the SCSM Center.

A very special thank you to



SCSM is thrilled to be one of the recent recipients of a \$5,000 Community Assistant grant from the Northern Piedmont Community Foundation!

The funding we receive will be allocated toward purchasing printing supplies, which will aid in our community outreach efforts.

for their support of SCSM!

People need to hear your story!



Please let us know how SCSM has impacted your life.

Send in your stories or short testimonies to: ahansen@scsm.tv

Newsletter Editor

Anna Hansen

Associate

Cheryl Reynolds



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Reaching for a hand and touching a heart.
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Have I
not commanded you?

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