

HEART & HAND

Reaching for a hand and touching a heart.



IT'S TIME TO TELL

BY CHAPLAIN LIZ DANIELSEN



"My passion to help people who are alone and hopeless is stronger than ever ...to remind them that every human being is a masterpiece made by God."

As we come to the close of 2023, I want to say "Thank You" for supporting Spiritual Care Support Ministries through your prayers, volunteering, and your financial support. We will be celebrating our 20th Anniversary as a ministry in 2024. What an amazing journey of helping people find hope!

I also want to thank every one of you for the support you have given me personally. Although my life has changed since my husband Arvid died, God is showing me that there is still work to be done. My passion to help people who are alone and hopeless is stronger than ever. My passion is to remind them that every human being is a masterpiece made by God and that He cares about every detail of their lives. He has a plan to bring them peace and contentment despite what they are facing. It all begins with Him.

I could never have imagined years ago when God gave me the dream in 1989 of the Spiritual Care Support Ministry Center how loss would affect everything around me. Loss has affected our homes, schools, faith communities, country, and the world. The ministry of Spiritual Care Support Ministries is needed more than ever.

It's time to share some things that you might not know.

1 We have 75 volunteers that serve with SCSM, and I am one of them. I have not received a salary from SCSM for nineteen years. Arvid and I prayed in the early years for God's direction. I knew

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that I would have to make sacrifices as I walked in obedience to His calling. Because of that sacrifice and the sacrifice of others being brought to SCSM to join with me to accomplish the dream and the work of God, the ministry of SCSM has witnessed the transformation of lives. Hearts defeated by loss and chronic illness have found healing. I am so grateful for everyone that has partnered with me.

(Time continued on page 6)

Shepherds Came That Christmas Down

By Linda Cutrell

Four years ago, when my husband died at age forty-nine, many people tried to comfort me by saying, "Linda you have so many close and wonderful friends." This remark, however, did little to ease my pain as I grieved.

My fourth Christmas without my husband was my first without my children. Although my college-age son, Josh, came home for the holidays, he had much to do with his friends. He, of course, didn't realize how lonely or depressed I was. I hid my depression from everyone, ashamed because I didn't want them to think my faith was weak. On December 26, I hit rock bottom, crying the whole day, not caring if I lived or died. How wonderful, I thought, if I could be with my husband in Heaven.

I decided to dismantle the nativity scene and put away the Christmas decorations. As

I wrapped each piece in tissue paper, one of the lambs that had contentedly lain beside the figure of Baby Jesus in the manger



bounced on the carpet. Reaching down for the porcelain animal, I thought, I'm as lost as you are, poor little sheep." It was then that the shepherd scene in the second chapter of the gospel of Luke flashed in my mind. While the shepherds had kept watch over their flocks by night, an angel appeared and said, "Do not be afraid, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people."

I, too, longed for a shepherd to tenderly care for me in my loneliness. Then I realized that I did have earthly shepherds. My friend, Marlene, had decorated my house for Christmas. We'd spent days sharing and working on greeting cards. Kate calls daily. Marilyn prays with me and for me. Jean lets me use her computer for my articles. Mary Beth invites me over for supper. These dear friends have helped me, watched over me, and hugged me in their arms – God's arms with skin on them.

On December 27, I decided I'd change Christmas **down** into Christmas **up**. These actions helped me:



I began a "gratitude" journal.

I wrote down how I'd been blessed by my friends, concentrating on what I did have instead of what I didn't have. I jotted down special things I could do to repay kindness shown to me.



I took a daily brisk walk.

Breathing fresh air increased my heart rate and released hormones that dispelled my depression. When the weather was inclement, I exercised by walking in a mall.



I set apart a day each week to be with the Lord.

I fasted from television, the phone, and the newspaper. I spent a day or afternoon in prayer, Bible study, praising the Lord, and journaling my thoughts. As I "fasted" from the world, I "feasted" with the Lord.



Many times, December does become depressing. However, I realized that this didn't mean my faith was weak, but that I needed to be especially close to my Shepherd. He is the One who lifted me up from Christmas down.



★ ★ ★

If you're struggling and need support, SCISM is here for you. We offer counseling services at no cost to provide hope and encouragement.

To schedule an appointment in-person, by phone, or via Zoom, please reach out at 540-349-5814 or scism@scism.tv.

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"I needed to be especially close to my Shepherd. He is the One who lifted me up from Christmas down."

FAITH RESTORATION

BY J. BATEMAN

Spiritual Care Support Ministries has been a blessing in my life during my darkest moments. I delivered a stillborn baby, Jax, on November 9, 2013. This was undoubtedly the worst day of my life. I had previously attended SCSM's support for the chronically ill and had met Chaplain Liz and had the privilege of praying with her on several occasions. After hearing the words, "I am sorry there is no heartbeat." I felt like my



heart too had stopped. My world became a very dark place. I felt alone, isolated, and as if I had done something terribly wrong. None of those were true, but at the time I did not believe it. I looked for a support group and could not find anything local. I reached out to SCSM and Chaplain Liz reached out to a

volunteer that had lost a young child, and they formed a group to help me through this time. Chaplain Liz has continued to be a blessing to me, and I am forever grateful that I was able to connect with her and SCSM.

Ten years later and I know that I can still count on support from SCSM. Each year in remembrance of my son and other babies born too soon, I host a virtual event called Candles for Jax, and Chaplain Liz always participates and honors my son. Chaplain Liz has helped to restore my faith, and I continue to walk knowing that one day I will be reunited with my son and what a glorious day that will be.



Rest in His Faithfulness

When we look back and wonder

How we ever made it this far,

We realize it is not because

We have been clever

But because

God has been wise not because

We have been strong

But because

God has been mighty

Not because we have been consistent

But because

God has been faithful

Author Unknown

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



OVER THE PHONE



ONLINE



IN PERSON

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

WWW.SCSM.TV

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SCAN ME



FOLLOW CHAPLAIN LIZ'S BLOG

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

A Special Gift for You

By Andrea Gambill



JESUS said, “It is more blessed to give than receive” (Acts 20:35), and most of us have lived that true experience. It is fun and exciting to plan a special gift for a special someone whom we love and want to make happy. We look forward with eager enthusiasm to the looks on our loved ones’ faces when they open the gifts we have chosen for them. Often, we have more time to enjoy the giving than the recipients have to enjoy receiving. If only we could have one more chance to give an extraordinary and precious gift to our absent loved ones...

suggestions that won’t cost any money and can work healing miracles in our own wounded hearts:

🎀 **Give the gift of FORGIVENESS.** Forgive someone who doesn’t seem to deserve it, but may be too ashamed or embarrassed or afraid to ask for it. Such generosity of spirit will stretch your own heart and soul, and any burden of resentment or hate will be lightened and even removed. You don’t have to start with the biggest chunk of forgiveness, either. You can start with little things and perhaps work up to the big ones later. Forgiveness is like a muscle; it needs to be exercised regularly to become strong and effective. (Don’t forget to include yourself in the forgiveness gift, as well. Think of something you shouldn’t have done, or that you have left undone, and make a commitment to forgiving yourself, too.)

Would it surprise you to learn that anger

🎀 **Give the gift of JOY.** (Joy and happiness are not the same thing.) Happiness is what we see on the surface; it bubbles to the top, and while it is light and frothy and effervescent, it is fragile and can leave as easily as it came. Joy is the foundation of hope that resides deep in the soul. It can coexist with sadness because it is the rock upon which we build our hope.

🎀 **Give the gift of FREEDOM.** When people are truly free, they can say what’s really in their hearts without fear of criticism or judgement. When we listen with an uncritical ear (and withhold advice), we give the gift of freedom.

🎀 **Give the gift of LOVE.** Love does not die. While love seems to be mushy and soft, it is the most powerful of our emotions. Love is always patient and true. Love warms our souls and calms our troubled thoughts. Love soothes our wounds in gentle, healing caresses. Love gives us back the most beautiful memories that grief has tried to steal. Love is kind and forgiving. Love sacrifices its own needs in favor of the needs of its beloved.

🎀 **Give the gifts of LISTENING** – not just with our ears, but with our hearts. To truly listen, we must be able to hear. Sincere listening creates an atmosphere of trust. When we really listen, we hear with our hearts as well as with our ears. Our minds attend, and emotionally we become one with those who have allowed us to glimpse their most intimate concerns.

🎀 **Give the gift of UNDERSTANDING.** Every one wants to be understood without criticism or judgement – or even advice. There’s an old saying, “A friend is someone who knows all about you and likes you anyway.”

and forgiveness can coexist? When we truly love somebody, we can forgive their failings, but still feel anger about whatever they did (or didn’t do.) It is possible for anger to be a healthy, productive emotion that can provide the energy we need to take righteous action. It’s important that we be honest with ourselves and examine our own hearts and motives.

🎀 **Give the gift of PEACE.** Seek out someone who is troubled or frantic or in chaos and offer them calmness and gentleness. Become a safe haven for them in the midst of their storm, and peace will multiply in your own life, as well.

“No matter how fresh our grief wound or how deep our pain of loss, we can refresh our own souls and bring a balm of peace to our own suffering if we can step outside our prison of pain long enough to provide a unique gift to someone else.”

Instead, why not consider a special healing gift for ourselves? It is when we give something thoughtful and special that we receive the most. No matter how fresh our grief wound or how deep our pain of loss, we can refresh our own souls and bring a balm of peace to our own suffering if we can step outside our prison of pain long enough to provide a unique gift to someone else.

It is always a temptation to “buy” our way out of grief (at least temporarily), but usually just throwing money at our pain doesn’t work. A gift of real significance has to come from a heart filled with sincerity and generosity. Then it can return peace and even joy to the giver. Here are some gift





"Give the gift of generosity. Don't 'gift till it hurts,' give till it feels good!"

Give the gift of PATIENCE. There are a million reasons why it could take somebody a long time to "catch on." If we are willing to wait patiently for the process to ripen and be fulfilled, we will find the fruit of our patience is very sweet and satisfying.

Give the gift of GRACIOUSNESS. Graciousness is knowing when to stop instructing, scolding, reprimanding, and advising. Graciousness is knowing when to be still, holding forth both love and patience. Graciousness is choosing to see past the faults of another and believing in their potential before it is evident.

Give the gift of FAITH. The Scriptures teach us that faith is a gift to us from God, and we can model that gift to others by living our own lives in gentle and "faithful" ways. By displaying our faith without "preaching" or demanding any particular behavior, we may (often unknowingly) suggest faith to one who has been wounded by circumstance. God didn't make us policeman; He wants us to be disciples. Faith is simply believing that which has been promised even when we cannot see it or prove it. We can calmly rest in "knowing" without having to argue our points.

Give the gift of HOPE.

Give the gift of HEALING.

Give the gift of GENEROSITY.

Don't "gift till it hurts," give till it feels good!

From Bereavement Magazine, Nov/Dec 2000.
www.bereavementmag.com

CANCER FROM THE BACKSEAT

BY DUANE DANIELSEN



Recently, it seems that each day I find out about another family member or friend facing cancer. Since I have never had cancer, I've only experienced cancer second hand, as a backseat driver. As a backseat driver, I felt the sadness of losing my dad. I wrestled with unanswered questions of why as I watched Willie Wonka & the Chocolate Factory for the first time in a children's hospital with a child fighting for her life. I have rejoiced with "cancer free" declarations of many and seen my good friend collect his cancer free pins each decade from St. Jude. I have also witnessed people's setbacks and God coming through with the miraculous, all from the backseat.

So what's it like for the person in the front seat, the person who has cancer and is driving through the category 5 storm that at times is so intense that they can barely see the road in front of them? In these moments I don't always seem to know what to say. Will my words be helpful from the backseat? A simple "praying for you" seems so incomplete though I know that when we pray, God can still move mountains.

Have you felt that way?

I have seen others with good intentions shout advice from the backseat. Seeing this, it can become easy to clam up. I don't want to be a distracting or discouraging voice. At the same time, I want to be a voice of encouragement from the backseat, a voice that reminds people that with God all things are possible whatever the twist and turns are in the road ahead.

But maybe God is wanting more than words from me. Maybe He is trying to push me out of the backseat. The backseat can get comfortable. It is close to the pain but safe. Maybe He is asking me to unbuckle and climb through the gap in the front seats and sit down in the passenger seat and get that much closer to "walking in their shoes." I



realize we can never fully understand what someone is going through in the driver's seat of their journey. But maybe this intentional effort to get into the passenger seat can get us closer. Jane Marczewski wrote of her cancer journey, "I am God's downstairs neighbor, banging on the ceiling with a broomstick. I show up at His door every day. Sometimes with songs, sometimes with curses. Sometimes apologies, gifts, questions, demands. Sometimes I use my key under the mat to let myself in. Other times, I sulk outside until He opens the door to me Himself." Wow, it's like Jane was giving a front row seat to what she was going through.

Lord, as I have the courage to move towards the passenger seat, help me to pray deeper prayers, empathize more, and see that You are even closer to the situation than I thought.

RESOURCE CORNER

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

- THE IMPORTANCE OF WORDS IN THE HEALING PROCESS
- A YOUNG WIDOW'S JOURNEY
- WHAT IS LOVE?

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.

NEED ENCOURAGEMENT?



Call 540-792-2345 for a prayer message from Chaplain Liz.

Spiritual Care Support Ministries Hours:

Mon, Wed, & Fri
9 am - 2:30 pm

Tues & Thurs
9 am - 5 pm



“There are times in our lives when our hearts need encouragement, our faith needs nurturing, and our souls need comfort. That is what we do at SCSM.”

You might wonder why I am telling you this information. It's because I really want you to understand what your donations are being used for and how much of an impact it is making. We are grateful for every dollar that we have received. Every dollar allows us to minister to more people!

My prayer is also that you would hear God speaking to you about giving financially either for the first time or the fiftieth time. We need your financial support more than ever before. Would you be willing to double or triple what you normally give to this ministry financially? If your faith community is not supporting us, would you be willing to start giving regularly? Would you be willing to share with your family and friends about our ministry? Perhaps, you have experienced the hope that we offer at SCSM, and you want to share it with others. Now is the time to do that.

There are times in our lives when our hearts need encouragement, our faith needs nurturing, and our souls need comfort. That is what we do at SCSM. Will you help us? Thank you for your generous gift.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 540-349-5814.

Chaplain Liz

2 We give support to grieving children, teens, and adults in the office and online, making our impact not just local but global. We can help people even where you live. In 2022 alone, we had:

- 4,575 Calls Seeking Help (up 9% over 2021)
- 1,710 People Came to the SCSM Center (up 47% over 2021)
- 712 One-On-One Counseling Sessions (251 were virtual sessions)

3 We have been able to offer our services *free* for all nineteen years because of your generosity. We offer the following:

- Bereavement Groups
- One-On-One Counseling
- Support for the Chronically Ill
- Visits to the Homebound
- Family Grief Camp

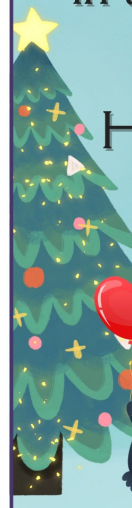
- Pet Loss Groups
- Divorce and Separation Care
- Widows Connect and Spouse Loss events
- Training for Faith Communities
- Coffee and Conversation - People of the community come together weekly for fellowship and prayer.
- Community Support - We were recently able to give support to the local High School after the death of the principal.
- Resources - Recently I was able to offer a comic book Bible to one of our teens who has found it to be interesting. It has given him a desire to read and learn more about God.
- Inspirational Bibles Studies
- Comfort Bags for Children & Teens



Our volunteers at SCSM are truly a blessing. They serve with unwavering purpose and dedication to help those in need, guided by their unwavering devotion to God.

**May God's presence
abide with you and
your family today and
in the New Year.**

**Have a blessed
Christmas from
the staff and
volunteers
at SCSM!**



PRAYER & PRAISE

WE PRAY FOR . . .

- Success in our Christmas fundraiser so that we can be financially in the black as we enter the New Year.
- Volunteers that are willing to help with counseling. Pastoral Counselors and Lay Counselors can live throughout the USA.
- Volunteers that will help with facilitating groups.
- Volunteers who will be willing to be prayer partners. Volunteers can live anywhere in the world.
- Volunteers who can help in practical ways around the Center (i.e. window cleaning, etc.).
- Retirees that would be willing to volunteer.
- Those who have experienced personal loss.
- Peace in our homes, in our workplaces, and in our communities that we live in. May that peace spread throughout the world.

WE PRAISE THE LORD FOR . . .

- The opportunity to serve Him for 19 years of ministry in Virginia and throughout the USA and overseas.
- Those who have joined with us in prayer and for their financial support.
- Danette Jennings who has been serving at SCSM for almost 10 years. She is now retiring. She has shown by example that excellence is something to aim for daily. We are celebrating the legacy of her hard work and commitment that she will leave behind.
- God's constant care of us and keeping us safe.
- Giving us wisdom to make decisions each day.
- All our volunteers who sacrificially give of their time to serve others.
- The encouragement we receive that inspires us to keep doing what God has called us to do.

MEMORIALS, HONORARIUMS, AND THANK YOU'S

IN MEMORY OF

Michael Allen Winks, given by Laura Winks; Arvid Danielsen, Vincent Buonomo, & Doris Honsinger, given by Liz Danielsen; Susan Bryan, given by Bill Bryan; Scott Neth, given by Jack & Joyce Neth; Nicholas Daymude, given by John & Debra Daymude; Tim Maahs, given by Sydney White; Elaine Thomstad, given by George Thomstad; Christopher Ryan, given by Virginia Wright; Barbara Cale, given by Norma Baum; Arvid Danielsen, given by Geri & Jim Savitske; John McCarty & Rob Christianson, given by Ann Marie McCarty; Trudy Budelman, given by Helen Danielsen; William Kennon Jeffries, given by Robin Dejarnette; Sherrill Moore, given by Michael Moore; Herbert & Dorothy Ott, Bea & Nick Rodolico, given by Andrew Rodolico; James S. Bassett, given by Linda Bassett; Katie & Alyssa Beach, given by Peggy McDonald; Sherry Moore, given by Jerry Drenckhahm.

IN MEMORY OF STEWART LINDSEY

Given by Betsy Anderson; Piedmont Periodontics, P.C.; Jackie Keller; Robert McAndrew; Tony & Donna Christiano; Liz Danielsen; Robert Sylcox; Sandra Swenson; G.W. & Sue Mitchell; Cindy Manning; Dale & Hazel Settle; Debra Lindsey.

IN HONOR OF

The work SCSM does, given by Sharon & Marvin Strauser.

THANK YOU

Rose Hernandez for supporting SCSM by making baskets for our fundraiser; Melinda Butler for making beautiful Fall wreaths and flower arrangements for our fundraiser; Pastor Jeff Light and Pastor Dennis DiMauro for helping read the names for our special December 15 Celebrating Christmas with SCSM online event; All of our volunteers and others who helped decorate the Center for Christmas and set up our manger; Plow and Hearth for donating angels to SCSM.



Celebrating 20 Years of SCSM!

Do you have a story to tell?

In honor of our 20th anniversary, we want to hear from you. We invite you to submit your stories about how God used SCSM to aid in your healing process.

By sharing your experiences, you can inspire and assist others who are struggling.

Please send your stories or short testimonies to chaplainliz@scsm.tv.

We can't wait to hear from you!






Spiritual Care Support Ministries, Inc.
Reaching for a hand and touching a heart.
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For to us a Child is born, to us a
Son is given; and the government
shall be upon his shoulder,
and His name shall be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
EVERLASTING FATHER,
Prince of Peace.

-Isaiah 9:6