

HEART & HAND

Where grief is understood, healing is possible, and hope returns.

All I Want for Christmas is Jesus

By Chaplain Liz

When your heart is heavy with sadness or sorrow, the last thing you want to do is celebrate the holidays. The carols and bells, the tinsel and evergreens can feel like reminders of the burden pressing on your spirit. While you weep, wrestling with life without the one you love, the daily pain of chronic illness, or the demands of caregiving, the world goes right on with its celebrations.

Rather than being times of family togetherness, sharing, and thanksgiving, holidays can bring feelings of sadness, loss, and emptiness. This Christmas, God promises to walk beside you, steady your steps, and place a new song of hope in your heart. He wants to give you a reason to celebrate.

Love is the true gift of Christmas. The love of a God who embraces us even when grief and hurt seem to push Him away. It is a love that understands all you are facing and meets you with compassion and hope. God's greatest gift of love to you this Christmas is Jesus Christ.



“For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16).

I will never forget the day when, at eleven years old, I sat in church and felt so alone. I did not believe anyone truly cared for or loved me, but then I heard about the baby in the manger named Jesus. I heard that He not only was born, but that He went to the cross for my sins and the sins of the whole world, showing me that He truly understood suffering. I heard that Jesus loved me, that He had a plan for my life, and that He would be all I needed in both the good and the not-so-good times.

That day, I learned that Scripture would guide me and that I could trust Him. I heard that as I confessed my sins to Him, He would forgive me. I heard that I had the promise of heaven.

I will receive many gifts this Christmas, but one gift matters most. All I want for Christmas is Jesus!

He has been my constant companion, and He has never failed me. Love is the Christmas gift that God wants to give you. All you have to do is receive the gift of Jesus, a free gift of grace. He is only a prayer away.

May your Christmas be filled with hope and meaning as you experience His love. From all of us at Spiritual Care Support Ministries, we wish you a Blessed Christmas and a New Year filled with hope.

If you need prayer, contact me at: chaplainliz@scsm.tv or 540-349-5814



Hand in Hand

By Shirley Brosius

Bill and I never talked about aging when we were young. I doubt anyone does. You think you'll always be healthy. You'll always be able to care for yourself and your family. No catastrophes will affect YOU.

Then . . . things happen. You suffer loss. You suffer setbacks. Your youth fades, and your health falters. Suddenly, you find yourself on the edge of eternity.

But how fortunate we are! We've enjoyed 64 years of marriage, and I've read that only six percent of the population lives to be our age. We've attended the wedding of one grandchild, with two more on the calendar. Perhaps we'll see great-grandchildren in the days to come.

We've also had the privilege of seeing God's hand on our lives throughout these many decades. As much as our hands have done, God's hands have done so much more.

"If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast" (Psalm 139:9-10 NIV).

I grew up on a farm, but once I got to high school and learned typing and shorthand, I wanted to become a secretary. Instead, God's hand led me into teaching, a profession I loved, and then on to Christian education and writing. Looking back, I wouldn't undo a single step of the journey.

God used every experience in my life to mold me into who He wants me to be, and He's still working on me. One would think by the time you're my age, you would have conquered every weakness, mastered every temptation. But not so!

"But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8 ESV).

All of a sudden, you find yourself faced with serious problems, more than you can handle. For us, it's our health.

Now I must learn to pray in the night and to wait in the waiting room. Bill and I have specialists for almost every body part. But our greatest fear is losing each other.



This article was written in early 2025. Bill Brosius passed away on September 17, 2025.

It's frightening to think of losing a spouse.

I know others have journeyed through loss, clinging to verses such as this one:

"Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10 NIV).

So, Bill and I journey on, hand in hand and with our hands in God's hand. He is faithful. He is Sovereign. And He is with us. Here. Now. And for all eternity.

Eternity with God will be so glorious, we will wonder why we ever fretted along the way.



The Power of Christmas for the Hurting Heart



By Chaplain Liz

For many, Christmas is a season of joy and celebration, but for others it can feel very different. Christmas can be especially difficult for those who have experienced loss. Memories of past Christmases spent with loved ones can flood our minds, stirring deeper feelings of isolation, loneliness, and sadness.

You may be experiencing the loss of a loved one or walking through separation or divorce. Chronic illness may leave you unable to bake, shop for gifts, or join in traditions because of daily pain—pain often invisible to others.

Have you recently been given a diagnosis that will cause loss for you and your family this Christmas? Caregiving can leave you so exhausted that decorating or writing Christmas cards—once a joy—now feels impossible.

When we face losses in our lives, we need power that is greater than ourselves. It is almost impossible to get through this season relying only on yourself. But you don't have to. God has the power and longs to be with you. *“His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness”* (2 Peter 1:3).

The choice is ours—will we accept His power and begin the journey toward healing? It is up to you to take the first step. **The journey of grief is a process, and it is not easy, but it is possible to find healing.**

Christmas reminds us that God loved us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to be born. He was not only born, but He also came to die on the cross for the sins of the world. Anything that separates you from God can be made right at the cross. In your pain of loss, surrender to Jesus, who alone has the power to help you find healing and lead you into peace and meaning this Christmas season.

LET THIS BE YOUR PRAYER THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON:

“You are the center of my life, Lord. Between me and every storm, every problem, every sorrow, you stand firm and unchanging. With your Word to give me strength, your presence to give me comfort, your touch to give me healing, your love to give me hope and make me whole. You are my hiding place, my shelter, and my peace.” (B.J. Hoff)

I am always available to chat at chaplainliz@scsm.tv if you would like more information on how to find healing.



Christmas Memories from the SCSM Staff



Courtney, Volunteer Coordinator

What I love most about Christmas is that it never

looks the same. We've had Christmas with one son, two sons, no sons, a nephew, and three Christmases with three different foster children. My favorite tradition is putting up the tree. My husband, Matt, and I have ornaments from our childhoods and our vacations over the years. But the most special ornaments are those with the names of the children who were with us each Christmas. We pray over each child as we decorate the tree, pausing to reflect on our memories with them.



Rose, Office Administrator

Because my parents' anniversary fell on Christmas

Eve, our home was always filled with people, making the holiday extra special. We cooked all the traditional foods (pork, rice with pigeon peas, Spanish meat pie, etc.) and made the beverages of the island. Music was an enormous part of the celebration, with everyone playing instruments and singing along to the record player. Close to midnight, everyone would gather in the dining room to have cake and sing Happy Anniversary to my parents. Then we would sing "Feliz Navidad" and give everyone hugs and kisses.



Debbie, Outreach Coordinator

As I think about our Christmases,

the most important gift we received was the gift of a loving family. Mom, Dad, aunts, uncles, Grandma, Grandpa, cousins, friends, and neighbors would always gather at our old farmhouse in Illinois and enjoy the day together. My mother was a great cook, and others would bring food. We would laugh, retell our favorite stories, and play games. My dad went all out—covering the outside of the house in decorations and playing Christmas music through a speaker for the neighborhood. It was so festive! Who needs money and things that fade away? We should cherish the love of our family and friends.



Lynn, Center Director

For as long as I can remember, we have attended church on

Christmas Eve as a family. We sing familiar carols and hear a simple message about how the birth of God's Son changed the world. My favorite part is when we light candles, and all the church lights are turned off. We sing the final verses of "Silent Night" in candlelight. During the final verse, at the words, "Christ the Savior is born," we all lift our candles in quiet praise. I always feel my eyes well up with tears as I reflect on the love and hope we have because of the baby who was born in the manger.





Celebrate Christmas with SCSM

**Honor loved ones
in a special way**



★ **Make a Christmas Donation in Memory/Honor of Loved Ones**

Call us at 540-349-5814 or complete the online form at
SpiritualCareSupportMinistries.org/Christmas2025

- \$15 = Christmas Tree Lights
- \$250 = Christmas Bell
- \$500 = Christmas Star
- \$1,000 = Christmas Tree
- Donation of \$35 or more = Angel

Note: Nov. 28 is the deadline for names to be included in the Reading of the Names at the Open House (Dec. 11).

Names submitted after Nov. 28 and postmarked by **December 31** will be listed in our **March 2026 newsletter**.



Scan the above QR code to make an online donation in memory/honor of your loved ones today!

★ **SCSM Open House** Join us in-person or virtually*

December 11
11 a.m.-7 p.m. EST

**Reading of the Names and Christmas
message at 1 p.m. and 6 p.m.***

*This portion of the day will be live streamed on our Facebook page:
facebook.com/spiritualcaresupportministries

★ **Watch the reading of the Christmas Story**

Scan the QR code to watch the reading or visit bit.ly/SCSMChristmasStory to be a part of this cherished SCSM tradition.





Sign up for the monthly SCSM email newsletter!

In addition to our quarterly print newsletter, we also publish a monthly e-newsletter delivered straight to your inbox. Each issue includes a special message from Chaplain Liz that you won't find in the print version.

**To subscribe,
email us at
scsm@scsm.tv and let us know you'd
like to sign up or scan the QR code
with your phone camera.** →



Your Year-End Gift Continues the Mission

As 2025 comes to a close, we're grateful for every partner who has walked alongside SCSM this year.

**If you're considering a year-end gift,
please know that donations postmarked
by December 31 are tax-deductible for 2025.**

Your year-end generosity allows us to continue providing free grief support services throughout the U.S. and abroad including:

- Family Grief Camp
- Bereavement Support Groups
- One-on-one counseling to individuals and families in our community
- *plus more!*

If God is stirring your heart toward year-end giving, visit www.scsm.tv or mail your gift postmarked by December 31, 2025.

Thank You's

- Elizabeth A. Shaw – a subscription to Guideposts
- Linda Grove – a new hose and broom
- Pam and Bobbie Reynolds – refreshments and stamps
- Linda Beaty – envelope moisteners
- Faith Scott, Karen Duby, Nancy Rider, and Mary Thomas – greeting cards
- Loving Hands Prayer Shawl Ministry at Manassas Presbyterian Church – 15 prayer shawls
- Faith Scott – kitchen and coffee supplies
- Mr. Ed Chapman – card stock, prayer cards and track cards
- Ruth Dominguez and Cathy Rogers – a tea for the Infertility and Miscarriage Support Group
- Val Nieters, Karen Duby and Brenda Connally – magazines and supplies for Family Grief Camp
- Ruth Dominquez, Cathy Rogers, Cheri Armstrong, Diana Bird, Faith Scott, Michelle Umbrell, Mary Ashley, Marty Ronayne, Nancy Rider, and Susan Izzie – filling gift bags and creating Christmas cards for Veterans
- Lori Medley from the American Legion; Jeff Moore, Owner of Heroic Axe; Jennifer Kelley, Community Engagement & Partnership Coordinator with the VA; Christina Nelson- Department of Veteran Services; Bruce Campbell, and Christine Craddock with the Veterans Task Force – providing supplies and helping with the gift bag and card project

In Memory Of

- Rob Christiansen, my son, and John McCarty, my husband, given by Ann Marie McCarty
- Nicholas Daymude, given by John Daymude
- James F. Legg, given by Joyce Legg
- Scott Neth, given by Jack and Joyce Neth
- Patrick Culbert, given by Sylvia White
- William Lansing (husband), given by Teresa Lansing
- Richard Sinelli, given by Liz Danielsen
- James Wesley Jr., given by Louise Cullers
- James O'Laughlin, given by Elizabeth O'Laughlin
- Allen Crane, given by Dotty Crane
- Stewart Lindsey, for our Oct. 13th wedding anniversary, given by Debra Lindsey
- Tim Maahs, given by William and Sydney White
- Juan Hernandez, Jr., given by Sylvia White
- Jerome Wen, given by Joanna and Johnny Wen
- Robert Johannis, given by Marnie Marie Johannis
- Scott Neth, given by John Neth
- John Conti, Frank Conti and Vincent Buonomo, given by Helen Danielsen
- John Conti and Vincent Buonomo, given by Elizabeth Danielsen
- Barbara Cale, given by David and Norma Baum
- Pam and Patrick Gay, given by Joseph and Kay McClure
- Richard and Theresa Gobb, given by Amy and Charles Cooke

In Honor Of

- Debra Legg Lindsey, given by Joyce Legg
- Liz Danielsen, given by Helen Danielsen
- Emily McLaughlin, given by Fawn McLaughlin
- Carol and Dick Jenkins, and Mrs. Liz, given by Harvey Stanley
- Jane Fitzgerald, given by anonymous



Their Light Shines On

Our loved ones leave behind a light.
That will never dim or fade.

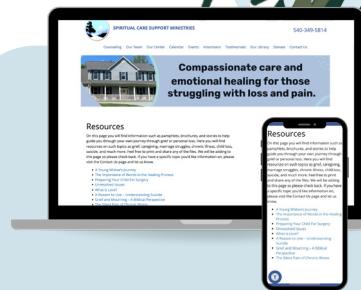
It's kept bright by the love we feel
And the memories we made.

It can warm us like a candle's glow.
And help bring comfort too.

And no matter where you go you'll find
it's always close to you.

And in the darkest times remember,
In our hearts their light is strong
So every time we think of them,
Their memory shines on.

—Andrea Jackson



Resources for you

We provide free online resources to help guide you through your own journey through grief or personal loss.

- The silent pain of chronic illness
- Unresolved issues
- *and more!*

Visit scsm.tv/resources
to learn more!



Spiritual Care Support Ministries, Inc.
Reaching for a hand and touching a heart.
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“When they saw the star,
THEY REJOICED
with exceeding great JOY.”

MATTHEW 2:10