



Service of Remembrance

Wednesday, June 22, 2022 at 11 a.m.
Celebrating the Life of

THE REV. NANCY PEARL ADAMS

December 18, 1952 - June 7, 2022

* *Please stand in body or in spirit.*

** *These words were written by The Rev. Em Finney and modified by The Rev. Emily Jean Gilbert*

ST. JOHN'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
36 South Sixth Street Allentown PA 18103
SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING TO GOD

PRELUDE

Lois Meade, Music Director and Organist

WELCOME

The Rev. Rebecca Sausser

CALL TO WORSHIP *

The Rev. Emily Jean Gilbert
The Rev. Allan Kramer-Moyer

If you have ever lost your place, needed to turn around, misplaced an important piece, searched for meaning: take this time to pause, reflect, explore, seek and **Find.**

If you have ever been a seeker of greater truth and knowledge, been willing to spend hours and hours reading and thinking about your own faith and the faiths of others, if you have committed yourself to understand ethics and apply them in difficult and sometimes heart-breaking traumatic situations, sat at the bedside of those wracked with pain and still find meaning and hope, modeled all this for myriads of pastoral care students and chaplaincy volunteers
Find yourself.

If you have ever rescued and cared for a cat (or other critter) in need, preached to your dog in an empty church, experienced white hot competitive energy with an undying commitment to fairness in the midst of a fun game, cheered and analyzed the sport of baseball or basketball, marveled at the beauty of the earth in its most ordinary of creativeness, listened to friends for hours, worked long, long hours even when your body is tired and in pain, managed anxiety in its power and its consuming demand of vigilance, married the love of your life even if there are many who disapprove:
Find yourself here.

If you have ever faced the opportunity of hearing “Are you open to a question?” or trembled at the words “Are you open to a comment?” knowing there would be a chance to hear something so true about oneself that it might change your life, experienced the love behind that question and the heartfelt challenge to be a better person

Find yourself here now.

If you have come to this present moment prepared to grieve, through the telling of stories and the shaping of hopes; with your heart open to the “God of rainbow leading people where the eagles soar,” open to the dawn in every darkness, ready to wrestle with the doubt of believing, to experience the blessing of differences and diversity and God known in so many, many ways

Find yourself here now today.

*Hymn

In the Midst of New Dimensions

NCH 391

PRAYER **

Holy Comforter, in this wisdom hour, may we open ourselves to the truth we claim: that life is a precious gift, that beauty surrounds us, that love never ends and that death is not the last word. In this time of thanksgiving, we rejoice that Nancy Adams lived and we celebrate all the ways her life touched each of us. So may we be blessed with comfort in our sorrow, with strength for our journey and with peace in our hearts. With confidence in the love that “bears, believes, hopes and endures all things,” we pray. Amen.

CALL TO CONFESSION **

Aware of our broken places and incomplete lives, let us join in confession:

PRAYER OF CONFESSION **

O Searcher of Hearts, receive us as we are. May we grow more discerning of what to hold on to and what to release. May we be turned away from habits of selfishness to practice relentless graciousness, greeting strangers as friends and enemies as guests. May we become less afraid to reflect on death and more willing to accept the fragility and resilience of life. May we find courage to forgive others and wisdom to accept forgiveness offered to us. Amid a climate of lies, hostility, neglect, ignorance and fear, may we find blessing. For the time being, may we move into the circle of light. Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE *There is a Balm in Gilead*
African American Spiritual

**There is a balm in Gilead,
to make the wounded whole.
There is a balm in Gilead,
to heal the sin-sick soul.**

ANCIENT TESTIMONIES

NRSV

**Staff, Department of Spiritual Care
St. Luke's Hospital and Health Network
The Rev. Heidi Tierney, Network Director of Spiritual Care
The Rev. Eugene Search, Coordinator of Spiritual Care
The Rev. Eric Johnson, Staff Chaplain Anderson Campus**

Micah 6:8

He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills –
from where does my help come?

My help comes from God,
who made heaven and earth.

God will not let your foot be moved;
God who keeps you will not slumber.

God who keeps Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.

God is your keeper;
God is your shade at your side.

The sun shall not strike you by day,
nor the moon by night.

God will keep you from all evil;
God will keep your life.

God will keep your going out and your coming in
from this time on and forevermore.

Romans 8:35-39

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all day long, we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Do not let your heart be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also.

NEW TESTIMONY *A Litany of Remembrance*
GATES OF PRAYER: The New Union Prayer Book
General Conference of American Rabbis

O God, this hour revives in us memories of loved ones who are no more. What happiness we shared when they walked among us! What joy, when, loving and loved, we lived our lives together!

Their memory is a blessing for ever.

Months or years may have passed, yet we feel near to them. Our hearts yearn for them. Though the bitter grief has softened, a duller pain abides, for the place, where once they stood is empty now for ever. The links of life are broken, But the links of love and longing cannot break.

Their souls are bound up in ours for ever.

We see them now with the eye of memory, their faults forgiven, their virtues grown larger. So does goodness live, and weakness fade from sight. We remember them with gratitude and bless their names.

Their memory is a blessing for ever.

As we remember as well the men and women who but yesterday were part of our congregation and community. To all who cared for us and labored for the well-being of our people and of humanity, we pay tribute. May we prove worthy of carrying on the tradition of our people and our faith, for now the task is ours.

Their souls are bound up in ours for ever.

We think, too, of the whole household of Israel and its martyrs. The tragedy of our own age is still a fresh wound within us. And we recall how often in ages past our people walked through the flames of the furnace. Merciful God, let the memory never fade of the faithful and upright of our people who have given their lives to hallow Your name. Even in death they continue to speak to us of faith and courage. They rest in nameless graves, but their deeds endure, and their sacrifices will not be forgotten. Their souls are bound up in the bond of eternal life. No evil shall touch them: they are at peace.

We will remember, and never forget them.

In gratitude for all the blessings our loved ones, friends, teachers, and the martyrs of our people have brought to us, to our people, and to humanity, we dedicate ourselves anew to the sacred faith for which they lived and died, and to the tasks they have bequeathed to us. Let them be remembered for blessing, O God, together with the righteous of all peoples, and let us say

Amen.

***HYMN**

In the Bulb there is a Flower

NCH 433

WITNESSES OF LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP

Family

Colleague and Chosen Family

Friend

Florida Friend & Colleague

Lawrence Adams

Emily Jean Gilbert

Nancy Kramer-Moyer

Rev. Kathy Peters

***COMMENDATION**

adapted from the United Church of Christ *Book of Worship*

Into your hands, Eternal God, we commend your servant Nancy. Acknowledge we humbly pray, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock and a daughter of your own redeeming. Receive her into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace and into the company of the saints in light.

**May you bless her and keep her,
may your face shine upon her
and be gracious to her,
may your countenance be lifted upon her
and give her peace, now and evermore. Amen.**

***HAIKU BENEDICTION**

adapted from John 16:22 and Isaiah 55:12

Jesus said:

**You have sorrow now.
Your joy will one day return.
I will see you again.**

The prophet declared:

**Now go out in joy.
Mountains and hills are singing.
You'll come back in peace.**

**May God's mystery
in this time of remembrance
fill us with all grace.**

**May the God of hope
sustain us and comfort us
in the days ahead.**

**May the peace of God
passing all understanding
always dwell with us.**

POSTLUDE

THE REV. NANCY PEARL ADAMS

December 18, 1952 - June 07, 2022

The Rev. Nancy Pearl Adams, born December 18, 1952 in Waterville, Maine died June 7, 2022 in The Villages, Florida. An ordained minister of the United Church of Christ, Nancy's ministry was as a hospital chaplain, serving for over thirty years as the Coordinator of Pastoral Services at St. Luke's Hospital and Health Network, Bethlehem, PA.

Nancy was predeceased by her parents, Albert H. Adams and Muriel H. Adams, her wife, The Rev. Donna Cieply, and her brother-in-law Rodney Sabattus. She is survived by her brother Lawrence A. Adams and his wife Victoria H. Adams and her brother Scott F. Adams and his wife Priscilla M. Adams and her sister Robin Sabattus as well as numerous aunts, cousins, nieces and nephews.

Nancy grew up with her family in China Maine, graduating from Winslow High School (1971) and Colby College, Waterville, ME (1975). She then received a Masters of Divinity from Andover Newton Theological Seminary (Newton, MA) and then did extensive training for hospital chaplaincy at the Lehigh Valley Hospital (Allentown, PA), The Hospital Chaplaincy Inc. (NYC) and at Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center (NYC) prior to beginning her work at St. Luke's where she spent her professional career. She was certified by Association of Professional Chaplains and received numerous awards from professional organizations and her faith group for her exemplary and unflinching compassionate work.

Nancy will be remembered for her passion – for her dearly loved wife, Donna, her family and her friends, the many cats she rescued and cared for, the wisdom she shared and teaching of the pastoral care students and chaplaincy volunteers at St. Luke's Hospital, her deep knowledge and deep respect for people of all faiths and no faith, her commitment to learning and to being a catalyst for justice for all people. She was uncommonly generous with her resources and herself.

Memorial gifts may be sent to: The Community Action Committee Of Lehigh Valley, 1337 East 5th Street, Bethlehem, PA 18015. Arrangements entrusted with BALDWIN BROTHERS Funeral & Cremation Society-Spanish Springs. Sentiments may be left online at www.baldwincremation.com.

