



## THE PASTOR'S NOTEBOOK

### *From the Desk of Pastor Garret*

We have reached that part of the year where the leaves have all fallen and the leaf peepers have all returned home. The time of year when you go outside in the morning and are greeted by a frosty air that chills you to the bone. November is that season in between, much like March is. The beauty and warmth of early fall is gone away. The beauty and warmth of the holidays are heading toward us faster than we would all like to admit.

As such it is a time to look back and also a time to look ahead.

As we look back we take stock of things that we are grateful for in this past year. What might some of those be for you? What are the things that you celebrate from this past year? Who are you grateful for in your life?

My hope and prayer is that your heart is filled and overflowing with gratitude to God for the blessings that you see God wove into your life.

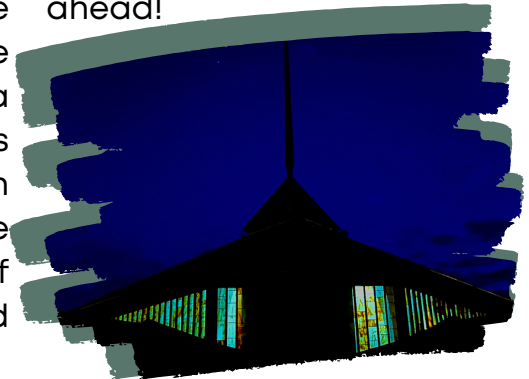
As we look ahead, I hope that we can do so with a sense of great anticipation. Here at Lynnwood we will be observing and celebrating Advent by reading the story of Esther. This advent season will be one to acknowledge the ways in which all is not right in the world, sin and evil persist, and we long for God to come and set all things right. And yet we are not left without hope, and that is what we will celebrate with our children's pageant on Sunday, December 17th and again on Christmas Eve, which falls on a Sunday this year.

As we look ahead and prepare for the holiday season, I hope we can do so with a mindfulness about the precious moments we can spend with loved ones or the meaning we can find in the celebration of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and the New Year.

At the same time I am aware that the holiday season can be particularly difficult for any number of reasons. Please know that you will be in my heart and in my prayers.

We have a lot to be thankful for as we look back over the year and a lot to look forward to in the season ahead.

This newsletter is a reflection of that reality. As you read through this Fall Newsletter you will notice that there are ways in which we look back and give thanks for all the work and ministries we have done. And we also take time to look forward at the different opportunities in the season ahead!



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **BROOKS' BBQ**

**DECEMBER 2ND**

Satisfy your taste buds and support Lynnwood Reformed Church at our upcoming Brooks' BBQ! Join us on December 2nd at 2:00pm for a delicious chicken dinner. Whether you're eager to volunteer or simply craving some mouthwatering food, this event is for you. Mark your calendars and get ready for a finger-licking good time!



## **CAROLS, COCOA, & COMMUNITY**

**DECEMBER 10TH**

Experience the magic of the season at Lynnwood Reformed Church's Carols, Cocoa, and Community night on December 10th! Open to all, this festive gathering invites you to enjoy the spirit of Christmas with friends and family. Delight in the sounds of carolers, savor the warmth of hot cocoa, and indulge in sweet treats. Whether you're young or young at heart, this evening promises fun for all ages. As a special touch, contribute to our Christmas tree adorned with prayer ribbons/tags, adding your own wishes to the display of hope. Don't miss out on this joyful celebration – join us for a night of holiday cheer!



## **RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE**

**JANUARY 22ND**

Join us for a lifesaving opportunity! We're hosting a Red Cross Blood Drive on January 22nd from 1pm to 7pm in our Fellowship Center. With a national blood shortage, your donation could be the difference between life and death. Each drop counts, so roll up your sleeves and be a hero – one pint at a time! Your generosity can truly save a life. We look forward to seeing you there!



# SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

## CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

After carefully reviewing all the surveys you kindly submitted regarding the preferred time for our Christmas Eve Service, the Consistory has made a decision. We are excited to announce that, based on your input, we will be hosting a single Christmas Eve Service on December 24th, 2023, at our regularly scheduled time of 9:45 am. Your thoughtful responses have been instrumental in shaping this decision, and we look forward to celebrating the joyous occasion together as a united congregation.



## ANGEL TREE PROGRAM

Lynnwood Reformed Church will once again be participating in the Angel Tree Program which gives you the opportunity to purchase Christmas gifts for children whose parents are incarcerated. This is sponsored by Lynnwood Women and is a project of Prison Fellowship Ministry. Project Angel Tree Tags will be available following 11/19 and must be returned attached to the wrapped gift you are donating. All gifts must be returned by December 10th, 2023.



## SMALL GROUP FOR SENIORS

Are you retired, and finding that this stage of life has some interesting changes? Having a Small Group for Seniors seems like a good idea! Getting together after the worship service on January 7th, we can talk about what we would want for a new Small Group. This group can go on into the future, meeting once a month, at a time we can work out between ourselves. Please join in, and we can have a good time, as well as hear the latest on health and well-being information. We can share our own experiences, wisdom and humor - and gain from speakers who have knowledge on tech, on fitness, faith and other topics. Please e-mail me at [susan@plik.net](mailto:susan@plik.net). And send your ideas for what would make

this group work for you!  
Sincerely, Susan Spring



## CITY MISSION VOLUNTEERING

Interested in volunteering at City Mission as Lynnwood members have in the past, pre-COVID? Opportunities are available at The Mission for one-time opportunities prepping dinner (early afternoon), serving dinner (4:30-6:30) or other special activities. These could be on weekdays or weekends. With enough interest, we would sign up as a group for a time that fits most people's scheduling needs. If interested, please use the Google sign-up by visiting this link: <https://forms.gle/Rm2cUe2U279ihJQe8> or call, text or email:

Mike Lynch (518-396-9042, [mikelynch3@yahoo.com](mailto:mikelynch3@yahoo.com))

Carol Lynch (518-396-6875, [carollynch3@yahoo.com](mailto:carollynch3@yahoo.com))





# MESSAGES



## ***BUILDINGS AND PROPERTIES***

In the upcoming autumn season, we will be introducing advanced security cameras near various entrances of the church. These cameras are designed to bolster the security measures in place, benefiting not only the church staff but also our dedicated YMCA staff and the children under their care. If you have any inquiries or concerns, please feel free to reach out to Mark Watson or Walt Cogswell for assistance.



## ***THE MISSION TEAM***



Lynnwood Reformed Church is proud to announce our new mission. We are excited to extend our support to "Things of My Very Own" in Schenectady. The mission of this organization is clear: to provide vital assistance to children who have courageously escaped abusive environments, helping them navigate the crisis, heal, and build a brighter future. Things of My Very Own, Inc. serves as a lifeline for these children, offering not only essential necessities but also valuable life skills that nurture confidence and self-worth. Through these services, they are dedicated to transforming the lives of these vulnerable children, turning a place of harm into a realm of hope!

## ***SNOW SHOVELER NEEDED***

Join the Lynnwood Reformed Church team as an hourly-waged (New York State Minimum at \$14.20) snow shoveler! If you're dependable, hardworking, willing to work before 8:30 a.m., and ready to make a positive impact in our community, apply today to be a crucial part of our winter maintenance crew. For more information and job description, contact Walt Cogswell ([waltc616@gmail.com](mailto:waltc616@gmail.com)) or 518.229.1947





# FELLOWSHIP FALL FESTIVAL

Dear LRC Community,

Our recent Fall Festival was truly a standout event, and we can't express our gratitude enough to those who played a part in making it extraordinary. Whether you lent your helping hand, captured beautiful moments on camera, or contributed delicious baked goods, your involvement was instrumental in making this day unforgettable.

Despite the unexpected rain, our community's unwavering spirit shone through, as our congregation turned out in impressive numbers. It was inspiring to witness your resilience and enthusiasm, proving that a little precipitation couldn't dampen our collective excitement.

We were delighted to feature Two For The Road and Buena Comida food trucks, serving up mouthwatering dishes that delighted our taste buds. The culinary delights offered by these vendors added a delightful and flavorful element to our festival, and we hope you had a chance to savor their offerings.

Our fantastic band deserves a special mention for keeping the festivities alive with their remarkable music. They played on undeterred by the weather, creating the perfect ambiance that elevated our festival to another level.

In a nutshell, our Fall Festival was a resounding success, and it's all thanks to your support and the incredible spirit of our community. Your participation made it a day to remember, even in less than ideal conditions.

As we approach the holiday season, let's carry the warmth and togetherness from the festival with us into the coming months, reminding ourselves of the strength and unity of our community.

Warm Regards,

LRC Fellowship Team

Emily Conti





# FELLOWSHIP FALL FESTIVAL



# A BIG WELCOME TO AMY CHEVALIER



I am delighted to introduce our new Leader of Faith Formation and provide an overview of the qualities we sought in a candidate for this position. In the past, we had individuals like Jason, Stacy, and Lucas, who were all supported by grants from the Synod due to their roles as ministers or their enrollment in seminary. However, our Consistory has since redefined this position in response to our church's current needs and the valuable feedback we received from our Appreciative Inquiry.

Our primary objective was to find someone who could commit to this role beyond a grant-based appointment. In our search, we prioritized several key qualities:

1. Prior experience in ministry.
2. A deep passion for and dedication to Christ, along with a desire to share that passion with others.
3. A genuine enthusiasm for this role and a strong commitment to enhancing our ministry efforts.

After a thorough review of applications and interviews, the interview committee unanimously selected Amy Chevalier for this position. At Lynnwood, Amy has already played a pivotal role in planning and executing events for our youth group. However, it's important to note that this position entails ministry for all age groups, not just youth. Before joining our community, Amy had been actively involved in ministry for the past 8-10 years. In her previous church in Massachusetts, she took a leadership role within the Hospitality Team, led various women's Bible study and small groups, and brought her communication science and disorders expertise to the ministry. She worked as a speech and language pathology assistant in Massachusetts and served as a reading specialist in New York. Her commitment to ministry was evident during her time as the Campus Ambassador President at Worcester State University, where she organized ministry events and collaborated with peers and ministers. Amy has also attended numerous ministry conferences and has experience working in elementary schools and after-school programs, as well as coaching basketball. We are very lucky to welcome her into the LRC staff!

Respectfully, Mary Chew





# LYNNWOOD MUSIC



COLOSSIANS 3:16

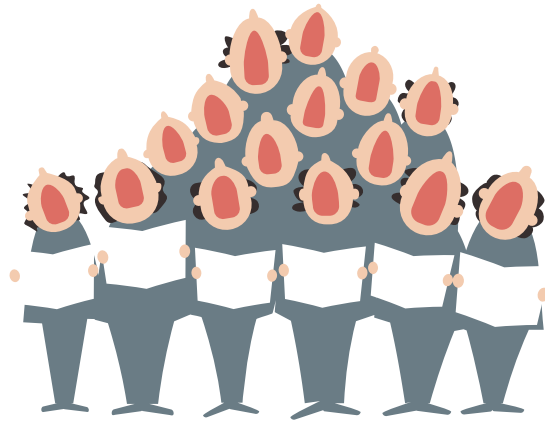
LET THE WORD OF CHRIST DWELL IN YOU RICHLY,  
TEACHING AND ADMONISHING ONE ANOTHER. IN ALL  
WISDOM, SINGING PSALMS AND HYMNS AND  
SPIRITUAL SONGS, WITH THANKFULNESS IN YOUR  
HEARTS TO GOD.



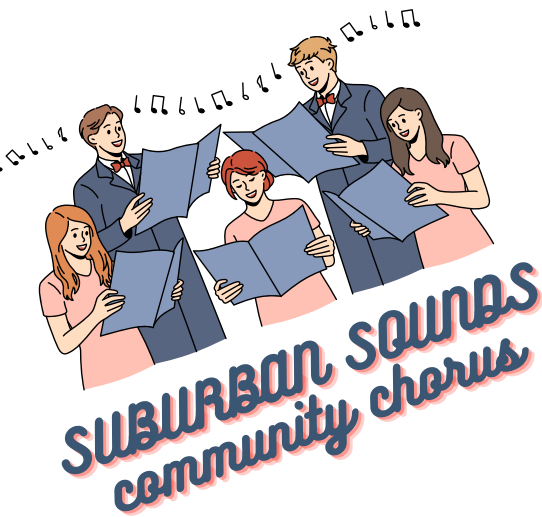
**PRaise BAND**



**CHORUS**



**CONGREGATIONAL SINGING**



**SUBURBAN SOUNDS  
community chorus**



**INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLE**



**KIDS SING**

*We welcome your participation!*

JEAN LA CROSSE, DIRECTOR OF CHURCH MUSIC





Matt Merker (M.Div., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) is director of creative resources and training for Getty Music and has contributed to several modern hymns, including "He Will Hold Me Fast." Matt and his wife, Erica, live with their two children in Nashville, Tennessee, where they are members of Edgefield Church.

## ***Help! I Don't Like the Music at My Church***

### **Common Complaints**

Too loud. Too soft. Too rhythmic. Too classical. Not relevant enough. Not transcendent enough. Not polished, creative, innovative, interesting, or powerful enough. Not good enough—at least not for me.

How do you feel about the music at your church? Are you ever disappointed by it? Why?

It is no wonder that Christians have strong opinions about music. Scripture calls God's people to "make melody," "sing to him a new song," and "play skillfully" on musical instruments ([Ps. 33:2–3](#)). Paul tells us to address one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs when we gather as a local church ([Eph. 5:19](#)). God has created us to use our voices to praise him, so singing rightly plays an integral role in corporate worship.

Yet, there is a subjective element when it comes to evaluating music. Our tastes for music do not develop in a vacuum but vary depending on our cultural background, location, family, upbringing, and more. The New Testament calls us to sing, but it (thankfully!) does not give us detailed rules on genre, instrumentation, or arrangement. That is not to say that those factors are unimportant, but that they are left up to Christian freedom and prudence.

So what should you do if you do not like the music at your church?

### **A Key Distinction**

Before I answer that question, we should make a key distinction. When we consider congregational singing, there is a difference between *songs* and the *music* that accompanies them. Both are important, but the words that we sing matter more than the music played by any instruments the church may use. The New Testament commands us to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual

songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God” ([Col. 3:16](#)). Every song is a teaching tool. Our songs either anchor us in truth, or they lead us astray. For that reason, it is better to sing words rich in Christ-exalting doctrine to lackluster musical accompaniment than it is to sing empty platitudes along with the finest orchestra or most thrilling band.

In this addition to the 9Marks Building Healthy Churches series, Matt Merker explores the biblical understanding of corporate worship as an activity where God gathers the church by his grace, unto his glory, for their mutual good, and before the world’s gaze.

If you have misgivings about your church’s music because the lyrics are consistently vague, unhelpful, man-centered, and unclear—or even worse, they teach false theology—then you indeed have a legitimate concern. Pray. Raise the issue humbly with a pastor. Ask wise believers for counsel, and honor your conscience.

On the other hand, what if the words your church sings are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and commendable ([Phil. 4:8](#)), but you do not enjoy the musical accompaniment? Here are eight points to consider.

### **Remember the Purposes of the Church’s Gathering**

First, remember the purposes for which God gathers his people each Lord’s Day. The church meets for *exaltation*: we praise, thank, magnify, and glorify the God who made us and redeemed us ([Eph. 5:20](#), [Col. 3:17](#)). We meet for *edification*, the building up of the whole body of Christ into greater maturity, unity, and love ([1 Cor. 12:7, 14:26](#)). As we focus on God’s glory and doing one another good, *evangelism* occurs as well—the unbeliever overhears the good news we proclaim and is converted ([1 Cor. 14:24](#)).

In other words: the gathering is not mainly about you or me. The mark of a faithful church service is not whether it caters to our tastes, but whether it orients us to devotion to God, love for the body, and zeal to see our neighbors know Christ.

### **Hold Your Musical Opinions Lightly**

Second, recognize that your musical opinions are just that. The Bible simply does not prescribe a particular musical style that churches must use. That is not to say that form or genre do not matter. The medium does shape the message. Believers are entitled to hold a view about which forms of music best serve the purposes of exaltation, edification, and evangelism mentioned above. But evangelicals often have only two speeds when it comes to matters like these: something is either of utmost importance or it is not important at all. Musical genre matters, but it is not of utmost importance. Believers can disagree about musical style and still be members of the same church, like the Christians at Rome who disagreed about eating meat sacrificed to idols.

We must admit that our views on music may be limited or misguided. You are entitled to your opinion, but you are not entitled to stand in judgment over the whole church and insist that your view is the best.

### **Lay Down Your Preferences for the Sake of Unity**

Third, recognize that you have an opportunity to promote the unity of the body by sacrificing your preferences and desires. That is the Christ-like model Paul calls us to follow: “Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” ([Phil. 2:3–4](#)).

What matters more to you: that your church plays your favorite musical style, or that your church is a community where believers from all different backgrounds lay down their tastes for the sake of the body?

We live in an era in which we can listen to our favorite music nonstop. Surely sacrificing our preferences for ninety minutes on a Sunday morning is not too much to ask of those whose core creed is that Christ gave up *his whole life* for us.

One side note for pastors: we should show an awareness that some people in the body have to lay down their preferences more than others do when it comes to music. Every church has a musical home base. That means the music will feel more distant to some folks. We should honor and thank those members for the sacrifice they make. They could probably find another congregation that better fits their musical profile, but they have stayed because they are committed to this particular body. Praise God for that testimony and encourage them for this evidence of the Holy Spirit’s work in them.

### **Consider Afresh the Glory of God**

Fourth, meditate on the matchless glory of God. From him and through him and to him are all things ([Rom. 11:36](#)). The God who sings over us ([Zeph. 3:17](#)) receives honor from our singing to him ([Rom. 15:9](#)). If we refuse to sing because the music is not up to our standards, we rob God of the glory he deserves. How sobering it is to remember that if we fail to praise God, the stones will cry out instead ([Luke 19:40](#)). God will get his glory. The question is, *Will we set aside our preferences to sing because we are ravished by the all-consuming delight of God’s infinite beauty?*

### **Treat Singing as a Ministry of Love**

Fifth, remember that singing is one way we show love and encouragement to the body. I often tell the story of a fellow church member named Jeremy who sings in such a way that the joy on his face seems to radiate straight to my soul.

Even if you don’t like the style of the music, singing is a way we “speak the truth in love” ([Eph. 4:15](#)). When your church gathers, there are dear brothers and sisters in nearby pews facing anxiety, cancer, depression, temptation, unemployment,

loneliness—the list could go on. One of the ways God intends to encourage them is through *your* singing. In this sense, Christ has enlisted every church member to join the choir. Singing is part of your ministry.

*If we refuse to sing because the music is not up to our standards, we rob God of the glory he deserves.*

### **Expand Your Musical Horizons**

Sixth, follow the advice of Dr. Seuss in *Green Eggs and Ham*: try it, and you might like it! Often we feel distaste at a style of music because we are less familiar with it. Take a music appreciation class. Ask friends for album recommendations. Try to understand why other people enjoy the music your church uses. It may not become your favorite genre, but you might be surprised to find that your tastes are more flexible than you once assumed.

My pastor told me that he thought we needed to sing “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms” more at church. “Its themes will encourage our body, and lots of people appreciate the tune,” he said. I agreed about the words of the song, but found the melody cheesy and old-fashioned. Still, God gave me the grace to submit to my pastor’s leadership. I led the song personally from guitar, with a forced smile. But I was amazed to find my heart warmed because the congregation was so evidently encouraged. I realized the Lord was rebuking my pride. He is sovereign, not me. He can use a song I do not like to bless his people. What a freeing truth that is to embrace.

### **Show Grace**

Seventh, show grace. Church is a family meeting, not a concert. If you struggle with the music because it is unpolished and a bit sloppy, pray for a heart of patience. Yes, Scripture calls musicians to play skillfully, but this does not mean they must match up to the professional production quality we enjoy in our headphones throughout the week. It means they should strive for excellence according to the talents God has given them. We can encourage them along the way by not holding them to an unattainable standard. Relax. Give them a break.

And *sing* enthusiastically—it is the best way you can encourage growing musicians in their ministry.

### **We Sing in Earshot of a Listening World**

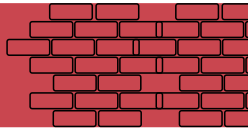
Eighth, remember that the church’s witness is at stake. The world understands a church where everyone has gathered around a shared favorite musical genre. But the church is to be counter culture. It confounds the world’s expectations. Our supernatural unity is supposed to amaze the whole cosmos ([Eph. 3:10](#)).

That is why it is absolutely thrilling to be a part of a church made up of fans of rock *and* classical, jazz *and* folk, hip-hop *and* electronica. What an opportunity to display our blood-bought unity.

We will spend eternity singing God's praise, and I trust that in the new creation we will not be concerned about musical style. The glory of the Savior will call forth a song from our hearts and we will not remain silent. Our singing today is a foretaste of that day, despite any musical misgivings. Let us begin the song now.



# BUILDING & PROPERTY



Embracing a spirit of renewal, the Building & Properties team at Lynnwood Reformed Church has been hard at work, ushering in wonderful improvements within the heart of our community. In the education wing, a notable enhancement awaits as a new toilet has been seamlessly integrated, ensuring much easier restroom access for all. Trevor Rueckert, lending his expertise, played a crucial role in the successful replacement of the toilet, showcasing the collaborative effort that defines our community.



The church office, a hub of activity, now boasts a fresh and vibrant atmosphere with a meticulous paint job, thanks to the skilled hands of our dedicated team. Steering these transformations are the tireless efforts of Walt Cogswell and Mark Watson, whose unwavering commitment keeps the church building in impeccable condition.

Adding to the community's joy, a new swing for the swing set on the preschool playground was also ordered and installed by the industrious Mark Watson. This thoughtful addition ensures that the little ones in our community can enjoy their playtime to the fullest.

But the dedication doesn't stop there – propelled by a generous donation from Janice Shaffer and the technical expertise of Bob LaPietro, the team is currently at work installing exterior cameras. This thoughtful addition not only aligns with modern security needs but also ensures an environment of enhanced safety for everyone in our church family.

If anyone has questions or concerns regarding the security cameras, please feel free to discuss them with Mark Watson or Walt Cogswell. As Lynnwood Reformed Church continues to evolve, it's the collaborative efforts of these passionate individuals that breathe new life into our beloved space. Witness the positive changes taking shape and join us in celebrating a community that thrives on commitment, care, and continual improvement.





# THANK YOU FROM HMRS



October 10, 2023

To the Lynnwood Consistory and our friends at Lynnwood Reformed Church

The Hudson Mohawk Recorder Society, a local chapter of the American Recorder Society, would like to present this check in the amount of \$250 to Lynnwood in sincere appreciation of the church's commitment to community engagement by allowing us to meet monthly in the Fellowship Center. Your facility is a significant improvement over our previous venue, and I am certain that this has been a huge factor in the recent growth of our membership. We are especially appreciative of easy parking, handicap access, good lighting, and nearby restrooms. We couldn't be happier.

We are an interest group dedicated to the study, practice, and performance of music for recorders and other early music instruments. Members come from all walks of life. Some have formal training in music, but others simply enjoy music and want to learn, practice, play, and perhaps, perform music in a group setting. If anyone at Lynnwood would like to know more, or to join us, feel free to contact Janith Mason and/or visit [www.hudsonmohawkrecorder.com](http://www.hudsonmohawkrecorder.com)

Should you have any needs within the church in the area of music, we hope that this donation may be of use.

We look forward to continued partnership with our friends at Lynnwood.

Sincerely,

*Michael Kuhrt*



Michael Kuhrt  
President, Hudson Mohawk Recorder Society

# UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS

## December Birthdays 02



- 03 Sandie Lundstedt
- 03 Bob LaPietro
- 08 Paisley Charvat
- 09 Greg Comparetta
- 14 Stacey Duensing
- 17 Matthew Lombard
- 18 Walt Cogswell
- 19 Spencer Gilbert
- 20 Payton Charvat
- 23 Jonathon de Forest
- 26 Bill Clark
- 28 Amy Chevalier & Frank Amigo

## January Birthdays



- 01 Charlotte Amigo & John Watson
- 06 Karsen Rittner
- 10 Nancy Moore & Walt Jones
- 20 Anthony Colloton
- 31 Grace Lombardo



*ll*  
**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!**  
*x* *NW*



# IN LOVING MEMORY OF BLANCHE MATHESON

## Blanche Matheson Obituary

Blanche I. Matheson Schenectady- Blanche Irene Matheson, aged 93, went home to our Lord on November 18, 2023.

Blanche was born in Lacombe, Alberta Canada in 1930 to the late Grace and Herbert Long.

She was employed for many years at the New York State Thruway Authority and enjoyed being with her family, traveling and gardening.

In addition to her parents, she is home and reunited with her beloved husband, Jack.

Survived to treasure her memories are children, John Douglas II (Karen) Matheson, Rae Lee (Butch) Robinson, Linda Colleen Matheson, Carlene Sue (Frank) Cummins and Alan Scott Matheson; grandchildren, Sheri O'Connor, John D. Matheson III, Scott Matheson, Daniel Robinson, Wendy Wilder, Brian Bartz, Timothy Bartz, Patricia Corbett, Jason DeMania, Tina DeMania, Jeffery Hayward and Kirstie Matheson; 17 great-grandchildren and 1 great great grandchild. She is also survived by her brother Donald (Sandra) Thayer and several nieces and nephews.

A calling hour will be held on Tuesday, November 28, 2023 from 10 to 11 a.m. at Lynnwood Reformed Church, 2714 Carman Rd., Schenectady, with a service to immediately follow. Interment to follow at Park Cemetery, Scotia.

To share a memory of Blanche or leave a special message for her family, please visit [www.newcomeralbany.com](http://www.newcomeralbany.com).

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