

Rose Champlin (1931-2020)

Obituary adapted from *The Highlands Current* | October 24, 2020

Rose Janet Champlin, 89, of Cold Spring, died Oct. 19 at her home.

Born on June 22, 1931, Rose married Norman Champlin, who died before her. She was a medical transcriptionist at Butterfield Memorial Hospital, and went on to be a confidential secretary for Putnam County before her retirement.

Rose was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown for more than 60 years, where she sang in the choir, coordinated concerts, and participated in many of the congregation's activities and outreach programs. She also enjoyed gardening, and First Presbyterian named its garden in Rose's honor.



Rose is survived by her children, Karen Chiappini and Dale Meck (David), and her grandchildren, Mike Meck (Catie), Matt Meck and Chris Chiappini. She is also survived by her cousin, Eileen Siegel; her brother-in-law, Ray Champlin (Anne); her nephew, Jon Champlin; and her grandnephews, Michael Champlin and Matthew Champlin. Memorial donations may be made to First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown, 10 Academy St., Cold Spring, NY 10516.

First Presbyterian Church of Philipstown: Our Favorite Memories of Rose

I was pastor at the church in the mid-to-late 1970s. There was a nursery school operating during the week with a play area outside my study, underneath the garage. One summer Rose and I were talking about what we could do to have a different kind of service of worship. We decided to hold it outside in the play area where Rose decorated the sandbox as a faux altar. As I recall, the service was well attended and appreciated. With a bit of encouragement Rose wrote an article entitled, "Serenity in a Sandbox," that I forwarded to *Monday Morning*, the Presbyterian minister's magazine, who published it. In her own quiet and humble way, she was thrilled. She was a dear and supportive friend, and her daughters likewise. Blessings and peace.

-- Rev. Bob White

My favorite memory of Rose is from bible study class. She was usually very quiet. I described her to friends as very "ladylike," nothing negative implied, the very best sense of the term. But when she did speak, it was always something surprising, insightful, and wise. Her voice has been missed.

-- Ron Sopyla, FPCP member and elder



When I first started attending First Presbyterian in 1979, Janet Rust, Lois Wirz, and Rose Champlin were the altos in the choir, sitting in the middle row. After their anthem, they would progress down and sit in the pew in front of me. Week after week, year after year, the altos faithfully shared their talents with the congregation. I grew to know and love all of them. Rose was a thoughtful, quiet, loving person. She was receptive of my hugs, and always called me to remind me that I had volunteered to supply flowers for Sunday. She also was part of the committee that arranged concerts on a monthly basis for the community. I was privileged to be friends with her.

-- *Renee Cruikshank, FPCP member*

I remember that Rose showed up to a workshop we held at the Depot Theatre with Kazi Oliver, African drummer, and if I'm not mistaken she brought her own *jembe*. At the very least, she joined in admirably with her notable musical skills!

-- *Amy Dul, FPCP member
and Executive Director, Philipstown Depot Theatre*



Pictured, left: Rose, with Norm Brown

This image is making me smile right now, thinking of them being together again, and how Norm must have greeted her!

-- Lynn Brown, FPCP member
& Clerk of the Session

I will miss the twinkle in her eye when she was about to say something I didn't see coming.

-- Cathy Carnevale, FPCP member

*Below left: Rose with her friend, Janet Rust
Below right: Rose with her family*





The roses were blooming in Rose's garden at the front of the church last week so I took this photo then passed it on to (Rose's daughter) Dale.

-- Bev Taylor, FPCP member and elder

Sandy and I knew Rose for all our 41 years at First Presbyterian. We will remember her quiet kindness and grace (even when our four small children were a bit vocal during service). She would just smile . . . We remember her voice in the choir . . . and the many years she tended the garden in front of the church. When it became too much, she asked for help . . . and for years now, we (and others) tended it for her, and showed her pictures each season, when she was homebound. In our hearts it was Rose's Garden, and when she passed away, the roses were blooming. We will miss her.

-- Janet & Sandy Barton, FPCP members;
FPCP deacon and elder

Rose welcomed our family so warmly when we started attending FPCP. When she heard me play cello, she immediately talked to me about music and we planned to play together sometime, with her on piano. I regret that we never did. She was always so kind, and so appreciative of music. I loved seeing her, and missed her when she was not in church.

-- Carolyn Llewelyn, FPCP member,
FPCP elder & Youth Education Coordinator

Sweet, compassionate, kind, intelligent Rose!! Yes, she has been such a blessing!

-- Diana Geller, FPCP member

Reflecting on Rose by Lynn Brown

Remarks shared at the memorial service for Rose Champlin on Oct. 28.

I often called Rose my “angel” as she (and Janet Rust) warmly welcomed Norm and me to our first Ash Wednesday supper and service at church more than 20 years ago . . . and we wished each other “Happy Anniversary!” every year on Ash Wednesday.

We shared the Sunday Study group, music, labyrinths, and so much more. She preceded me in both breast cancer diagnosis and surgery, and in widowhood, and she was right there for me on both occasions, when my time came to face them.

I recall, after they experienced a tragic loss, Rose asking if the family could come out and walk our labyrinth together. The whole family came, and on a day sort of like this, they all walked the labyrinth with umbrellas, as our two Norms stood to the side, talking.

A word that comes to mind when thinking about Rose is DEVOTION, defined as “the state of being dedicated and loyal.” That was Rose. She was devoted to her God, her faith, her family, her church, to people, to causes, and to projects.

Rose was full of ideas, and full of positivity. She knew who to ask in order to make things happen, whether raising money for a grand piano for the church, or saying to me “We should do a spiritual retreat, and I think it should be at your house!” And that’s how traditions begin!

Rose had the idea, which I believe came from something Dale had done at her church, to create a booklet of Lenten Readings, with contributions from many in the church family, and it came about in 2002. Rose’s own contribution to that booklet began with a scripture verse from Psalm 13: *“I will sing to you, O Lord, because you have been good to me.”*

And Rose wrote:

It was August of 1994, and life was good. I'd been retired for a year, had reservations for a trip to Colorado, and looked forward to the birth of grandchild number 4 in a few weeks. Then I received the shattering news: I had cancer. I went through surgery and recovery, supported by the prayers and caring of friends and family. No chemotherapy was necessary, just a small white pill to be taken daily. I could live with that!

Four and a half years later, cancer struck again. After surgery, the doctors were divided on whether I should go for chemo. I decided to use natural measures instead, taking supplements to strengthen my immune system, listening to the music of Mozart for its healing effect, reading inspirational books. I attended workshops on meditation, Reiki, and Tai Chi, and asked people to pray for me.

Still my anxiety lingered. Had I made the right decision? Would I regret it? With some timidity I asked Pastor Bill Weisenbach if he would consider having a healing service. Without hesitation he agreed, and another tradition was started in our church . . .

I can't explain what happens in the laying on of hands, the anointing with oil and the prayers, but the feeling of energy transfer is intense and I'm left with the assurance that God is good and cares for us all . . .

And she closed with the words:

There are things we cannot understand, but only accept with gratitude.

I have so much gratitude for the life and love and legacy of our very dear Rose Champlin.



Janet Rust, Rose, and Lynn Brown at First Presbyterian