

Devotion, Week of July 19, 2026

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

We celebrated the life of Nancy Phillips this past week, and it was indeed a time of celebration. She would be proud of her family and the church members who prepared the sanctuary and the lunch afterwards. We cried some, but we laughed a lot. Nancy had a busy and interesting life, and she and Jim had a 60 year marriage full of all kinds of blessings and hilarious events. I don't think I'll ever forget the story about the lost and found dog.

When we have a memorial service or funeral for someone, it is not just to honor the dead, but to provide hope for the survivors. The experience of sharing the life of a beloved person reassures us of God's love for us and our love for each other. Sharing memories of Nancy will help us keep her alive in our hearts. There is a Jewish saying that you are never really dead until no one on earth is left to remember you. That is why stories and pictures and memorabilia are so important – they help us remember. We saw pictures of Nancy as a flight attendant, as a bride, as a mother, and as a grandmother. We remembered all of the things she did for our church. We sang hymns she loved. And we ate a meal together and enjoyed the company of her family and friends who loved her. And I'm sure she smiled. God was there with us smiling also, at this wonderful saint who is now wrapped in his embrace.

As Crystal sang so well,

I sing because I'm happy
I sing because I'm free
His eye is on the sparrow
And I know He watches me.

Amen for those blessings.

Jeanne