

**Mary H. Soderberg
Scholarship Application
First Presbyterian Church of Skaneateles**

This scholarship has been established in the name of Mary H. Soderberg. The intent of this scholarship is to assist church members pursuing post-secondary education goals.

Requirements:

1. The applicant must be a member of First Presbyterian Church.
2. The applicant must have documented full or part-time enrollment at an accredited college, university, technical school or other post-secondary education program.
3. The applicant must submit one letter of recommendation from a non-family church member that has not endorsed another applicant for this scholarship.

Selection:

1. Applicants must **submit the completed application and letter of recommendation by May 7, 2018 to the First Presbyterian Church office** or to one of the current members of the Mary H. Soderberg Scholarship Committee (see below). All applications and letters of recommendation will be kept confidential.
2. The recipient(s) will be chosen and notified by the scholarship committee in June.
- 3.

Award: The award in the amount of not less than \$500 and not more than \$1500 will be made by June 30th of each year. The recipient must be accepted or enrolled in an accredited academic or technical program. Documentation from the institution must be provided to receive the scholarship. The scholarship will be awarded directly to the student.

Scholarship Committee:

Kendra Witter
Joyce Campbell
Debra Covell
Mary Margaret Biss
Sara Soderberg Rauck

The Mary H. Soderberg Scholarship Letter of Recommendation

Thank you for helping the committee differentiate this applicant from other well-qualified candidates. Please write a recommendation for only ONE applicant for the Mary H. Soderberg scholarship this year.

Name of applicant _____

Name of person recommending this applicant _____

How long have you known this applicant? _____

Please identify three character traits that best describe this applicant and explain how these traits will help the candidate succeed in reaching his/her life goals.

The Mary H. Soderberg Scholarship of the First Presbyterian Church

The Mary H. Soderberg Scholarship is awarded to a student pursuing post-secondary education who has been an active member of the First Presbyterian Church. For this award, an active member is defined as one who has been baptized and confirmed, and who is also a regular and active participant in the activities of the church.

Name of Applicant: _____

Address: _____

E-Mail: _____

Telephone Number: _____

College/University/Post-Secondary Program: _____

Intended Dates of Attendance: _____

Documentation of Activities within and/or service to the church:

_____ **Ordained Elder (with dates of service):** _____

_____ **Ordained Deacon (dates of service):** _____

_____ **Sunday School Teacher** _____

_____ **Sunday School/Youth Group attendance** _____

_____ **Choir Member** _____

_____ **Youth Fellowship Activities (list)** _____

_____ **Youth Mission Trips (list)** _____

_____ **Other (describe)** _____

Please submit application directly to the First Presbyterian Church office

Please read the following brief biography about Mary H. Soderberg.

Mary Holton Soderberg was the matriarch of four generations of Soderbergs in the church congregation. She was a graduate of Mount Holyoke College, where she was elected to phi beta kappa and was a proud booster of her alma mater. Mary married Robert (Bob) Soderberg immediately after her graduation and lived and worked in Massachusetts and St. Louis before returning to Mary's roots in Skaneateles in 1968.

Mary was an active member of The First Presbyterian Church from the time she joined the church in 1968 until her death in March, 2011. She is remembered by those who knew her well for her great sense of humor, her gift of friendship, her capacity to love, her intelligence, her eloquence, and her understated grace. As a member of the Skaneateles Presbyterian Women's Club, Mary served as treasurer for several years. She provided Bible study for the Ladies' Circles and on request wrote special graces, personalized award presentations, penned words for hymns, and gave a Mother's Day sermon. Mary's love for words and great ability to write in addition to a writer's aplomb for listening and fact seeking allowed her to make each prayer, award or tribute unique and fitting for the occasion. Mary was always proud of her family, past and present, and was intimately involved--and head cheerleader--in their activities and endeavors. She enjoyed meeting new people; traveling, especially to Switzerland and Scandinavia; reading; swimming and cooking. Most of all she was a loving wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend to many. Dr. Maya Angelou once said that "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel." Had Dr. Angelou ever met Mary, she might well have been the embodiment of this discourse.

Additional Requirement: Choose ONE of the essay options below and respond to it (If you are a previous applicant, please do not use the same essay. Thank You)

- 1. Below is an excerpt from an article Mary wrote for the Skaneateles Press under the byline "Window Shopping." If the "future you" could write a letter to the "present you," what advice would the "future you" convey and how would it change the way you live your life?**

I'm not sure exactly when it hit me that I might be one of those elderly folks...When did that happen? Perhaps on a wet fall night when my foot began to slip across the leaves and I barely grabbed onto a stair rail thinking, "Oh not my hip, please not my hip," or perhaps feeling my eyes ache as I peered ahead through the windshield as the snow came barreling at me like a locomotive at full speed and I was afraid, fear puddling in my foot on the brake, but suddenly I knew, not that I should probably stop driving at night, but that I was an old woman.

All those endlessly optimistic years when I was sure that the "me" who had done the expected sometimes earnestly, or anxiously, and sometimes even feeling the pleasure of it all sweeping through my veins, that the "me" who had never worried about old age suddenly felt the tapping on the shoulder and the leering voice screeching, "It's your turn

now, you old fool, you.”

OR

- 2. In February 2014, Chuck Crosman made a donation to the Mary H. Soderberg Scholarship in memory of his wife Margaret Crosman who was a dear friend to Mary Soderberg. Both were active members in the church and in the Presbyterian Women of the Presbyterian Church, USA. They enjoyed each other’s company and shared many common interests. Their friendship was enduring.**

“A friend is one that knows you as you are, understands where you have been, accepts what you have become, and still, gently allows you to grow.”

William Shakespeare

Mary Soderberg’s and Margie Crosman’s friendship was a wonderful example of this quote. Have you witnessed or experienced a friendship like the one described? What impact did it have on you?

OR

- 3. Have you ever been the recipient of a pay-it-forward gift or have you had an opportunity to pay-it-forward? If so, describe how this gift or the experience it enabled has impacted you and your life.**

OR

- 4. In Ecclesiastes 3 there are Solomon’s general observations, “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity, under heaven...” This year has brought many changes and challenges into your life. What advice has been the most helpful?**

OR

- 5. Mary Soderberg’s faith in God, was central to her life, and she expressed her faith in her action’s and words. How do you show your faith?**