
NEWSLETTER

Comforter Ministry, Inc.



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles; so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

A letter from Su

Another winter is waning and spring is on the way...but not according to what the view is outside of my loft window as I sit at my computer to write the Spring 2020 Comforter Ministry Newsletter. Not unusual, however, for the Northwoods of Wisconsin as most years it is April before the snow is really gone and we can count on seeing the ground once again. Whenever spring decides to grace your neck of the woods, ENJOY!

Highlights of this Spring Issue include:

- New Quilters to CM from Salem Lutheran in Escanaba, MI on Page 5 - **WELCOME, LADIES!**
- New “Sharing What I Know” series on **Multiple Myeloma** on Page 6
- “Words to Share” note from Carla B with her personal comments on the story about **Deede’s Quilters** (Grace Lutheran) from Scroggins, TX on Page 7
- A great list of CM event ideas for you to consider in 2020-21 on Page 5



Signs of Spring 2019 in the Wisconsin Northwoods!

A mission of comfort and compassion, reaching out to women with cancer with God’s Word and the love of the Comforter through journals and quilts.

- A bit of personal health news from me to all of you on Page 7
- **Women with Praying Hearts Wanted!** Reminder to please use the CM Prayer List on the CM Web site...personal prayer time, prayer groups, prayer chains
- Check out the CM Website regularly for updated **News, Notes, and Newsletters**

Enjoy the waning winter and signs of spring!

Su

With a Thankful Heart . . .

I thank my God every time I remember you. Philippians 1:3-5

As of February 10, 2020, 131 Quilters/Quilt Groups from 23 states and one Canadian province have made 698* comforters that have comforted over 906* women with cancer from 38 states (USA), one Canadian province, Australia, the Caribbean, Japan, and Switzerland. As I share the following information with you, my heart overflows with thankfulness to God for each of you.

| Quilters..... | | Recipients..... | | | |
|----------------------|----|------------------------|----|-----------------|-----|
| Alaska | 2 | Alaska | 4 | Tennessee | 2 |
| Alaska (QG) | 2 | Arizona | 11 | Texas | 106 |
| Arizona (QG) | 1 | Arkansas | 2 | Utah | 1 |
| | | | | Virginia | 6 |
| Arizona | 2 | California | 21 | Washington | 9 |
| California | 1 | Colorado | 12 | West Virginia | 2 |
| California (QG) | 1 | Connecticut | 2 | Wisconsin | 389 |
| Colorado | 2 | Florida | 23 | Wyoming | 1 |
| Florida | 1 | Georgia | 10 | | |
| Georgia (QG) | 1 | | | | |
| Illinois (QG) | 1 | Idaho | 2 | | |
| Illinois | 1 | Illinois | 28 | | |
| Iowa | 1 | Indiana | 9 | Australia | 1 |
| Kansas | 1 | Iowa | 14 | Caribbean | 1 |
| | | Kansas | 7 | Japan | 1 |
| Michigan | 7 | | | | |
| Michigan (QG) | 1 | Kentucky | 12 | Ontario, Canada | 6 |
| Minnesota | 6 | Maryland | 1 | | |
| | | Michigan | 52 | Switzerland | 1 |
| Minnesota (QG) | 2 | Minnesota | 97 | | |
| Nebraska | 3 | Mississippi | 2 | | |
| | | Missouri | 4 | | |
| | | Montana | 1 | | |
| Nevada | 1 | Nebraska | 12 | | |
| North Carolina | 1 | Nevada | 6 | | |
| North Dakota | 2 | New Jersey | 2 | | |
| Ohio | 2 | New York | 5 | | |
| Ohio (QG) | 1 | | | | |
| South Dakota (QG) | 1 | North Carolina | 9 | | |
| | | North Dakota | 3 | | |
| Texas | 4 | Ohio | 10 | | |
| Texas (QG) | 3 | Oklahoma | 10 | | |
| Utah | 1 | South Carolina | 1 | | |
| Washington | 1 | South Dakota | 9 | | |
| Wisconsin | 50 | | | | |
| Wisconsin (QG) | 16 | | | | |
| Wisconsin (LGP) | 2 | | | | |
| Wyoming | 1 | | | | |
| Ontario, Canada (QG) | 1 | | | | |

*Several comforters have been given on behalf of the Comforter Ministry, but I have not been given further information as to names of recipients, addresses, etc.

QG=Quilt Group LQP=Lutheran Girl Pioneers

Prayers . . .

The prayers of a righteous man are powerful and effective. James 5:16

- ♥ Pray for a cure for CANCER
- ♥ Pray for women diagnosed with cancer-See www.comforterministry.com under News, Notes, and Newsletters and scroll down to Prayer List
- ♥ Pray for the Comforter Ministry

Gifts Received . . .

And whatever you do; whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Colossians 3:17

- ♥ **Rachel and Hosanna H**-Mt Pleasant, TX - **Thank you, dear ones, for helping with the Winter 2019/20 CM Newsletter mailing.**
- ♥ **Betty K**-Jeffersonville, IN and **Lynnette H**-Manassas, VA for gifts of postal stamps; **Betty G**-Sun City Center, FL and **Linda J**-Manitowoc, WI for handmade bookmarks; **Kathy D**-Shawano, WI and **Linda J**-Manitowoc, WI for handmade note cards/envelopes - **THANK YOU, LADIES, SO MUCH!**
- ♥ **Gifts of Money** received since November 23, 2019 - **Gail O**-Waupaca, WI; **Mary Ellen L**-Wausau, WI; **St. Paul's Lutheran Women's Ministry**-Appleton, WI; **Joanne R**-Lake Tomahawk, WI; **Renee W**-Wausau, WI; **Bud and Barbara S**-Inver Grove Heights, MN; **Carol S**-Saginaw, MI; **Sally H**-Goodhue, MN; **Jean C**-Cedarburg, WI; **Tim and Lana S**-Burnsville, MN; **Jan R**-Hugo, MN; **Sharon N**-Carmel, IN; **Carla B**-Elkhorn WI; **St. Peter WINGS**-Schofield, WI; **Joyce R**-Georgetown, TX - **THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

CM Basics

Requester's Basic Instruction

- If you know of a woman with cancer whom you would like to receive a CM comforter and journal you may contact Comforter Ministry, Inc. and request they be sent to her, providing the recipient's name and complete mailing address. A cover letter will be included, stating YOU are the one requesting they be sent.

Quilter(s) Basic Instructions

- Make your quilt according to CM "Criteria for Making and Donating a Comforter" (criteria by request to CM or go to CM Website). Make sure your name, city, state and date you finished your quilt are displayed in some permanent method on the back of your quilt.
- Request CM journal, and fill out "Greetings from the Quilter" page of journal.
- Provide three (3) colored pictures (preferably all the same) of your quilt.
- Send Quilt, Journal and Pictures to Comforter Ministry, Inc.
- All materials, including postage are covered by Quilter(s).

Recipient's Basic Instructions

Between the cover letter and CM journal all details are provided and explained, including the following:

- who made the request CM comforter/journal be sent to you
- brief explanation of CM
- what to do with the comforter/journal
- when ready to do so, you or your family have several options, including 1) sending comforter/journal back to Comforter Ministry, Inc. 2) sending them on to another woman with cancer 3) keeping both – With option 1 or 2, postage is covered by recipient or recipient's family.
- what to do with the comforter/journal before sending them back to CM or on to another woman with cancer

Thoughts to Share . . .

New Quilts Received since November 23, 2019 - **Kathy S-Sandy, UT; Amy K and Margo S-Franklin, WI; Chris B-Manitowoc, WI; Jan R-Hugo, MN; Kathy D-Shawano, WI; Trinity Quilters-Minocqua, WI; *Bonnie H and Salem Quilters-Escanaba, MI; Carolyn J and Faith In Action Quilters-Rochester, MN; Mary B-Sachse, TX; Karen S-Prairie du Sac, WI; Darlene D and Abiding Grace Quilters-Conyers, GA; Phyllis F-Mukwonago, WI.** WELCOME, BONNIE AND SALEM QUILTERS! Check out the CM web site to see photos of these quilts at www.comforterministry.com, click More-Photo Gallery. THANK YOU, QUILTERS!

QUILTERS, please NOTE

***** DO YOU HAVE A TOP MADE THAT YOU WOULD LOVE TO DONATE, BUT IT NEEDS TO BE LONG ARMED? HEIDI BORK HAS OFFERED TO LONG ARM UP TO TWO QUILTS PER MONTH ON A FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED BASIS. AS THE TOP MAKER, YOU WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING THE TOP, PROVIDING A BACK THAT IS 4” LARGER THAN THE TOP IN ALL DIRECTIONS AND SHIPPING TO HEIDI IN NEENAH, WI. SHE WILL PROVIDE THE BATTING, LONG ARM QUILTING, AND RETURN SHIPPING TO YOU. IF INTERESTED CONTACT HER AT

Quilterazzi@gmail.com or 920.205.7213

COMFORTER MINISTRY EVENTS YOU MAY WANT TO CONSIDER IN 2020

■ **Comforter Ministry Display and/or Presentation with Power Point**

- Quilt Groups (Church, Club, Stores)/Quilter Retreats
- WELS Churches/Women’s Organizations/Women’s Retreats
- WELS Lutheran Girl Pioneer
- WELS Lutheran High Schools
- WELS Lutheran College Women (Campus Ministry)
- WELS Homeschooling Organization(s)
- Pastor/Teacher Conferences & Retreats
- LWMS (Congregation, Circuit, and Annual Convention)
- WELS Leadership Conferences/Events
- WELS Women in Ministry/Mission Conferences/Events
- OTHER?

■ **Comforter Ministry Prayer Gathering with Prayer Bible Study**

- WELS Women’s Organizations/Women’s Retreats
- WELS Lutheran College Women (Campus Ministry)
- WELS Quilt Groups/Quilter Retreats
- WELS Women in Ministry Events
- OTHERS?

A NEED FOR MORE QUILTS!!!

If you are a quilter, please consider making and donating quilts to the Comforter Ministry. I am low on quilts at this time and would appreciate receiving your “labors of love” as you are able to provide them. “Without quilts, there is NO ministry/mission.” THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Sharing What I Know . . .

Because the Comforter Ministry’s mission is to reach out to women with cancer, each Comforter Ministry Newsletter will include information about a specific cancer or a related subject. By being better informed about cancer, my hope is that readers will be aided in detecting cancer in regard to themselves and others and, if necessary, know where to go for further information and qualified assistance.

Multiple Myeloma

PART 1

The Basics - Multiple myeloma is a type of blood cancer that affects your plasma cells. Plasma cells are a type of white blood cell mostly found in your bone marrow - soft spongy tissue inside your bones. (White blood cells, and red blood cells and platelets are important because they help you fight infections, carry oxygen through your body and help prevent bleeding.)

When you have multiple myeloma, your plasma cells grow out of control and crowd out the other types of blood cells. They also produce abnormal antibodies (called M proteins) that can build up in your blood and urine, and damage your kidneys and other organs. When your plasma cells grow out of control, they can build up on soft spots or holes in your bones that are also caused by myeloma cells. Myeloma cells eat away at your bones...Because your bones can’t grow back fast enough to repair the damage, your risk of bone fracture increases when your myeloma is active. Myeloma cells can also build up and form tumors in your bones.

Symptoms - You may not experience any symptoms until your cancer is advanced. Or you could have symptoms that are similar to a different condition. But multiple myeloma can affect your body in different ways. Symptoms include:

feeling tired - this is often because of anemia, kidney failure or too much calcium in your blood (from the breakdown of bone), but being tired can be caused by many things

bone pain or fractures - because of bone loss or myeloma cells growing into bone

pain, numbness or weakness - this can happen if you have a fracture that causes bone to push against your spinal cord or pinch a nerve

hypercalcemia (high levels of calcium in your blood) - this can cause many symptoms like dehydration or extreme thirst, kidney problems, constipation, loss of appetite or weight loss, or feeling tired or confused

increased in infections because multiple myeloma weakens your immune system

kidney problems - M protein antibodies can build up and cause kidney damage or failure

If you’re already diagnosed, keep track of your symptoms. They could be signs of complications, or side effects from medicines. Be sure to share what you’re experiencing with your doctor.

Symptoms of multiple myeloma are often described with the acronym **CRAB**: **C** (high blood Calcium), **R**enal (kidney) problems, **A**nemia (low red blood cell count), **B**one damage

REMEMBER - IF YOU KNOW OF A WOMAN DIAGNOSED WITH CANCER AND WOULD LIKE ME TO SEND HER A COMFORTER MINISTRY QUILT AND JOURNAL ON YOUR BEHALF, PLEASE CONTACT ME!

THANK YOU TO ALL who were so kind to send Christmas Cards to me/ Comforter Ministry this past Christmas 2019 and also the kind notes of support and encouragement!

THANK YOU TO ALL who remembered Comforter Ministry with monetary gifts this past Christmas 2019. These gifts came at a time when 100 more CM journals needed to be printed!

FROM CARLA B -

"Dear Su, The story of Deede Zahrt in the Winter newsletter has touched my heart. I see a lot of Deede in me! I enjoy collecting fabric and using my stash of fabric for many projects. I too, hope to one day make quilts for the ministry but right now other projects need to be finished. My "problem" is I can't say no to other worthy causes that use my time when I should be quilting! What a blessing and motivator your grand-daughter is to the "Deede's Quilters". So for now, please accept this donation to the ministry. God's blessings to you, your family, and the Comforter Ministry in the new year."

WATCH FOR MORE INFO...

*Currently, I am working on a new presentation called, "Comfort & Joy - For All Seasons." In the past, I have hosted several "Comfort & Joy" Retreats at my cabin for close friends. These retreats have been held in December, staying with a Christmas vibe. I have been pondering for some time the thought of "comfort" and "joy" as blessings from God which certainly are meant to be experienced throughout the year - in ALL seasons - not just at Christmas. Lord willing, I can also expand this beautiful and meaningful theme to not just a presentation but include a 30 minute Bible study to accompany the presentation. Excited! Look for more information in the upcoming months!

A NOTE TO YOU, DEAR FRIENDS, FROM ME!

Recently, I was diagnosed with a rare vascular disease, fibromuscular dysplasia. There is no cure and there are several high risk factors involved that I will have working against me. I am being evaluated and carefully monitored by the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN, one of few medical centers throughout the United States involved at some level with FMD. I have every intention of continuing this wonderful ministry/ mission BUT please allow me to also take care of myself as I determine as necessary. At this point, I am not even sure what that may actually involve.

I tell you this in order to not only make you aware but also to ASK FOR YOUR PRAYERS. I would be honored if you would add me to Prayer Groups you may participate in yourself, church Prayer Chains, etc. THANK YOU, FRIENDS!

Words of Comfort...

The following meditation is based on the second of 12 Biblical passages of comfort found in the Comforter Ministry Journal. Originally written for and printed in 12 previous Comforter Ministry Newsletters, they are being reprinted here and in the following 10 issues of CMN.

Comfort in Sorrow

O my Comforter in sorrow, my heart is faint within me. Jeremiah 8:18

God’s Old Testament prophet, Jeremiah, is often called the “weeping prophet,” and for good reason. The theme of God’s message through Jeremiah to the people of Judah was one of repentance and judgement, not once or twice, but many times over. It seems the people of Judah just didn’t get it when it came to recognizing their sins against God and His commands or take seriously His divine judgement on them until they found themselves in captivity, under the rule of harsh and brutal rulers. And remember, they were warned by Jeremiah that this is what would happen if they didn’t repent and obey the Lord God.

In reading the biblical book of Jeremiah I am surprised by the continued obedience and faithfulness of Jeremiah. Here was a man ridiculed, ostracized, even harmed by his fellow brothers of Judah and, yet, he comes back time and again to lovingly warn them. Jeremiah knows God wants only what is best for them, and watching them continually choose the wrong path and suffer unspeakably for their choice is heart wrenching. It reminds me of loving parents who only want what is best for their children. They teach God’s ways to their children through His revealed word, the holy Bible. They model their faith in Jesus within the family home. Through God’s Word they warn what will happen if wrong choices are made. They do all of these things because they love God and know He loves their children more than they love their children. Like Jeremiah, they weep as they watch those whom they love suffer the consequences of bad choices. Like Jeremiah, they are sorrowful because they know how much God loves His children and He wants only what is best for them. However, the most amazing part of this story is not Jeremiah’s love for his people. **Beyond amazing is God’s continual faithfulness and undeserved love for sinners - you and me, included!**

God’s mercy and grace were manifested in His plan to save sinners through the suffering, death, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus earned eternal life and the forgiveness of sins for me. It isn’t up to me to find comfort when “my heart is faint within me.” Jeremiah knows that God’s amazing love and faithfulness will comfort him. Jeremiah 8:18 literally says, “O my exhilaration in sorrow! My heart very ill!” To think of God as my “exhilaration in sorrow” is to know Him as my ultimate Comforter, the One to fill me with strong feelings of well-being when I’m in despair of finding any consolation on my own.

It is at times of *faintheartedness*, times when it is difficult to see or hear for want of clarity in life situations, lacking courage or resolution because of the circumstances of life here on earth, that our Comforter God comes to us with exhilaration, providing peace, clarity, courage, and consolation to our otherwise weary and fainting heart. Sometimes, God appears to wait in His coming to us with His provisions. To understand God’s timing is always the best timing is to begin to feel this amazing comfort.

Dear One, may you feel God’s exhilaration in your sorrow. May the Lord cover you with His comfort during times of trial and difficulty. May you come to know or simply be reminded of His amazing love and faithfulness to you through His Son, Jesus.

Comfort me, Lord, with your amazing love and faithfulness. Be my exhilaration in sorry. Amen.

Biblical References to Read and Study: Psalm 64:1; Psalm 145:13,14; Lamentations 3:21-24; John 11:1-44; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Hebrews 10:23; 2 Peter 3:9

