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# NEWSLETTER

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## 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

These past six months have been hard to process, haven't they? But may I ask you - How's your prayer life? One thing I hear over and over from those I talk with is how much they pray. With so much going on around us with pandemic issues, violence, hatred, death, stress, uncertainty (need I go on?), prayer has been the calming, comforting constant in a Christian's life during these difficult days of 2020. The more you talk with a brother or sister in Christ, the more you will hear about the many blessings they are experiencing, too. God is good...ALWAYS!

I pray you will see His blessings as you look through this newsletter and thank Him for His grace to us...ALWAYS!



- I have shared a personal health update on Page 7 in response to those who have shared their concerns with me regarding my FMD diagnosis this past February.
- Please note the many and varied donations CM has received since February that I have shared throughout this issue, and join me in thanking God for such generous hearts!

**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.**

- Enjoy **Words of Comfort** on Page 8, a particular meaningful devotion on God as the Gardener who in His great love uses His pruning process to help make us stronger and more fruitful :)
- Congratulations to Lorraine S for making and donating the 700th Quilt!

Have a Blessed Summer!

Su

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### 700th QUILT!

Congratulations, Lorraine S - Algoma, WI for making the 700th Quilt for the Comforter Ministry!

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Lorraine has been a quilter and supporter of CM for many, many years.

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She and St. Paul Quilters-Algoma, WI have been making and donating quilts for CM since 2007!

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Thank You, Lorraine and St. Paul Quilters!

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## With a Thankful Heart . . .

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

**As of June 1, 2020, 133 Quilters/Quilt Groups from 23 states and one Canadian province have made 721\* comforters that have comforted over 930\* 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.**

<b>Quilters</b> .....		<b>Recipients</b> .....			
Alaska	2	Alaska	4	Tennessee	2
Alaska (QG)	2	Arizona	11	Texas	110
Arizona (QG)	1	Arkansas	2	Utah	1
				Virginia	6
Arizona	2	California	22	Washington	9
California	1	Colorado	12	West Virginia	2
California (QG)	1	Connecticut	2	Wisconsin	400
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	13	Ontario, Canada	6
Minnesota	6	Maryland	1		
		Michigan	53	Switzerland	1
Minnesota (QG)	2	Minnesota	102		
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	4		
Texas	4	Ohio	10		
Texas (QG)	3	Oklahoma	10		
Utah	1	South Carolina	1		
Washington	1	South Dakota	9		
Wisconsin	52				
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 LGP=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](http://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, Wayne, Hosanna H** - Mt Pleasant, TX and **Dave** - Thank you, dear ones, for helping with the Spring 2020 CM Newsletter mailing.
- ♥ **Lynnette H** - Manassas, VA for gifts of postal stamps, card/note, and encouragement- **THANK YOU, Lynnette!**
- ♥ **Gifts of Money** received since February 10, 2020 - **Martin B**-Dubuque, IA; **Dianne G**-New London, WI; **Colleen L**-Franklin, WI; **Barb T**-Superior, WI; **Jean C**-Cedarburg, WI; **Sandra B**-Ixonix, WI; **Jeannie M**-Cedarburg, WI; **Shirley A and Neighbors of CM Recipient**-Mt. Pleasant, TX; - **THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

**MORE GIFTS RECEIVED . . . See Pages 5 and 7**

# 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

*Like sunshine over a valley, God's great love spreads out over the whole earth.  
J. Heinrich Arnold*

### Thoughts to Share . . .

New Quilts Received since February 10, 2020 - \*Kathy F-Eau Claire; Sandy B-Ixonia, WI; Jodi S-Appleton, WI and Amy N and Shelley M; Lorraine S-Algoma, WI; Judy A-Wisconsin Rapids, WI; Deede's Quilters-Grace, Scroggins, TX; Phyllis F-Mukwonago, WI; \*Adele D-Manitowish Waters, WI; Carolyn J and Faith In Action Quilters-Rochester, MN; \*WELCOME, KATHY AND ADELE! Check out the CM web site to see photos of these quilts at [www.comforterministry.com](http://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](mailto:Quilterazzi@gmail.com) or 920.205.7213

#### A NEED FOR MORE QUILTS!!!

If you are a quilter, please consider making and donating quilts to the Comforter Ministry. I 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!**

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### TRINITY LUTHERAN ENDOWMENT FUND RECIPIENT 2019 -

Comforter Ministry, Inc. was blessed to be a recipient of \$400 from the Trinity Lutheran Endowment Fund. This is the tenth year CM has been awarded a portion of this annual funding effort at Trinity. **THANK YOU SO MUCH!**

### MEMORIAL GIFT OF MONEY TO CM -

Comforter Ministry, Inc. received a donation from Dottie B and daughters in memory of husband/father Jim. Jim and Dottie have been long time supporters of CM and a blessing to me as encouragers and friends :) **THANK YOU, DOTTIE AND GIRLS!**

### GOOD SHEPHERD-CEDAR RAPIDS, IA -

I was invited to give a Comforter Ministry Power Point Presentation to a small group of quilters at Good Shepherd in Cedar Rapids, IA this past January. Thank you to host, Tammy S, for inviting my husband and me to spend the night with her and husband Tom. So enjoyable! A generous donation was sent in support of CM and the efforts it makes to bring comfort and joy to women diagnosed with cancer. **THANK YOU, TAMMY AND GOOD SHEPHERD!**

## 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 2**

**Testing & Staging** - To diagnose your cancer, your doctor will do some or all of the following tests:

- blood and urine tests
- imaging tests like X-rays, MRIs, CT (or CAT) scans and PET scans
- bone marrow biopsy

Once you begin treatment, your doctor will continue to run some of these tests to monitor your progress and see if your treatment’s working.

Your doctor may recommend testing the genetic makeup of your tumors. This can help inform your treatment decisions now, and may even be able to help other patients in the future. Ask your doctor for more information.

Doctors generally use the Revised International Staging System (R-ISS) to learn whether your cancer will be easy to treat or whether it will resist certain treatments. R-ISS staging is based on four factors:

- amount of albumin (a protein in your blood that’s linked to your overall health)
- amount of beta-2-microglobulin (a protein that’s linked to more aggressive cancer)
- amount of LDH (an enzyme in your blood that helps show how quickly your myeloma cells are growing)
- genetic defects in your cancer that show resistance to treatment (more defects mean more resistant cancer)

Your R-ISS factors will give your doctor a more complete picture and accurate diagnosis.

Your diagnosis can feel overwhelming. If you ever have questions, don’t be afraid to ask your doctor to explain it again. You can even get referrals to reach out to other doctors as well.

**Staging:** Unlike other cancers, with multiple myeloma your stage is based on how aggressive your cancer is - not where it has spread.

There are two groups that describe how quickly your cancer is progressing, and determine your treatment:

- Smoldering multiple myeloma (SMM): You don’t have symptoms and probably won’t have treatment at this stage
- Symptomatic multiple myeloma: You’re having symptoms like those mentioned earlier, and will receive treatment.

**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!**

**AS PREVIOUSLY SHARED:** Recently, I was diagnosed with a rare vascular disease, fibromuscular dysplasia (FMD). 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!

**PERSONAL UPDATE:** Thank you to all who have sent emails, cards and notes of encouragement and who have added me to their prayer circles or personal prayer list. ...last February, I saw a Vascular Surgeon at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN relative to my January diagnosis of fibromuscular dysplasia (FMD). He restated there is no cure for this rare vascular disease or repair work/procedure or anything that I can consider. My FMD was found in both carotid arteries (the neck) going to the brain and, as the doctor discussed with me, if one keeps looking more compromised arteries would probably be found throughout the arterial system of the body. I do have, however, several good things in my favor as far as severity of FMD so I am blessed. I am in fairly good health for my age and am encouraged to keep healthy eating habits and regular exercise as part of my “treatment” plan (in order to avoid plaque build up in my already compromised arteries) along with continuing to keep blood pressure and cholesterol levels under control, both of which I am doing on medication and close monitoring. Often people with FMD have experience with strokes, aneurisms, and even worse which of course puts them into a very dangerous position going forward from diagnosis. Aware of that, I prayer for peace of mind and heart. My personal incentives to be healthy have grown and taken on much more importance, I must admit! I have limitations on what kind of exercise I am allowed and fatigue is probably my main issue at this point. I am working on a personal care routine that needs to take precedence in my life so I can continue to serve God and others. My personal prayer is to be at peace with simply living out my days of grace according to God’s will and for His purposes...and isn’t that our prayer as His children, anyway?

## **GENEROUS DONATION TO COMFORTER MINISTRY**

*“Thank you” to former CM recipient Carla B - Rowlett, TX for her recent generous donation to CM!!! Carla has been one of my biggest Requestors throughout the years and supporters of CM. I am truly humbled to be a recipient of her generous spirit.*

*Because of this special surprise gift, I am planning to move forward with an expanded vision of a recent project I have undertaken - a new series called COMFORT AND JOY...FOR ALL SEASONS. This series of projects will be in addition to my current CM power point presentation, CM Prayer Gathering presentation and Bible study, etc. **More info will follow...***

## Words of Comfort...

The following meditation is based on the third 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 Suffering

*My comfort in my suffering is this: Your promise preserves my life. Psalm 119:50*

Every gardener knows to encourage a plant to produce more flowers or fruit she must regularly cut back, or prune, the plant. This way life-sustaining nutrients from the water and soil can go directly to where it is needed to produce the best foliage or fruit. Sunlight can shine more easily where it is needed. It may have been unable to reach those branches that were shaded by other branches, stunting the growth of the shaded branches. Pruning increases yield is the rule of thumb in gardening circles.

Pruning is a necessity. It may appear cruel, and even senseless, as perfectly good branches have to be cut off to insure a good harvest. But it is through the pruning process that better branches will develop. The life and beauty of the plant is strengthened by the cutting away of another part of the same plant.

The same can be said for the spiritual life. Suffering can be a part of the pruning process in our own lives. A good metaphor of our relationship with Jesus is that of branches to a vine. God is the gardener. Jesus is the vine, the conduit through which we (believers in Jesus), the branches, are attached, receiving and sustaining life. With Jesus and His word we are preserved and live; without Him and His word we die.

So where is my comfort in my suffering? Even when I don't feel comforted in my suffering, how can I know comfort is mine?

The psalmist, by inspiration from the Holy Spirit, states emphatically that I *do* have comfort in my suffering, and *this* is to be my comfort: **God's promise, His word, God's words preserve my life.** My personal, home lexicon defines *preserve* as follows: to keep up, maintain; prevent from ruin or decay; to maintain and protect for private use. What an outstanding picture of God and His relationship with me, His child. I can do nothing to maintain myself or keep myself from ruin and decay. I need a Savior God to maintain and protect me "for private use." What grace! What comfort in suffering is mine!

God's words are my comfort and my guide whatever my circumstances. My misery has filled me with new life and strength. The darker the days which come on me, the more eagerly I watch for every ray of light from God's word. The master gardener prunes so that I will be even more fruitful. While remaining in Jesus and His words remaining in me, I will bear much fruit and so bring glory to God.

Apart from Jesus, dear reader, you will never find true comfort in suffering. Only as a branch (believer) in the true vine (Jesus) will you possess the comfort in suffering that will preserve your life. You did not create your own life, and you cannot maintain or sustain it without the master gardener (God) who created you and is the only one who, by His grace, can graft you into the true vine through faith in Jesus. With faith in your heart, I pray God will graft you into the true vine and His promise of preserving your life in Jesus will be yours eternally.

***Dear Heavenly Father, as the master gardener of my life, You alone know how to best preserve my life, maintaining and protecting me as a beloved branch within the true vine. When pruning is necessary in my life, guide and comfort me with Your promise, Your word. Through Your abundant grace may my life produce much fruit to Your glory. Amen.***

*Biblical References to Read and Study:* Romans 5:8,9; Psalm 119:32; John 15:1-17; Romans 6:6,7; 1 Peter 4:19; Isaiah 49:13; Matthew 5:4; Ephesians 2:8-10; Psalm 92:12-15



