



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Kindness and Compassion Through Hospice Care

Pull Quote

**"Hospice was there when we were in great need, and we are thankful to the entire team for their kindness and compassion. Hospice helped us to focus on what really mattered." —Brad Barker, Kathy's Husband**

PARK RAPIDS, MN (NOV. 8, 2018) – CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care 2018 Light Up A Life honors the memory of Kathy Barker.

Kathy and Brad both grew up on Leech Lake in Walker. They knew one another as kids and married in 1974. They led an active and happy life and enjoyed all types of outdoor activities. Camping, canoeing, hunting, fishing, snowshoeing and boating were just some of the many ways they shared their love for one another and as a family, in their favorite place – Minnesota. When their daughters were younger, they spent entire weekends on the boat on their ancestral Leech Lake.

In September of 2017, Kathy was diagnosed with Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease, a rare, incurable brain disorder. Kathy was then referred to hospice, and they opted to return home. At the recommendation of friends, they chose CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care.

The CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care team allowed Kathy to live at home by helping Brad and their daughters respond to Kathy's needs and adapting to the daily physical and emotional changes that Kathy experienced. "Brad and Kathy were very caring towards one another and their family, and they welcomed hospice into that fold," says Krista Walen, Home Health Aide, CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care.

"The hospice team soon felt like family," Brad says. "We developed trust with one another, and together provided loving care for Kathy. Our family felt like we were

the only priority for the hospice team. I was concerned that our needs were greater than what was available, yet we were always reassured not to be concerned. Each hospice visit and **phone call was appreciated.**"

**"There are many aspects to being a hospice nurse, including providing emotional and physical care to the patient, and providing emotional support to the patients family and friends," says Heather Umthun, RN, CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care. Kathy's needs were** being met, and so were those of their whole family – including their grandchildren. Education materials were provided to each of them that helped talk about what was happening, right to the very end.

**"My family and I miss Kathy and cherish many years of memories, including those at the end of Kathy's life," Brad says. "Hospice was there when we were in great need, and we are thankful to the entire team for their kindness and compassion. Hospice helped us to focus on what really mattered."**

CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care is about helping patients and families live as fully as possible. Providing care tailored to the wants and needs of each individual patient and their families is key.

**"Our hospice team is compassionate and delivers expert care," says Jessica Jensen, RN, BSN, CHI St. Joseph's Health Hospice Care Director. "Our team is comprised of many talented individuals who are skilled at end of life care. Whether it is the smiling face at the other end of the phone or the home health aide coming to assist with bathing, we are here for you."**

During this holiday season of thanks and giving, the public is invited to join Hospice Care in a celebration of life and memories by giving a gift in honor or in memory of a loved one.

Gifts of \$25 or more to the Hospice Care Light Up A Life program help to bring individualized care to those in need of pain and symptom management, counseling, spiritual care, and respite services. Your support ensures quality hospice care close to home and 100 percent of your gift remains local.

The Barker family is among 150 patients and their loved ones who received Hospice Care through CHI St. Joseph's Health this past year. Providing specialized quality healthcare with an emphasis on comfort and dignity has been Hospice Care's unique privilege for 31 years. Hospice Care has a passion for helping people live each day to the fullest, making more meaningful moments possible.

Please plan to attend the Heartland Lakes Community Tree Lighting at 6 p.m. Friday, Nov. 23, Main Street, Park Rapids and celebrate the season in honor or memory of those dear to you.

Donations can be made at CHI St. Joseph's Health south lobby in the Light Up a Life gift box, at participating area businesses in Park Rapids and Menahga or mailed to CHI St. Joseph's Health Foundation at 600 Pleasant Avenue, Park Rapids, MN 56470.

#### Cutline



Photo of Kathy & Brad Barker: Kathy was born April 24, 1955 and passed November 12, 2017.

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#### **About CHI St. Joseph's Health**

*CHI St. Joseph's Health is a 25-bed critical access hospital serving communities in Hubbard, Becker, Cass and Wadena Counties since 1946. In recent years, CHI St. Joseph's Health's award-winning teams received several national honors including: The Joint Commission Top Performer on Key Quality Measures in surgery; Top 100 Critical Access Hospital, HealthStrong; WomenCertified's America's Best Hospitals Women's Choice Award in obstetrics; and the Studer Group Fire Starter Healthcare Organization of the Month among other national, regional and state recognitions.*

About CHI

*Catholic Health Initiatives, a nonprofit, faith-based health system formed in 1996 through the consolidation of four Catholic health systems, expresses its mission each day by creating and nurturing healthy communities in the hundreds of sites across the nation where we provide care. The nation's third-largest nonprofit health system, Englewood, Colorado-based CHI operates in 18 states and comprises 103 hospitals, including four academic health centers and major teaching hospitals as well as 30 critical-access facilities; community health-services organizations; accredited nursing colleges; home-health agencies; living communities; and other facilities and services that span the inpatient and outpatient continuum of care. In fiscal year 2015, CHI provided almost \$970 million in charity care and community benefit - an 8% increase over the previous year -- for programs and services for the poor, free clinics, education and research. Charity care and community benefit totaled more than \$1.6 billion with the inclusion of the unpaid costs of Medicare. The health system, which generated operating revenues of \$15.2 billion in fiscal year 2015, has total assets of approximately \$23 billion. Learn more at [www.catholichealthinitiatives.org](http://www.catholichealthinitiatives.org).*

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