

his faith. It was obvious that he had found favor with God and God was demonstrating His faithfulness to his children. On the plus side, we were able to attend church, socialize with friends, eat out, engage in family activities, and truly enjoy our lives. We absolutely did not dwell on anything negative!

Words cannot adequately express the importance of our support system, which included our family, friends, our church family, hundreds of prayer partners, and hospice personnel. They were all there for us when the going got tough and it became tough on many occasions. Not only did we receive cards, calls, and visits, but we were blessed to have persons in our lives who hugged us, made certain we ate properly (especially me), and just let us know how much they loved and cared about us. All of this was extremely important, but it pales in the sight of the most important facet, and that is to know Jesus Christ as our personal savior. If you have not had that experience, we invite you to join us in knowing him. (I say "us" because I know Dick would be saying this to you.) It is not a difficult process, for the Bible teaches us in John 3:16



that: *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever (and that includes you) believes on him should not perish but have everlasting life."* All that is necessary is that you believe that Jesus came to this earth, died for our sins, was resurrected, sits at the right hand of the Father, and is coming back, again, to receive us as his own. So, if the peace

that we had during this journey, and I continue to have, sounds like something you need and would like to have, simply sincerely say:

"Father, I acknowledge that I am in need of a savior. Please forgive me of my sin. I want Jesus to come and live in my heart and be my everlasting friend. I surrender my life to you now. Thank you, Father, for hearing my prayer. Amen"



I want you to know that Dick and I walked through this season of our life with our faith intact. He had asked God for two things: "Let me have no fear, and allow me to keep my sense of humor." God delivered on both counts! He was still smiling in the hospice room and when he departed this life, it was with the absence of fear and the knowledge that Jesus was walking with him to the other side. Now, that is the kind of peace that passes all understanding, but bears truth to this scripture: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Isaiah 26:3 (KJV)

By
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HOSPICE BROCHURE

Walking Together Through Terminal Illness

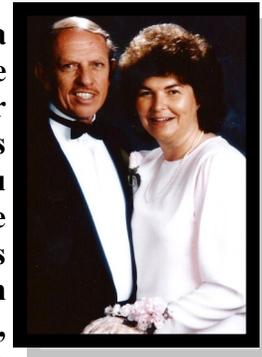


If you are reading this brochure, you probably either are, currently, or have been in the past, involved with someone who is dealing with some form of terminal illness.

My name is Sandra Lehmann, and the sole purpose for telling our story is to share with you the avenue to peace and comfort, as you walk through this difficult time, yourself, or with someone who has a special place in your life. As you continue, it is my prayer that you will derive both strength and encouragement from its content, as well as get a glimpse of how our strong faith in God impacted our journey.

Of all human emotions,

fear is the most negative. It also has the *power to dictate decision-making;* therefore, greatly influencing the outcome of any given situation. There is a certain



"uneasiness" which creeps into our psyche the moment we realize something suspicious" is going on in our bodies. It is at this point

that we either succumb to the worry of "what ifs" or make a choice to **LET GO . . . LET GOD!** What does that mean? It means that before our emotions spin out of control, we need to seek guidance from our creator, God, who is in absolute control.

. . . “DEEP, ABIDING PEACE”

When my husband, Dick, first began having difficulty swallowing, we thought, perhaps, he had developed a narrowing in his esophagus and needed to see a gastroenterologist. That visit culminated in an immediate endoscopy. When the doctor informed us that he had taken several biopsies and would talk with us again, after the results were back, we knew this was not good news.

We immediately contacted our church and the intercessory prayer team, as well as several prayer teams across the country, which subsequently became “around the world.” It was that very day that we began a daily on-purpose appointment with God. This was different from our normal prayer routine. This was a single focus on divine intervention for Dick’s condition. We



Dick & Daughters:
Julie, Lori, JoLynn, Paula

came away from that initial meeting with a deep abiding peace and the absolute absence of all fear! This was extremely important, because, this would become our sustaining force in the days to come. There is a tremendous difference between *knowing about God* and “*knowing God*,” personally. We began to experience Him in a completely different dimension. As I look back on all of this, I know, without any doubt, that this was a preparation for “things to come.”

Our foundational scripture passage, Proverbs 3:5-8, says: Trust in the Lord with all your heart, do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you what path to take. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the Lord and turn away from all evil. Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones.

I wondered what evil there might be for us, and I was impressed, in my spirit, that there were two things that would confront us — fear of the circumstance and doubt that God could take care of it.

With God’s Word firmly implanted in our hearts and the knowledge that all of this prayer was being sent heavenward, when we received the diagnosis of *inoperable esophageal cancer*, we were already enveloped in a cocoon consisting of so much love and support that it became our safety net! We landed in that net and got back up on the high wire of life with dignity and purpose. We were both members of our sanctuary choir, and their buoyancy of anointed prayer and concern kept us singing in the choir Sunday after Sunday. With our strong faith in God, we knew that the cancer would neither define our character nor dictate our future. We prayed and took Godly counsel from pastors and dedicated Christian friends regarding all of our decisions.

The treatment options offered to Dick were to result in such negative outcomes that he deemed them unacceptable and chose to have quality of life over a few extra months of extremely diminished capacity. This was the point when we decided, together, to sign on with a hospice provider. He wanted quality time with God, family, and friends, and he had it.



Dick; his grandson,
Nicolas; and son, Richard

Regardless of the path chosen (taking the treatment or not taking the treatment), the journey must still be taken and there are many curves and obstacles along the way. For us, these came in the form of decisions to be made, emotional upheaval, grieving over the loss of “who we once were,” anger, and an emergency room visit due to food lodged in Dick’s esophagus, which culminated in the placement of an esophageal stent that would allow him to continue to swallow. Although this was an extremely dangerous procedure, this and all of the previous experiences were met with peace and the assurance that God was guiding us along the pathway he had chosen for us. God was with us! Except for the placement of the stent, Dick experienced relatively little pain. As I recall, he only vomited twice. Dick told his “story” to everyone with whom he made contact. It was interesting to observe him after this experience. It was nothing short of miraculous—the foods that he ate! I was the one who questioned some of his requests which included: traditional crust pizza, chicken parmesan, beef tips over noodles, and crunchy chicken tenders! He stated that he felt God was rewarding him for