

We Remember

For Immediate Release

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Four Hospice Organizations and Kaufman Interfaith Institute Host Communitywide Memorial Event in Grand Rapids

Grand Rapids, Michigan, August 11, 2015 – Four local hospice organizations in collaboration with the Kaufman Interfaith Institute of Grand Valley State University will hold a special communitywide, interfaith memorial event on Thursday, Sept. 10 in Grand Rapids.

Emmanuel Hospice, Faith Hospice, Heartland Hospice and Hospice of Michigan will host We Remember, a free event from 6-8 p.m. that is designed to allow those who have lost a loved one to come together, share memories and honor a special family member or friend. The event is open to the public, and all ages are welcome. Sign language interpreter will be available.

The evening begins with a memorial service at 6 p.m. at the Dominican Center at Marywood where attendees are encouraged to bring a photo or other small item of memorabilia to honor their loved one during an interfaith service.

From 7-8 p.m., attendees will have the opportunity to participate in hands-on memorial activities, including:

- Planting a flower along a reflective path at the Dominican Center, 2025 Fulton Street E.
- Decorating and flying a kite as part of Hospice of Michigan's annual Fly & Remember
- Taking a reflective nature walk on the beautiful grounds of the Dominican Center, 2025 Fulton Street E.
- Walking an indoor labyrinth, which reflects the challenges and confusion that often comes with grieving a loved one

Attendees can choose to attend either part or all of the evening, which runs from 6-8 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, alternative arrangements have been made for indoor activities.

“The entire community is welcome to join in an evening of sharing memories and celebrating the legacies of our loved ones,” said Douglas Kindschi, director of the Kaufman Institute. “At a special event last year, Grand Rapids Mayor George Heartwell proclaimed 2015 as the Year of Interfaith Service in our community. We Remember is one of the many activities that have grown out of that proclamation, allowing the Kaufman Interfaith Institute to partner with four local hospice organizations to offer a communitywide memorial service.

“It is our hope that the event will become an annual gathering that will give our community a way to remember those special people in our lives who have died.”

As a response to Mayor Heartwell's proclamation, the Kaufman Interfaith Institute created a Service Council that meets monthly and includes interfaith activists and advocates from several faith communities as well as the secular community. Members of the Service Council, the four local hospice providers offer grief support to those in the community who are experiencing a loss.

This is the first time that local hospice providers and the Kaufman Institute have worked in collaboration on an event. For parking at the Dominican Center, enter off of Lakeside Drive. For more information, visit <http://bit.ly/1M9bbQQ>.

About the participants:

Emmanuel Hospice: Emmanuel Hospice is an interfaith collaboration of four local organizations with more than 200 years of combined experience providing quality health care services in West Michigan. St. Ann's, Clark, Porter Hills and Sunset have joined together to deliver the highest level of holistic care to those who have reached the end of life and their loved ones wherever home is. <http://emmanuelhospice.org/>

Faith Hospice: The greater Grand Rapids area's first faith-based hospice, Faith Hospice cares for approximately 1,500 patients annually through in-home hospice care services and Trillium Woods, the area's only dedicated in-patient hospice center. Part of the Holland Home system of care, Faith Hospice focuses on providing expert and compassionate physical, emotional, and spiritual care to the loved ones and families it serves. <https://www.faithhospicecare.org/>

Heartland Hospice: Heartland Hospice first opened its doors in the greater Grand Rapids area in 1999, and is part of the HCR Manor Care family. Heartland Hospice is the third largest hospice provider in the nation and believes in providing care wherever the patient or family calls home. <http://www.heartlandhospice.com/>

Hospice of Michigan: A nationally recognized leader in end-of-life care, Hospice of Michigan is the original – and largest – hospice in the state. The nonprofit cares for more than 1,700 patients each day, raising more than \$4 million each year to cover the cost of care for the uninsured and underinsured. Hospice of Michigan has programs to care for special populations, including pediatric patients, veterans and others. www.hom.org

Kaufman Interfaith Institute: The mission of Kaufman Interfaith Institute is to promote interfaith understanding and mutual respect in West Michigan through interfaith dialogue and service we promote a vibrant and diverse community for all generations. www.gvus.edu/interfaith

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