



Yellowjacket Heroes – Tracy MacClement – class of 1972

Tracy MacClement (CHS class of 1972) refers to her work as a Hospice Chaplain as a “Ministry of Presence”. The essence is simply “being present” with her patients as they reach the end of their lives. Holding hands, leaning in close to listen, sharing a quiet prayer, singing songs, and reading together are all acts that are not possible in a time of pandemic. Many of Tracy’s patients are in facilities that are locked down from visitors, even chaplains.

Since mid-March, Tracy’s job as changed dramatically. She does her best to provide comfort via phone or video chats, but those resources are often difficult for patients in their final days and hours. Tracy’s job has shifted to providing counsel and support for families as they deal with the sorrow of not being able to visit their loved ones.

Tracy’s passion for hospice began in her early 20’s as she sat with her grandmother-in-law as she passed away. That experience sparked an interest that grew as she became a pastor in churches, often finding herself working with people in medical crisis. When she went to Divinity School, several professors saw her gift and encouraged her to pursue hospice as a ministry. She has worked as a Hospice Chaplain for Catholic Community Hospice for eleven years.

While her primary support is with the patient who is dying, she also provides support to families during the process as well as other health professionals. She has found that, especially in recent weeks, the nurses, certified nurse assistants, home health aides, and therapists need her support and prayer as much as the patients and families.

While this time is difficult, Tracy has seen positives as people come to reevaluate parts of their lives, recognizing the value of relationships, the importance of taking care of each other, and the inequalities that exist in our world. We can only hope that those are the values that are strengthened as the pandemic passes.

Thanks to Tracy and all our Yellowjacket Heroes for their service and caring for our communities.