Anne Helen Margaret Helmus

January 15, 1954 – June 23, 2011

I will say of the Lord, “He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.” Psalm 91:2

Surrounded by her loving family, as she would have desired it, with a mixture of joy and sorrow we announce that Anne Helmus very peacefully went home to live eternally with her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. After a valiant five-year struggle with cancer, Anne finally succumbed on June 23, but we believe that she is now rejoicing and dancing in heaven. She will be greatly missed by Bill, her loving husband for nearly 33 years, and their four children: Diana and David Reitsma (and much adored Nana to Marshall, Adam, and Kyle), Sean and Anita, Jonathan and Paola, and Ryan. Predeceased by her parents, Willem and Johanna Bakker (Strathroy, Ontario), she will be fondly remembered by her six brothers: Bert (deceased on May 20, 2011) and Ellen of Strathroy, Ontario; Harry and Betty of Bradenton, Florida; Bernie and Irene of Whitby, Ontario; Paul and Lory of Grand Rapids, Michigan; Ralph and Diane of Palmerston, Ontario; and Wilmar and Melinda of Listowel, Ontario. Many other members of her large extended family will miss her dearly as well. After meeting while teaching at Calgary Christian School, with Anne teaching Grade 5, Anne and Bill were married in Calgary, Alberta in 1978, where their first three children (Diana, Sean, Jonathan) were born. From 1983-1985 they lived in Ukarumpa, Papua New Guinea, where their youngest son, Ryan, was born, while they served with Wycliffe Bible Translators. Upon returning to Canada, they lived in Bowmanville, Ontario for eleven years. Anne spent some years at home raising the children, and also taught in local public elementary schools for several years, the final three years in Grade 1, while Bill served as principal of Knox Christian School. The family moved to Victoria in 1997 when Bill took up the position as principal of Pacific Christian

Elementary School. Anne taught various elementary grades in the Saanich School District, with her final few years at Saanichton and KELSET elementary schools. Anne was always dedicated first and foremost to her Lord and to her family, but she was also very passionate about her teaching, deeply caring for every single student. She loved teaching! Anne was first diagnosed with ovarian cancer in September 2006, just weeks after she and Bill returned from a wonderful 5-week missions trip, serving in rural Christian schools in Zambia, Africa. Although she suffered long and endured much, she never complained, but accepted and took in stride all of these significant changes to her personal goals and plans. Her desire was to honour God in every aspect of her life. “Endurance is not just the ability to bear a hard thing, but to turn it into glory.” That is exactly what Anne has done! She was greatly loved and will be deeply missed by all who knew her and were impacted by her life.

Heartfelt thanks to Dr. Patti Olsen for her genuine love and care, and to Dr. Jorg Michels and many other caring and competent physicians, nurses and other staff at the Victoria Cancer Clinic, plus Royal Jubilee and Victoria General Hospitals. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Cancer Society, or to your favourite charity.

Everyone is invited to a special service to celebrate Anne’s life at GLAD TIDINGS PENTECOSTAL CHURCH on Wednesday, June 29 at 3:00 pm. A private graveside service will be held earlier at Royal Oak Burial Park. Condolences may be offered to the family at www.mccallbros.com.