



Elizabeth W. Horton, MSW, LICSW

March 7, 2016

Horton, Elizabeth W. MSW, LICSW age 82, passed away March 7, 2016, from liver cancer. Known as Betsy to her family and friends, she was born Elizabeth Ann Winters June 20, 1933 in Summit, New Jersey. As a child, she lived through the Great Depression and then the second World War, during which the neighborhood girls formed the "Girl Marine Corps" in support of the war effort. In spite of the inherent challenges of the times, she enjoyed a happy childhood in Summit with her parents, Helen and Austin Winters, and her two younger sisters, Mary and Eileen. She attended Mount Holyoke College (her mother's alma mater), where she forged many female friendships that continued throughout her lifetime. She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English in 1955 and served as Class Scribe until shortly before her death. In 1962, she received her Masters of Social Work from Simmons College. She worked at several health care organizations, including Boston Children's, during the 1960s. In 1969 she married Dr. Keith A. Horton, a psychiatrist from Philadelphia; their two children, Laura and Amy, followed shortly thereafter. Mrs. Horton was a stay-at-home mom while her daughters were young. Among her many contributions to their upbringing were the Halloween costumes she made by hand each year, which included Rapunzel (complete with a dashing boy doll climbing up a floor length, yellow yarn braid), Holly Hobbie, and the Pope! In 1980, Mrs. Horton resumed professional social work as an independent practitioner. She held many leadership roles in the profession throughout her career, including serving as President of the Clinical

Social Work Association (formerly the National Federation of Societies for Clinical Social Work), the Minnesota Society for Clinical Social Work and the Board of the Psychoanalytic Foundation of Minnesota. Mrs. Horton's political savvy and organizational ability were integral in the achievement of independent licensure for clinical social workers in Minnesota in 1987. Throughout her career she remained deeply committed to training and development; since 1991 she had helped teach a review course to prepare applicants for state social work licensing examinations and served as principal editor of the course manual. She was author or editor of numerous other publications; of note, she served as principal editor of the 1985 Code of Ethics of the National Federation of Societies for Clinical Social Work. Among the many professional honors she received were a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers in 2004 and an Honorary Membership of the Minnesota Psychoanalytic Society and Institute in 2015. During Mrs. Horton's illness, many colleagues reached out in person and in writing to express their affection and appreciation; more than one called her a "hero" in the profession. It should be noted that in her "spare time," Mrs. Horton also managed Dr. Horton's busy psychiatric practice. Mrs. Horton's personal interests included music and travel. In high school and college she performed in a number of musical theater productions, and she continued to participate in choral ensembles, including the Minnetonka Choral Society, throughout her adult life. Her family fondly recalls hearing her sing along to recordings of Handel's Messiah at Christmastime. She was also an avid traveler; with her husband, she visited almost every continent, exploring countries as diverse as China, Kenya, New Zealand and Mexico. Perhaps the destination that touched Mrs. Horton most deeply, however, was Robben Island in South Africa, where they visited the tiny prison cell in which Nelson Mandela was held captive for 18 years. She spoke many times of the resilience of the human spirit, personified by President Mandela. That she was so moved by the experience in South Africa came as no surprise to those who knew her, for it was the human spirit that was at the

center of Mrs. Horton's journey on earth. She had a unique gift for forging relationships and never missed an opportunity to connect, regardless of any demographic, personality or even linguistic difference. (Fortified by no more than rusty college Italian and a genuine desire to learn, she happily conversed with Amy's Spanish-speaking in-laws.) She was both fun and relaxing to be around. She listened. Her warm, grounded presence and disarming sense of humor soothed wounded egos, salvaged broken hearts, and calmed fears, whatever the moment called for. She was generous with her time and her insights, frequently offering advice to anyone who asked, whether a close family member or a "friend of a friend." To family and friends, there was no one more devoted. She remembered the Christmas card, made the phone call, offered the hug, and showed up for the celebration or in the hour of need. As her death approached, Mrs. Horton said many times that she was not sad, though she understood that others might be. "I've had a happy life," she said. Mrs. Horton was preceded in death by Keith, her beloved husband of 46 years, and other relatives including her parents, Helen and Austin. She is survived by two daughters (Rev. Laura Horton-Ludwig and Amy Horton-Tavera), two sons-in-law (John B. Ludwig and Juan Tavera), two grandchildren (Grace and Xander Horton-Tavera), two sisters (Mary Cooper and Eileen Mann), and many other loving family members. A memorial service will be held on Sunday, May 8, 2016 at 2:00 pm at First Universalist Church, 3400 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, with a reception to follow.