



Mary Lee Bleser (nee Heise)

07/27/1950 - 12/04/2020

On Friday, December 4, 2020, Mary Lee Bleser (nee Heise), aged 70, of Butte des Morts, became the newest soul in heaven. Born on July 27, 1950, in Oshkosh, she was the daughter of the late Carl C. and Patricia K. (Hopp) Heise. On August 28, 1975 she married her husband of 45 years, Albert Earl Bleser.

She grew up on the Carl Heise family farm on Heise Road in Omro - named after her grandparents and seven of her aunts and uncles who all had adjacent farms along the road. Mary, her older sister Barb, and younger brother Mark, shared many adventures and learned the importance of a strong work ethic from early on. Mary graduated from Omro High School in 1968. She worked for the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh as an administrative assistant for her entire career, retiring in 2017 after 43 years of service. She worked in the Criminal Justice, Public Affairs & Urban Studies department for many years before transferring to the Psychology department. She also enjoyed her time working for the Broadway 41 project at the university, bringing in professional speakers and entertainers from around the country. She was a well-known fixture on campus, beloved by many. She also supported her husband in his many self-employment business ventures over the years, most recently as an officer at Fox Tax in Oshkosh.

She always enjoyed music, and Christian music in particular. She started taking organ lessons when she was 13 years old, and was playing in church by the time she was 16. She also enjoyed singing and performing with the church choir in her early years. She was known for always having her favorite music playing at work or wherever she was. This not only kept her own spirits high, but was an encouragement to those around her. She was also a lifelong lover of the performing arts and a current season ticket holder with her daughter at the Performing Art Center in Appleton. She enjoyed traveling with her family and loved ones to attend concerts and events - from a Barry Manilow concert with her sister to "The Phantom of the Opera" with her daughter's high school youth group, she was always up for an evening of arts and entertainment.

Mary deeply loved her Lord and was a lifelong member of the Lutheran Church, having grown up in the Lutheran church in Omro where she was baptized on August 20, 1950 and confirmed on June 17, 1962. She continued to be actively involved playing the organ and volunteering at church wherever needed. For the last 25 years, she was a member of New Hope Lutheran Church in Neenah, WI, where she also happily volunteered wherever she was needed- most often helping with the children's ministry on weekends and New Hope Christian School during the week. She had a very special place in her heart for her New Hope family and friends.

She was an accomplished crocheter and knitter and was known to whip up any request from blankets and socks, to sweaters for penguins in Antarctica. Mary inherited her mother's love for cooking, gardening, and sewing. Her sewing kit was always handy, and she would happily mend the many items her family regularly brought her. Also, she could often be found outside planting flowers around her home or harvesting cherries from the family tree to make her famous cherry pie. She was a master chef in her own kitchen as well, utilizing fresh ingredients from her brother's farm, including hand-picked sweet corn and an annual half cow that fed the family for a year. Her family (and often the neighborhood kids) was known to show up as she was pulling a hot dish out of the oven, and her table was always full.

Mary also enjoyed traveling. She spent many summers in Thailand with her daughter, Heidi, son-in-law, and grandchildren. She enjoyed visiting Maine with her daughter, Rebecca, and son-in-law. She enjoyed regular visits to the family cabin in the Upper Peninsula where she was able to spend time with Jonathan and all of the grandchildren, especially Marcus, who enjoys the outdoors. She excitedly flew across the country for her grandson Dakota's Marine Corps graduation, and she didn't shy away from a road trip, most recently enjoying a trip to the Ark Encounter and Creation Museum in Kentucky with her daughter, Jody and her family.

Mary loved her family (especially her grandchildren), and her friends. In January 1975 she started dating Al, the love of her life, and they married just seven months later and enjoyed an old-fashioned chivalry celebration. They first met in November 1974 in a co-ed volleyball league, and they also enjoyed square dancing and annual ski trips to Aspen in their early years together.

The love and generosity she showered upon everyone will live on through us all. She is survived by her husband of 45 years, Albert Bleser, of Butte des Morts; four children and their families: Jonathan (Bobbie Jo) Bleser, of Green Bay, and children, Rhya, Kealey, and Carson Bleser; Heidi (Thanongsak) Tannarat, of Bangkok, and children, Timmy, Rose, and Lily Tannarat; Jody (Craig) Kell, of Winchester, and children, Marcus and Dakota Bleser, Oliver and Sylvia Kell; Rebecca (Nate) Chute, of Butte des Morts. She is also survived by a sister, Barbara (Jim) Kolb, of Omro; a brother, Mark (Marilyn) Heise, of Omro; and nieces, nephews, other relatives, and friends.

Mary will be missed and forever remembered by family, friends, brothers and sisters in Christ, and the special charities where she selflessly gave her time, for the sparkle in her eyes, and a heart full of compassion - with a deep love and caring for all those she touched. Mary would seldom complain and was always eager to share her joy by helping others. She was always ready to sacrifice with little thought of herself, which made her contributions and support foundational for all of those she helped.

The family would like to thank the doctors and nurses at St. Elizabeth

hospital in Appleton for their compassionate care.

A visitation for family and friends will be on Saturday, December 12, 2020, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at New Hope Lutheran Church, 1850 American Dr., Neenah, followed by a funeral service at 11:00 a.m. with Pastor Jeff Prewitt officiating. Friends and family are welcome to stay for a meal and fellowship in celebration of Mary's life after the service. For those who are unable to attend, online streaming will be available at newhopeconnect.org. The service will also be recorded and available on demand at www.newhopeconnect.org. Interment will be in Evergreen Cemetery, Manitowoc. Mueller Funeral Home - Winneconne is assisting the family with arrangements.

Memorials in Mary's name may be made to: Concordia Welfare and Education Foundation - Thailand at www.cwefthailand.org/donate or directly to New Hope Lutheran Church. Please note in memory of Mary Bleser.

Online condolences may be shared at www.muellerfh.net.