

Mount Holyoke College Class of 1965 In Memoriam

Denise Thompson Smith

Denise Thompson Smith passed away peacefully at home on June 30, 2010, following a long and courageous battle with ovarian cancer. She is survived by her devoted husband Herman J. Smith, Jr. (103 Sagamore Ave., Medford, MA 02155).

At MHC, Denise majored in English literature and received a scholarship in modern dance. Many remember the grace and beauty of her dance performances. Denise also choreographed our junior class show.

Following graduation, Denise began a distinguished career in the book publishing industry. At Houghton Mifflin Co., she edited and supervised the development of college text books in education, English, the humanities and the fine arts. Denise also worked as an editor for the Harvard University Press, WBGH-TV and others. As a project manager at the Forum Corp., Denise wrote, edited and supervised the production of management and training materials for Fortune 1000 companies. Denise also served on the Alumnae Association Board of Directors for five years.

In 2002, Denise fell victim to recurrent ovarian cancer. Due to neurological complications, Denise was unable to walk, read or manage any physical activity involving balance and coordination for many months. However, Denise's spirit and her deep faith always burned brightly. In 2007, as she was starting a new round of chemotherapy, Denise wrote, "Life is full and I hope to feel well enough most of the time to be useful and happy." And she was. As leader of the "Wings" prayer team of the Park Street Church in Boston, Denise reached out to others through prayer and frequent phone calls. She also hosted a women's bible study group. In 2008, Denise, a life-long choir member, wrote a beautiful hymn, "Prayer for Renewal" which is now part of her church's Bicentennial Hymnbook.

Those who spoke at the memorial service for Denise at Park Street Church on July 10th, remembered a wise, loyal and loving friend who always cared about others and lived abundantly despite her long illness.

(Posted Fall 2010)