

## ***Vivian Needed to End Care-Sharing Team Membership***

*Vivian had been a member of the care-sharing team helping Joan care for her husband, Wayne, who had Alzheimer's. As Wayne's dementia grew worse, caring for him was beginning to remind Vivian of her dark, lonely days caring for her father. She realized she needed more time to heal from the long, hard journey of her dad's illness. She wanted to help her dear friends Wayne and Joan, but knew in her heart she couldn't continue as part of the team.*

*Joan had anticipated that some friends and family members would eventually drop out, so she had recruited an extra large care-sharing team. When Vivian*

spoke of her need to leave, Joan gathered this team together and suggested hosting a potluck party to celebrate and thank her friend. Vivian at first refused, saying she felt like a quitter and didn't deserve a party. But Joan reminded Vivian that she had already contributed an important, lasting gift—and for that Joan would be forever grateful.

At Joan's request, I, her pastor, retold one of Mother Theresa's stories. Mother Theresa was originally partnered with another sister who was scheduled to travel to India with her, but at the last moment the sister suffered a health crisis and could not go. This sister, however, agreed to be Mother Theresa's "spiritual partner." And while she could not give hands-on care, she could still be of great value to Mother Theresa. Joan asked Vivian if she would pray for her and be her "spiritual partner." Vivian, through tearful eyes, agreed, gave up her guilt feelings, and went on to enjoy the rest of the celebration—her celebration—as her hands-on caregiving for Wayne ended and her spiritual support of Joan began.