

## **Laura Fancher—Christian Service**

We would be hard pressed to find a more compelling example of Christian service among our Houghton alumni over the course of a long lifetime than Class of 1949 alumna Laura Fancher. After growing up in Houghton—(she comes from the Fanchers who gave their name to our own Fancher Hall) -- Laura served on the mission field in Portugal and Spain, as well as in short-term missions in Guatemala and Bolivia. For most of her life, however, her ministry has been as a nurse at Highland Hospital in Rochester, caring for newborns and their mothers.

Today, at 93 years old, Laura still volunteers in Highland's special care nursery, running errands and assisting the nurse managers in their duties. She folds laundry, delivers blood samples to the labs, and supports staff members in any way she can. But her favorite moments, according to niece Cheri Romero, are the times where she gets to hold and feed one of the newborns. "They say she still has a special skill for getting babies to take formula when no one else can," Cheri says, adding, "I personally think it's her patience and calming voice that's her special gift."

Laura also participates in a quilting group, making small quilts which are presented to mothers who have had newborns in the special care nursery at Highland. She continues to pray for the newborns and their families, and is always ready with warm smiles and kind words. "She's always displayed what a true Christian should be," Cheri says. "Kind, caring, giving of herself and putting the Lord first always."

Laura, you illustrate for the Houghton community one of the many ways in which lay people can minister in the name of Jesus Christ. Through your professional training as a nurse, you have been able to reach into the lives of hundreds of families, often at times when it would have been impossible for medical reasons for ordained clergy to be present. For your many years of faithful Christian service to newborns and their families we honor you today with the 2019 Houghton College award for Christian service.