For more than 27 years, Dr. Willie McClaren has been a steady presence in Mercy Trauma Services. During recovery, patients see a compassionate physician who offers encouragement. He provides comfort during a trying time and helps family members understand the care their loved one is receiving. These are just some of the gifts which describe Dr. McClaren — and make him the latest Spirit of Mercy Award winner.

Colleagues say Dr. McClaren is a quiet man and a gifted physician who sees himself as “just a country doc” — but he’s much more. During an emergency, the physicians, nurses and staff say his ability to remain calm and focused is reassuring. After the initial care, they say Dr. McClaren takes things to the next level by connecting with patients and families in a way that increases their understanding and shows respect for the situation they are experiencing. Whether it is a reassuring word, a hug or sharing a prayer — he helps guide those he cares for. Dr. McClaren is said to have a knack for noticing the little things that provide comfort. It’s not unusual for him to become involved in direct care by walking patients or helping them move to a chair.

Colleagues say Dr. McClaren also cares about them. Everyone is treated the same — like family. He celebrates successes and joyous moments including weddings and new babies. He’s also there for staff during rough days and when there is personal loss. Colleagues say he is a mentor and they know he is always available no matter when you contact him. If you need assistance, he will help you.

Congratulations on your Spirit of Mercy Award, Dr. McClaren and thank you for your selfless service to meet the needs of others.

Dr. Willie McClaren works closely with Sarah Eason (L), director of Trauma Services, and Director of Emergency Services Jeri Babb in caring for patients needing emergency care.

KIDS HELPING KIDS is something you see more and more these days. That’s exactly what Kendall Bradford’s students are doing. For the second year, her first grade class at Walnut Hills Elementary in Waukee made fleece blankets as a service project. The blankets were delivered to children in the hospital at Mercy Children’s Hospital & Clinics on Dec. 20. Thank you to Kendall and her students at Walnut Hills Elementary!
CONGRATULATIONS TO...

Kaitie Vaudt, CMICU, and Trey Hall, on the birth of their son, Kainyn Lowell. Kainyn was born on Nov. 29 and was welcomed home by Quintyn, 7.

Kelsey Shortley, labor and delivery, and Adam, on the birth of their daughter, Jayde Olivia. Jayde was born on Dec. 1 and was welcomed home by Rhett, 1.

Kerri Hart, flex, and Joe Hogan, on the birth of their son, Maverick Ross. Maverick was born on Dec. 6 and was welcomed home by Olivia, 7, and Graysen, 5.

Danae Hewitt, endoscopy, and Andy, on the birth of their daughter, Emmie Lou. Emmie was born on Dec. 10 and was welcomed home by Sadie, 4, and Ruthie, 2.

Caitlin Arey, CIC Associates, and Tyler, on the birth of their son, Gunner. Gunner was born on Dec. 26 and was welcomed home by Hank, 2.

SYMPATHY TO...

Jennifer Lapp, inpatient rehab, on the loss of her grandfather

Cole Fister, inpatient rehab, on the loss of his grandfather

Maggie Nugent, West Lakes rehab, on the loss of her father-in-law

Santa made a pre-Christmas visit to Mercy Children’s Hospital & Clinics on Dec. 20. He brought lots of presents for all the good little boys and girls in the hospital.