

Touching Lives

"My children, let us not love with word or tongue, but in deed and truth." - 1 John 3:18

Giving Hope

The Michigan District of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod invites you to join in observing and celebrating Christian Care Sunday. The purpose of this Sunday is to celebrate the Christian Care work taking place in your congregation. It is also to bring awareness to the same care that is taking place through three Michigan-based LCMS Recognized Service Organizations whose stories are found on the next three pages.

Christian Care Sunday

October 18, 2009



Lutheran Homes
of Michigan

Lutheran Homes of Michigan
160 S. Main St. P.O. Box 329
Frankenmuth, MI 48734
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LUTHERAN CHILD & FAMILY SERVICE
of Michigan

Lutheran Child & Family Service of Michigan
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Project Compassion Ministries, Inc.
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Picture the Possibilities

When we look out for society's youngest members, we pave the way for a better future.



In the closing years of the 19th century, the Michigan District held its convention and delegates voted in the affirmative to this statement. Their action in that convention gave birth to what today is

one of the oldest, largest, and most respected child welfare organizations in Michigan.

Today, there are nearly 20,000 children in Michigan who are in the Child Welfare System.

Family disruption and societal discord are in far too many situations taking a toll on our communities, schools, and families. Our very commitment and responsibility to care for each other, particularly those who society might describe as the "least among us" is being questioned and challenged.

There are countless stories of children and families whose futures have been altered because of LCFS and our Lutheran congregations in Michigan. You can read of these incredible life changing experiences by visiting our website at www.lcfsmi.org.

We are grateful for your generosity and are mindful of the responsibility we have to serve as an extension of your congregation's ministry and as an expression of God's love. Your support truly makes a difference in the lives of the children and families we serve.

In His Love,



Dr. Robert G. Miles
President/CEO



Because of Lutheran Child & Family Service of Michigan ...

"I listen to my children more than I used to and try to understand their needs. We do more things as a family."

"This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all." (John 1:5)

I recall a school chapel service at St. Peter, Hemlock that I attended several years ago. A junior high aged girl sang a solo which included the phrase "we must run to the darkness and seek out the hopeless." Her song and that phrase have stuck with me perhaps because of her personal story. She had been in foster care in another state. Somehow she ended up in Michigan with no family. Her future wasn't even on the radar screen. She was placed with LCFS and that is when her future began to take shape. When I met her, she had a family, she had been adopted. Her teachers told me that when she first arrived in school two years earlier she wouldn't talk and she was a "loner". What a leap from there to singing a solo in front of the entire student body. Consistency, encouragement, and achievement build confidence.

"Running to the darkness and seeking out the hopeless" isn't something everyone would routinely want to do, but it is what we are called to do. Together we must "Picture the Possibilities" and be the change we wish to see in the world.

Finding New Ways to Reach Out

With a century of touching lives and giving hope throughout its history, Lutheran Homes of Michigan is finding new ways to help seniors, their families and their caregivers — even if it's just a few days away!

Recently, Agnes, a 95-year-old resident of The Manors in Saginaw, noticed that Lutheran Homes had senior housing campuses in other areas of the state. She approached several staffers at the new Aging

Alpena Village, in Alpena. Lutheran Homes of Michigan, a Recognized Service Organization of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is one of the partners in that affordable apartment and condominium campus.

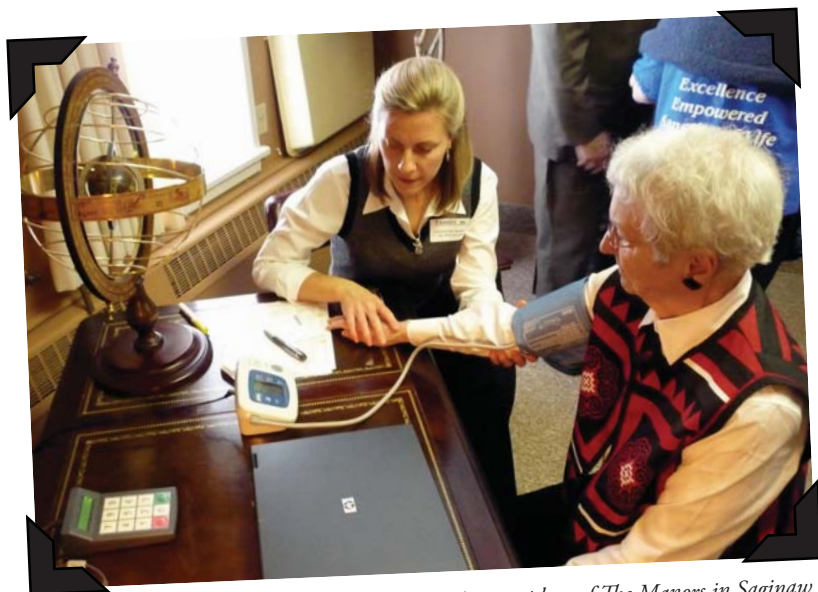
Tied in with the Resource Center is another important Lutheran Homes initiative, the CareTec Network. Currently based around Frankenmuth, the CareTec Network is designed to be a one-call resource for seniors and their families who need connections to services, advice, and referrals.

“Agnes’ story, the Resource Centers and CareTec all tie into one of our prime values at Lutheran Homes, which is empowerment,” said David Gehm, president and CEO of Lutheran Homes.

“Information is power, and we want that power in the hands of seniors and their loved ones. We also want to leave the door open to fresh ideas that come directly from seniors — like Agnes wishing to take a road trip!”

“By putting tools in the hands of seniors, by finding ways to touch their lives and give them opportunities to pursue their hopes and dreams, we find our own lives enriched and blessed,” Gehm said.

Lutheran Homes of Michigan is a faith-based, nonprofit organization that has been serving Michigan seniors of all faiths for 116 years. With campuses and locations around the state, Lutheran Homes provides senior housing, assisted living, skilled care, home care, and hospice services, as well as new initiatives.



Tammy Wee of Lutheran Homes of Michigan helps a resident of The Manors in Saginaw learn to use biometric equipment in the Aging Enriched Resource Center. The Resource Center is opening up new doors to serve seniors and their families.

Enriched Resource Center in The Manors, and asked if she could take a trip up north, to Fairview, Michigan, where Lutheran Homes sponsors a campus.

The Resource Center was set up exactly for people like Agnes, who live independently, but need information, services, and referrals. In this case, Agnes needed a safe, interesting place to stay, someone to drive the car, and assistance nearby — just in case.

“We’re finding that the Resource Center at The Manors is becoming a social hub for seniors and their families, with some great ideas percolating up,” said Tammy Wee, a Lutheran Homes registered nurse. “Like Agnes’ vacation, the Resource Center has opened up amazing new opportunities to serve seniors, witness our faith and theirs, and help them live enriched, joyous lives.”

A second Resource Center has now opened at

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- David Gehm

For more detailed information, please go to the Lutheran Homes of Michigan Web site at www.AgingEnriched.org.

Enriching the Lives of Nursing Home Residents

The story of Project Compassion Ministries in Michigan began in the early 1970s as a predominantly volunteer-based organization answering an unmet need of many lonely, frail, and elderly nursing home residents. The Board of Social Ministry of the Michigan District was instrumental in developing this ministry which was led by a chaplain. Volunteer visitation led to trained chaplaincy, and over the years, ministry offerings expanded to God's Love Bus, Block Parties, Vacation and Day Away programs. The ministry has grown to 27 chaplains at 24 facilities throughout Southeast and Mid Michigan that have been yoked with the task of "Touching Lives and Giving Hope." As God's children, we are called to "... love ... in deed and truth," I John 3:18.

Chaplaincy Ministry fills an essential need at nursing homes and assisted living facilities by providing over 35,000 one-on-one visits each year, proclaiming and sharing the love of Christ to residents, 60% of which have no visitors. Bible studies, small groups, and even worship services are offered at many facilities and chaplains are

available to hear concerns of family and staff. For many, connections formed through this ministry help maintain hope and bestow great comfort through difficult circumstances.

God's Love Buses, four in Detroit and one in Saginaw, feature specialized wheelchair-accessible transportation, facilitating opportunities for residents to reconnect with their community. God's Love Buses offer trips to the zoo, parks, ball games, restaurants, shopping malls, and the like.

Vacation Programs offer 3-day/2-night trips providing memorable experiences to over 625 residents and staff from 21 nursing homes. Facilities from Southeast and Mid-Michigan and as far away as Newberry in the Upper Peninsula took advantage of these special opportunities for residents to enjoy fun and sun-filled days. Some groups participate each year because they realize that these respites are able to renew body, mind, and soul.

Day Away Programs offer residents a shorter



sojourn to a Metro Park for devotions, picnic lunch, and sometimes a boat-ride. During autumn, outings can be combined with fall color tours and trips to cider mills and apple orchards further enjoying God's beauty in nature.

In late summer, an Annual Block Party is held on East Grand Boulevard in Detroit for nearly 700 nursing home and adult foster care facility residents.

Many volunteers are essential in providing this afternoon of fun and fellowship.

In special arrangement with the Michigan District office, PCM is on-call to provide LCMS chaplains for

people away from their home congregations who are in hospitals, prisons, or jails in Metro Detroit.

Significant funding for PCM's major programs is provided through Spring and Fall Concerts as well as the Annual Golf Benefit and Silent Auction. Local chapters of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans grant matching funds for these events, increasing community visibility and proceeds. Please see page 28 for information on the November 8 Fall Concert at Cross of Christ, Bloomfield Hills.

Project Compassion Ministries, Inc. is supported by a sister corporation, Project Compassion, Inc. which owns Livonia Woods Nursing & Rehabilitation, a Compassionate Care Community. This skilled nursing care facility desires to provide residents with a dedicated worship area and, to this aspiration, has established a special Chapel Fund.

PCM wishes to thank all those who support this Christian ministry by offering their time, gifts, and most of all, prayers.

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