



The Spiritrust Connection

A Spiritrust Lutheran® Publication

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Spiritrust Lutheran® is proud to have served our community for seven decades!



We appreciate our **team members, donors, board members, volunteers** and all other **supporters** of Spiritrust Lutheran® for helping us achieve this milestone and your steadfast commitment to our mission. Thank you to our **residents, clients** and **participants** for allowing us to serve you each day and to their **family members** for entrusting us with the care of their loved ones. As needs continue to grow and shift, we remain firm in our commitment to enriching and enhancing the lives of those we serve.



Spiritrust Lutheran®

A Spirit of **Service**. A Legacy of **Trust**.

SpiriTrust Lutheran® Executive Leadership Team

Robert L. Rundle, Jr., *President/CEO/CFO*

Carol Hess, *Chief Human Resources Officer/Vice President of Human Resources*

Editorial Team

Crystal L. Hull, ABC, *Vice President of Communications & Public Relations*

Chris Beck, *Communications Manager*

Vanessa Sanders, *Communications Coordinator*

Design & Layout

Chris Beck

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For change of address, please send old address label and new address to Crystal L. Hull, Communications & PR, SpiriTrust Lutheran®, 1050 Pennsylvania Avenue, York, PA 17404.

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How to Contact Us

By Mail: Crystal L. Hull
Communications & PR Department
SpiriTrust Lutheran®
1050 Pennsylvania Avenue
York, PA 17404

By Email: PublicRelations@spiristrustlutheran.org

By Phone: 717.854.3971, ext. 10433

www.spiristrustlutheran.org



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By the numbers

\$1.37 Million

The estimated **COVID-19 related expenses** for SpiriTrust Lutheran® in 2021.



15,340

The approximate number of **resident and team member COVID-19 tests** performed by SpiriTrust Lutheran® in 2021.



2,275

The number of **purple and white paper links** submitted by residents of The Village at Utz Terrace for the “Longest Day Chain,” greatly exceeding the goal of 1,440 chain links needed to represent the number of minutes in a day. The chain was linked as part of “The Longest Day,” a celebration held each June 20, the summer solstice, in which caregivers, family members and friends show support for those with Alzheimer’s through fundraising and awareness events.

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SpiriTrust Lutheran® marks 70th anniversary

This year, SpiriTrust Lutheran® marks its 70th anniversary of serving those in need. Our service footprint has grown well beyond our humble beginnings when Sister Charlotte Weissgerber, a prominent social worker from Philadelphia, came to York in 1951 as the first executive director of Lutheran Welfare Services. We now serve 11 counties in Pennsylvania and three in northern Maryland.



We have always played an important role in providing compassionate care and support to those we serve in our communities to ensure their well-being and help them achieve an optimal quality of life. As needs grew and shifted, we opened new programs, expanded our territory and partnered with others to offer a variety of care options in multiple settings.

Our name, SpiriTrust Lutheran, captures the essence of who we are and the care and compassion our amazing team delivers. It embraces our Lutheran heritage, our spirit of service, and the reality that people come to us because of their trust in us. We provide residential living, assisted living, personal care, memory support and nursing and rehabilitation services in six life plan communities; home care, in-home support, palliative care and hospice services; and an innovative program for clinically frail adults in need of nursing home level-of-care.

A message from the CEO



This year, SpiriTrust Lutheran® celebrates 70 years of service. It is hard to imagine that 70 years ago a forward thinking group of individuals could have ever envisioned what SpiriTrust Lutheran has become today. From those early discussions centered on serving women in York County to today serving thousands each day in 11 counties in Pennsylvania and three in northern Maryland, our growth in service is astounding. Over the course of seven decades, we have witnessed 17 presidential elections, the Civil Rights Movement, the invention of numerous modern conveniences that we now take for granted, numerous worldwide conflicts and, most recently, a pandemic. From our inception in 1951, the one constant in our organization has been our commitment to those we serve – a constant made

possible because of the commitment of our teams, our donors and our volunteers.

Throughout these 70 years, the focus on whom we serve and how we are able to serve them has changed. The introduction of Medicare and Medical Assistance has allowed us to increase the number of persons we can serve in our skilled care centers and through home care. The introduction of the hospice benefit has allowed us to offer a service to clients and families during a trying time. Earlier this year, we felt the loss of closing our life enhancing services due to the impact of COVID-19; however, we cannot forget to celebrate the impact they had on so many lives for so many years. Since 1951, our various ministries have changed in response to

resident and client needs, funding shifts and our ability to sustain our work, but our vision and commitment has not.

As I look back on our history, adaptation to change has been the strength of SpiriTrust Lutheran. We may not know our future and the challenges that lie ahead, but we can be certain that no matter the challenges and opportunities, we will face them with the same spirit and commitment that led our founders to begin our work 70 years ago. On behalf of all who serve and all those we serve, thank you for the opportunity to enrich the communities in which we live and work.

Robert L. Rundle
President/CEO
SpiriTrust Lutheran®

Restrictions eased on visitation at life plan communities

Last year, our holiday celebrations and visitations were severely limited because of the strict guidelines the CDC and CMS had placed on long-term care facilities. In mid-November, CMS issued new visitation guidelines, removing most of the visitation restrictions in place since the start of the pandemic. This means residents and their families will be able to share the magic of the holidays in ways they could not last year. Here is a synopsis of our current visitation policy for assisted living, personal care and skilled care:

- Visitation is once again permitted at all times and for all residents, per our normal visitation policy, which means there is no advance scheduling of visits nor is there a limit on the

frequency or length of visits. We do ask visitors limit their movement in the building and go directly to the resident's room or place of visitation.

- Visitors must conduct themselves in a manner that adheres to the core principles of COVID-19 infection prevention and does not pose a risk to other residents.
- If the COVID-19 county prevalence rate is substantial or high, all residents and visitors, regardless of vaccination status, should wear face coverings or masks and physically distance, at all times.
- Visitors are not required to have received the COVID-19 vaccine or

show proof of vaccination; however, we may ask their vaccination status. If a visitor declines to disclose his or her vaccination status, we will ask that person to wear a face covering or mask.

- We will screen all visitors, regardless of vaccination status, upon entry to any of our life plan communities. The screening protocol includes a temperature check, a review of COVID-19 signs and symptoms and possible exposure to a COVID-19 positive individual. We will deny entry to any individual who exhibits signs or symptoms of the virus or has had close contact with someone with a COVID-19 infection in the prior 14 days.

Challenging times lead to closure of seven programs in 2021

In our 70-year history, we have never faced as tough a time or been presented with as many challenges of unprecedented proportions as we have since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020. Despite our best efforts to battle COVID-19 on all fronts with every ounce of energy, experience and fortitude that we could muster, we could not remain immune from the fiscal impact of this healthcare crisis.

The expenditures associated with keeping our team members and those we serve safe coupled with significant losses in revenue have been substantial. In spite of these fiscal challenges, we were able to maintain all lines of service throughout 2020 thanks to donor support, federal and state assistance and agency reserves. By the close of 2020, federal and state support had diminished and we expended the funds that bridged the loss of revenue used to support those unable to pay for their care. After months of discussions and an

in-depth review and analysis of our programs and services, we made the difficult decision that we no longer had the resources to support seven of our programs. All seven of these programs – Counseling Services, Domestic Abuse Solutions, Financial Education & Coaching, Senior Companion Program, Stephen Ministry, Touch-a-Life and Volunteer Income Tax Assistance – relied on the generosity of our donors and funding from agency reserves that were no longer available. As a result, we began the process of closing all seven programs culminating with the closing of the last three programs on June 30.

Although difficult, these measures were necessary to ensure that we would be able to preserve our ability to support our skilled care, personal care/assisted living, home care and hospice programs that serve some of the most vulnerable members of our community. Just as we have for the past seven decades, we will remain steadfast in our commitment to provide service excellence as we compassionately care for those in need.

Leadership Changes

Eric Cline, NHA, joined The Village at Luther Ridge team as nursing home administrator.

Amy Eakins, NHA, accepted the nursing home administrator position at The Village at Utz Terrace. Previously, she was residential living administrator at The Village at Sprenkle Drive.

Jill Flasher accepted the executive director position at The Village at Sprenkle Drive. Previously, she was executive director at The Village at Gettysburg.

Charlotte Gauthrie joined the SpiriTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice team as manager of hospice.

Michelle Loucks, NHA, accepted the executive director position at The Village at Gettysburg. Previously, she was nursing home administrator at The Village at Shrewsbury.

Kayla Oberholtzer, MBA, MHA, ALA, PCHA, joined The Village at Sprenkle Drive team as assisted living administrator.

Kyla Renninger was promoted to manager of client access for Home Care & Hospice. Previously, she was medical records supervisor.

Emily Shaw, NHA, ALA, PCHA, accepted the nursing home administrator position at The Village at Shrewsbury. Previously, she was assisted living administrator at The Village at Sprenkle Drive.

Kathleen M. Shroyer, BSN, RN, was promoted to director of Clinical Services for Home Care & Hospice.

Deborah J. Strong, CFRE, CSP joined the executive leadership team as vice president of Philanthropy.

Board approves transfer of SpiriTrust Lutheran LIFE sponsorship to Albright LIFE

After careful consideration and weighing several options, the SpiriTrust Lutheran® LIFE Board of Directors approved a plan to transfer sponsorship of SpiriTrust Lutheran® LIFE to another not-for-profit, faith-based entity. The board made the decision after determining an organization focused on managing LIFE programs could better meet the needs of our LIFE program participants and team members while positioning the program for future growth and success.

Albright LIFE, an Albright Care Services program, will become the new provider of LIFE services in the three counties we serve through our centers in Chambersburg and Enola once the transfer of assets is

completed. Albright Care Services, an affiliate of Asbury Communities, traces its legacy back to 1916 with the opening of the United Evangelical Home in Lewisburg, PA. Albright Care Services and Asbury are both rooted in the United Methodist Church.

Our goals are to ensure a seamless transition between SpiriTrust Lutheran LIFE and Albright LIFE with little to no disruption in participant care and services and to provide the opportunity for LIFE team members to become a part of the new Albright LIFE team.

Albright Care Services intends to hire all of our current staff. “Some positions will need evaluated to determine how they best fit into the ongoing program structure;

however, the Albright team has assured me that it plans to provide our current LIFE team members with the opportunity to continue providing the great care and service they now provide our program participants,” said **Robert L. Rundle**, SpiriTrust Lutheran President/CEO. “The Albright team realizes it will take the collective strengths of our existing team to build on the success of the program and is committed to working in collaboration with our LIFE team to build synergy to support future growth of the program.”

We anticipate completing the process in early 2022 once all aspects of the transfer of assets and management receive governmental approval.

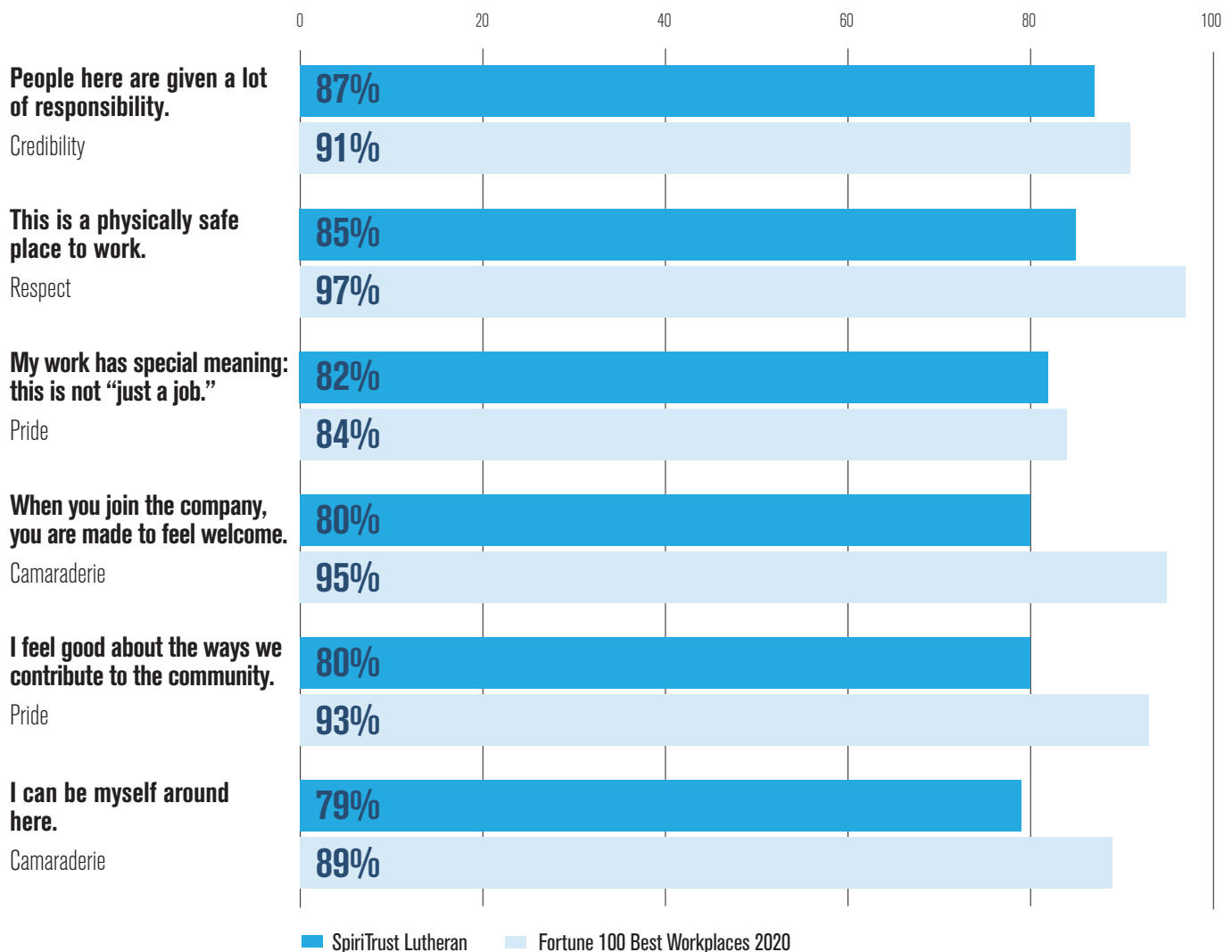
SpiriTrust Lutheran® named Great Place to Work for fourth consecutive year

For the fourth consecutive year, the Great Place to Work Institute has certified SpiriTrust Lutheran® as a Great Place to Work. The SpiriTrust Lutheran leadership team thanks all 608 team members who shared their thoughts and opinions by completing the survey. The feedback these team members provided will help us tremendously moving forward as we strive to make SpiriTrust Lutheran an even greater place to work.



How we compare to Fortune 100 companies

This chart from the Great Place to Work survey shows how SpiriTrust Lutheran® scores compare to those from companies in the Fortune 100 Best Workplaces 2020. Overall, SpiriTrust Lutheran has a Trust Index® score of 65, compared to the Fortune 100 Best Workplaces 2020 score of 86.



A great workplace is one where you **TRUST** the people you work for; have **PRIDE** in what you do; and **ENJOY** the people you work with.

WellSpan Health Partnership presents multiple opportunities

SpiriTrust Lutheran® has a history of forming mutually beneficial relationships with other agencies and entities to help us achieve our mission in the best way possible. One of those relationships has been with WellSpan Health. In November of 2020, we entered into a formal strategic partnership with the York-based healthcare system to deliver improved access to home care, hospice and post-acute skilled care services.

“The partnership with WellSpan Health provides us the opportunity to share our expertise and resources with a trusted community partner to improve the overall health and well-being of individuals, especially older adults, in the communities we serve,” said **Robert L. Rundle**, president and CEO of Spiritrust Lutheran. “This strategic partnership positions our two organizations to leverage our collective strengths in home and community-based services and senior living options to ensure those served always receive the highest quality of care in the most cost-effective manner.”

Listed below is the status of the three key opportunities:

Hospice

- Exploring ways to increase hospice services in Adams and Franklin counties through onsite clinical and non-clinical liaisons with Chambersburg Hospital (and eventually Waynesboro and Gettysburg hospitals) in an effort to improve access to care for hospice clients and their families.
- Developing a hospice response team.
- Participating in the **We Honor Veterans** program administered by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs. The five-tiered program recognizes partner organizations for demonstration of a systematic commitment to improving care for veterans through a variety of means.
- Launching the Spiritrust Lutheran and WellSpan Advanced Illness Management (AIM) pilot program in Franklin County in mid-December.

Home Care/Home Health

- Collaborating with **WellSpan VNA** to extend home care services to veterans throughout Franklin County through the AIM program.

- Developing a remote patient monitoring system for life plan community (LPC) residents.
- Expanding the WellSpan Hospital at Home program for LPC residents.
- Leveraging our in-home care and private duty nursing services with WellSpan Hospital at Home and WellSpan VNA to provide Skilled Nursing Facility at Home services.

Skilled Nursing Care and Long-Term Care

- Embedding palliative care clinics in our life plan communities.
- Contracting with WellSpan Philhaven to provide mental and behavioral health services for LPC residents, including psychiatric diagnostic evaluations, medication management, behavioral health interventions, psychotherapy and staff education.
- Exploring the creation of niche programs at WellSpan Chambersburg and WellSpan York hospitals for bariatric care and neurological rehabilitation.
- Exploring ways to make skilled care beds available to WellSpan Hospital system patients needing skilled nursing care.

Spiritrust Lutheran® bucks Great Resignation trend

Recently, I was reading an article on LinkedIn by Lene Gammelgaard about the “Great Resignation.” For those of you unfamiliar with the term, also known as the Big Quit, it refers to the ongoing trend of employees voluntarily leaving their jobs – a trend that began primarily in the United States in the spring of 2021 and continues to the present.

Gammelgaard cited a June 14, 2021 Microsoft survey that found 40% of the workforce is considering leaving their current job to find more balance in their lives and more alignment with their values. According to a recent U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics report, 4.3 million people quit their jobs in August, up 242,000 from July. The average monthly quit rate of 2.9% equates to an annual turnover rate of 34.8%. Our annual turnover rate is 30%.



Many have speculated as to the reasons workers are not happy. One theory states because there are many jobs available, people have the confidence to walk away from something that does not give them meaning because they know they can find another job elsewhere.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made us all look at how we spend our time – with many of us wanting to make an impact. In the last 20 months, many people in the work force said they were looking for a place where they could make a difference. They said they want more than a job ... they want their job to make a difference.

Our team members are no exception. Fortunately, we have kept our turnover at the same levels as before the pandemic. This is not just luck.

I believe it relates to the feedback our team

members gave us on our Great Place to Work survey. In response to the statement, “**My work has special meaning: This is not “just a job”, 89% of our team members agreed or strongly agreed.** This is a higher percentage than that of most companies listed on Forbes Fortune 100 list of the largest public and private companies in the U.S.

In addition, I believe it also shows our team members are finding value in their work. While we recognize we have more work ahead to make us an even greater place to work, I want to celebrate our amazing group of team members, who through very trying times, have stayed at Spiritrust Lutheran® to bring special meaning to those we serve.

Carol D Hess

Carol Hess
CHRO/VP of Human Resources



Generosity, Comradery and Renewal

Hot seats and garden beds provide means for neighborly interactions

This past year, The Village at Gettysburg reintroduced the “Interview with a Neighbor” program, which gives residents a chance to introduce themselves to their neighbors and share some of their life history. Individuals, couples and even siblings were welcomed to the “hot seat” to share something about their lives before they moved to the village.

“This program and the informal reception after each interview has become a much requested activity,” said **Jessica Sheahan**, life enrichment director. “The life enrichment team loves it

because it helps connect residents with common interests and helps us get to know our new residents so we can recommend or develop new programming based on those common interests.”

In a less formal fashion, residents with a shared love of gardening had the opportunity to become more neighborly this past April after a local Boy Scout built four wheelchair-accessible garden beds for the village. Tending to the garden beds spread not only soil and seeds, but also much joy among residents.

Pandemic validates specialness of the Kelly Drive family

“When walking into The Village at Kelly Drive you often hear people say it feels like home and how easy it is to see that team members and residents are like family,” said life enrichment director **Lauren Eriksen**. “Team members from all departments banded together to continue bringing love and providing care and fun to residents, often finding new ways to make that happen because that’s what families do.”

It was important to The Village at Kelly Drive team to continue to find ways to celebrate holidays and special occasions with residents. Eriksen said, “There was a specially decorated Santa truck that delivered hot cocoa and homemade cookies at Christmas, New Year’s Eve Party in a Box deliveries and teams with a wide variety of games, music and surprises that traveled

throughout the community to bring joy to residents on a regular basis.”

“We are deeply grateful for the team members we work alongside, the residents we are here to serve, and the ways these challenges have helped us grow and learn in new ways,” Eriksen said.

Pam Conrad, executive director, said the pandemic made it even more evident that the Kelly Drive team is a special group of people. “They have given so much of themselves to ensure our residents are well cared for and safe,” said Conrad. “They have made sacrifices they never had to make before and adapted to many unprecedented changes. Many have worked long hours and yet they have remained strong and resilient. I am humbled and grateful to work alongside such a dedicated, caring team.”

New exercise class provides fitness and fun

After a month of settling in her position, **Ali Noll**, life enrichment director, The Village at Luther Ridge, wanted to find a way to mesh her background and passion for personal training and exercise with getting to know the residents who frequented the Fleck Center, the hub of activity for the residential living crowd.

The COVID-19 pandemic had disrupted nearly every aspect of life and in-person exercise routines were no exception. Introduction of the Strength & Stretch exercise class at the village came at the perfect time this fall and provided the perfect opportunity for Noll to meet residents.

The class takes place in a fun and relaxed setting where residents stretch and strengthen all of their major muscle groups. “The focus is on meeting residents on their level, developing comradery and making their well-being a priority,” emphasized Noll.

“A new and fresh program was just what the residents needed to get out of their cottages and start moving again,” Noll said. “With only two requirements for class – have fun and move – everyone is able to benefit from this class!”

Vaccinated residents thankful to reconnect with one another

“Residents were thankful we were able to provide the vaccine to them on site,” said **Jan Kessel**, executive director. “However, the best part was that they were able to reconnect with one another. They had not been together for a whole year and were so happy to see each other!”

In the spring, with most residents fully vaccinated and county positivity rates at some of their lowest levels, residents were able to resume many of the fun activities and engaging programs they had missed for more than a year. One of the first outings for

residents from The Village at Shrewsbury was a trip to Perrydell Farm and Dairy in York, where they enjoyed delicious homemade ice cream and the company of friends and neighbors once again.

Participants of the monthly Craft Corner also were able to gather in person once again, as they did in June to create beautiful marbled bookmarks. Live entertainment resumed with a performance by SweetLife Music that got residents up and dancing to a mix of songs from the 50s, 60s and 70s.

Planning underway for cottage expansion project and skilled care center renovation

Now that SpiriTrust Lutheran® is emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, planning has resumed on two construction projects that upon completion will enable SpiriTrust Lutheran to provide services to more individuals in the greater Gettysburg and Chambersburg areas. The first project, renovating the 51-year old skilled care center at The Village at Gettysburg, is awaiting final approval from state regulators. The second project, expanding residential living at The Village Luther Ridge, is in the design phase.

The skilled care renovations will begin in early 2022 and take nine to 12 months to complete. The spring groundbreaking for the cottage expansion project is dependent on a final approval by the SpiriTrust Lutheran Board of Directors in February and permit approvals by local authorities.

“These projects emphasize our commitment to serving more individuals in the communities we already serve with an emphasis on quality and excellence in the services and amenities we provide,” said **Robert L. Rundle**, President/CEO. “The

skilled care renovations will result in 38 private rooms and 11 semi-private rooms for a total of 60 licensed beds. The tentative site plan at Luther Ridge includes a combination of 60 single and duplex cottages.”

“It has been quite some time since we last made improvements of this magnitude at the skilled care center,” said **Melissa Williams**, VP of Sales & Marketing.

“The current plans call for the addition of a spa which would add to the warmth and home-like environment of the center once the renovations are completed. An occupational therapy apartment also will assist people in achieving their optimal outcomes and successfully return home.”

“The new cottages at Luther Ridge will be located on the south side of the campus beyond the skilled care center and personal care residence,” said Rundle.

“The residential living expansion will not only increase resident census, but will help to sustain the village financially and help ensure our ability to provide benevolent care to those who are

rightfully in need of this assistance.”

The Luther Ridge plan also includes the possibility of adding 18 hybrid or mini apartment dwellings. A hybrid apartment is a cluster of apartments built around a central common area while a mini apartment building is a smaller grouping of apartments built more compact and arranged on top of one another.

“Prospective cottage residents will have two new floorplans from which to choose in addition to existing floorplans,” emphasized Williams. “All floorplans will have two baths, as well as kitchens featuring the option of a breakfast bar or island.”

“The expansion will give more opportunities for people to join a community of like-minded individuals,” Williams added. “When someone moves into one of our communities, they will have peace of mind of knowing there’s a full continuum of care and support from onsite personal care and skilled care to in-home support and home health care.”

GENEROSITY, continued from page 8

Residents say generosity, comfort and support kept them safe and healthy

The normally lively Glatfelter Center, the hub of activity at The Village at Sprenkle Drive, was eerily quiet. Month after month, there were no engaging activities in the community room, no working out at the fitness center, no playing cards or shooting pool with friends and no delicious meals and good conversation at Rachel and Reuben’s.

The precautions to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and long periods of staying at home could have led to isolation and loneliness. Instead, cottage and apartment residents at The Village at Sprenkle Drive say the generosity, comfort and support offered by team members and fellow residents helped them stay safe and

healthy and feel more connected to the community than ever.

“What I have discovered is how important the residents and staff are to me,” said one resident. “SpiriTrust Lutheran® is a crucial cog in my daily life. The extra mile the staff has gone is so obviously apparent to help ‘ease the pain’ of isolation. I cannot place a value on how well the administration and staff have responded.”

“We have always felt we were safe from the virus and have been good with our stay-at-home life,” said another resident. “Our children have felt the same way with us here. It is a huge amount of relief for them. We can only feel that we are fortunate to be here.”

The Country Store reopening reinvigorates community

The reopening of The Country Store at The Village at Utz Terrace in August reinvigorated the community. The store, which offers practical items, gift ideas, seasonal decorations, jewelry, cards, puzzles, candy and more, has been an important part of the fabric of the village since opening for the first time in September 2008. In March 2020, the store closed due to safety concerns associated with the pandemic.

“After such a long time of being closed, it is such a breath of fresh air to have people start coming back in the store,” said Sandy Langknecht, who is also a village resident. Langknecht, who co-manages the store with Betty Price, said the best part of The Country Store is quite simply – the people.

“We are beginning to see people feeling more comfortable with going out,” Langknecht said. “That’s what we want. It is not about selling goods. It is about the people and the community.”

In November, The Country Store sold more than \$370 worth of holiday and fall items in just two hours during a trunk show held in the personal care residence. Residents enjoyed the opportunity to shop for Christmas gifts, birthday gifts and seasonal decorations.

“It was something that was truly appreciated and needed,” said Langknecht.

A fighting spirit

At SpiriTrust Lutheran®, those we serve and those who serve refuse to let COVID-19 win

As 2021 began, the unprecedented scientific achievement of the COVID-19 vaccines brought optimism that life would begin to look a little more like it did before the pandemic began in March 2020. In February, we celebrated the team members and residents who rolled up their sleeves in December and January to receive the vaccine. In March, we resumed indoor visitation at our life plan communities, allowing residents to hug their loved ones after spending much of the previous year apart. Volunteers once again were able to share their time, talents and skills on a limited basis. Residents were able to get reacquainted with their neighbors and resume in-person life enrichment activities. While COVID-19 has continued to present challenges, the SpiriTrust Lutheran® family has refused to let the virus win and continually finds ways to uplift each other through thoughtful words, kind acts and fun celebrations.



SpiriTrust Lutheran® scored a victory in the battle against COVID-19 when skilled care residents and team members at The Village at Sprenkle Drive became the first of the agency's six life plan communities to receive their first dose the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine on December 28, 2020. **Missy Schultz, RN**, director of nursing, was among the first team members to receive the vaccine.



For achieving the top vaccine participation rate among our six life plan communities, team members at The Village at Gettysburg who had consented to being vaccinated against COVID-19 were treated to Farm Show Milkshakes on February 23. The Building & Grounds team – (L-R) **Mark Wagner, Bryan McCleaf, Wayne Slaybaugh, Fred Nelson** and **James Bixler** – celebrated giving a swift kick to this insidious virus by posing with their trophy.



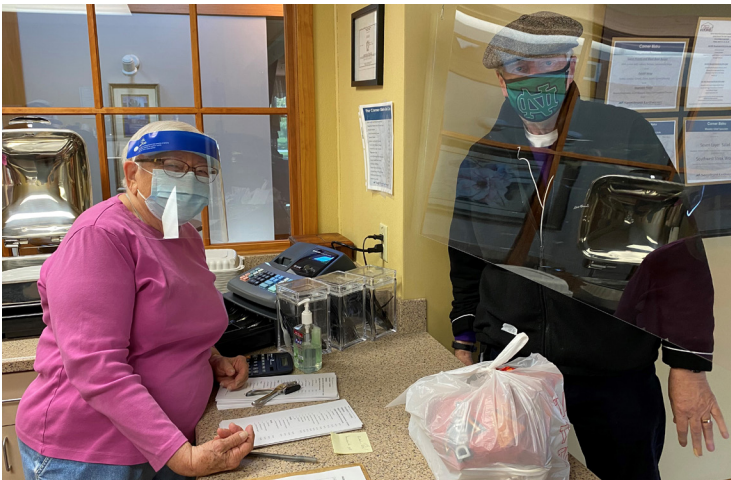
In March, **Rena Stare**, finance coordinator, led an uplifting effort to purchase daffodils for each skilled care, personal care and assisted living resident at our six life plan communities. She enlisted the help of friends, family and fellow team members at the Heusner Office Center for donations and their overwhelming response enabled her to purchase the daffodils. **Bob Rundle**, president/CEO, (not pictured) and **Bonnie Garner**, finance manager, (left) helped Rena (right) deliver the flowers to each community on March 22.



Team members at The Village at Kelly Drive, fully vaccinated against COVID-19, proudly wore their "Champions get vaccinated!" shirts. All SpiriTrust Lutheran® team members who consented to the vaccine received a shirt boldly announcing "I got my COVID-19 vaccine! Did you?" as a thank you for doing their part in the battle against COVID-19.



Irish eyes were smiling as team members at Spiritrust Lutheran®, The Village at Shrewsbury turned the personal care residence green for St. Patrick's Day.



In April, we began welcoming volunteers back to our life plan communities. Residential living resident **Jean Brake** said she was excited to resume her volunteer role at Spiritrust Lutheran®, The Village at Luther Ridge serving in The Corner Bistro. We were grateful to have volunteers beginning to safely return to doing what they do best – touching the lives of our residents and team members.



Twenty-three residents in the Gitt Court cottages at Spiritrust Lutheran®, The Village at Utz Terrace were grateful for the opportunity "Gitt Together" to reconnect with their friends and neighbors during a Memorial Day block party. It had been more than a year since many of the residents had spent time with one another.



In March, residents, family members and team members at our six life plan communities were grateful that we were able to begin easing our visitation guidelines and allow residents to schedule in-person time with their loved ones. Family visitors at Spiritrust Lutheran®, The Village at Luther Ridge were welcomed back to the skilled care & rehabilitation center on March 22 under an arch of festive blue balloons! **Brandi Hollar**, skilled care life enrichment partner, joined residential living resident **Wayne Criswell** in celebrating his in-person visit with his wife.



In October, our six life plan communities enjoyed a fun-filled week of Halloween activities. At Spiritrust Lutheran®, The Village at Utz Terrace, **Heather Sztobryn, RN**, residential living wellness nurse; and **Dan Golliday**, director of facilities, and fellow team members, dressed in creative and colorful costumes, paraded through the personal care residence and skilled care center delivering treats to appreciative residents.

100% of team members vaccinated or exempt

We are pleased to report that 100% of our 1,100+ team members received the COVID-19 vaccine or received an exemption for medical or religious reasons. This is a major milestone in protecting the health and well-being of those we serve and our team members.

Despite “breakthrough infections” of vaccinated individuals, statistics show the Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines have been effective at preventing infection, serious illness and death. According to recent data published by the CDC, unvaccinated people are at 6.1 times greater risk of contracting COVID-19 and 11.3 times greater risk of dying from the virus than fully vaccinated people.

Whether you are unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, fully vaccinated or in need of or considering a booster shot, the chart below provides helpful information about all three vaccines. If you have questions regarding vaccination, consult your healthcare provider. The vaccine is the best way to prevent the spread of the virus and potentially save yourself from serious illness or even death.



Lauren Eriksen, life enrichment director at Spiritrust Lutheran®, The Village at Kelly Drive, displays her bandage after receiving a COVID-19 booster dose in November.

| Pfizer-BioNTech | Moderna | Johnson & Johnson/Janssen |
|--|--|---|
| Who Can Get this Vaccine | | |
| Individuals age 5 and older | Individuals age 18 and older | Individuals age 18 and older |
| Stage of Approval/Authorization | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received FDA approval for individuals age 16 and older on August 23, 2021. Received FDA Emergency Use Authorization for individuals ages 12-15 on May 10, 2021. Received FDA Emergency Use Authorization for children ages 5-11 on October 29, 2021. | Received FDA Emergency Use Authorization for individuals age 18 and older on December 18, 2020. | Received FDA Emergency Use Authorization for individuals age 18 and older on February 27, 2021. |
| Number of Doses | | |
| Two doses given three weeks (21 days) apart <i>(Children ages 5-11 receive one-third of the adult dose)</i> | Two doses given four weeks (28 days) apart | One dose |
| When Fully Vaccinated | | |
| Two weeks after your second dose | Two weeks after your second dose | Two weeks after your dose |
| Additional Dose | | |
| Moderately to severely immunocompromised people should get an additional dose (third dose) at least 28 days after their second dose. | Moderately to severely immunocompromised people should get an additional dose (third dose) at least 28 days after their second dose. | Not recommended at this time |
| Booster Dose | | |
| A booster dose is recommended at least six months after your second dose for individuals age 18 and older. You can get any of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines for your booster dose. | A booster dose is recommended at least six months after your second dose for individuals age 18 and older. You can get any of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines for your booster dose. | A booster dose is recommended at least two months after your first dose for individuals age 18 and older. You can get any of the authorized COVID-19 vaccines for your booster dose. |

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention | As of December 1, 2021

SpiriTrust Lutheran® blessed by dedicated volunteers across the agency

In March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to suspend in-person volunteer assignments, we had no way of knowing how long it would be until we could welcome volunteers back to our life plan communities and into the homes of our hospice clients. Although not back in full force by any measure, we are grateful for the dedicated and loyal individuals who have stood on the sidelines waiting to serve and those who have been answering the call to serve as permitted.

“Workforce shortages make the future of volunteers even more important. We are blessed to have volunteers assisting in our dining rooms to help serve meals to our residents,” said **Jan Kessel**, executive director, The Village at Shrewsbury. “The ability of volunteers to help offset the workload of licensed and certified nursing team members helps to improve the quality of care that we can provide. We are most grateful for the relationships our volunteers build with our team members and our residents. They really are a part of our family.”

Pam Conrad, executive director, The Village at Kelly Drive, concurs with Kessel saying, “We are most grateful for the friendships and relationships we have established with our volunteers. They are very much a part of our family here at Kelly Drive and we look forward to their visits. We will continue to depend on our volunteers to supplement the programs and services we offer to our residents, provide socialization for our residents – which is a great addition to the quality of our residents’ care – and well-being. Our volunteers also are wonderful ambassadors within the greater community, as they share with their friends and family about the services we provide.”

Volunteers fulfill a variety of roles and perform many functions at our life plan communities and for our hospice clients and their families. If you would like to become a volunteer, visit our website at <https://www.spiritrustlutheran.org/volunteer-2/>.

Here is a sampling of the volunteer opportunities available at SpiriTrust Lutheran®.

SpiriTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice

- Place phone calls to bereaved clients at quarterly intervals for the first year following the death of the loved one
- Sew memory bears and pillows
- Write poems, notes and prayers of encouragement and support to hospice aides, nurses, social workers, chaplains, bereavement coordinators, volunteer coordinators and hospice supervisors each quarter

Life Plan Communities

- Serve as greeters and COVID-19 screeners
- Assist with craft classes, parties and games
- Visit residents
- Provide musical entertainment
- Serve as pianists and assistants for worship
- Deliver beverages to residents
- Assist during meals
- Fold laundry and mend clothes
- Knit, crochet and sew lap blankets, walker bags and dining scarves
- Provide pet therapy
- Assist residents with personal technology questions
- Send cards to residents
- Serve at The Corner Bistro (Luther Ridge)
- Help with grocery/shopping trips
- Accompany residents on trips to medical appointments

As for predicting what the role of future volunteers will look like, long-time volunteer coordinator, **Linda Beaver**, The Village at Luther Ridge, said, “With baby boomers continuing to retire, I see a great resource of individuals with diverse skills and life experiences finding themselves with hours to fill. That is an exciting prospect! If we encourage volunteers to come and share their passions, knowledge and expertise with our residents and team members, it will be a win-win. Volunteers are apt to feel more connected, valued, and fulfilled when we encourage them to bring something new and different to our community. I think allowing volunteers to do that more will further enrich the lives of our residents and team members.”

Our volunteer coordinators say they are most grateful to our volunteers for the following reasons...

“I am most grateful for the dedication, patience, understanding and resiliency our volunteers continue to show. I am also appreciative of the faithful members of the SpiriTrust Lutheran® Chambersburg Auxiliary who raise money throughout the year to support benevolence and other needs at SpiriTrust Lutheran.”

– **Linda Beaver**, The Village at Luther Ridge

“I am most grateful for the volunteers that I can always count on! If I need a volunteer, I have a few people I can call who will help at a moment’s notice, but most of the volunteers at Kelly Drive & Sprenkle Drive actually fit that description!”

– **Bob Gibson**, The Villages at Kelly Drive & Sprenkle Drive

“Their heart for serving, their willingness to bring joy to the lives of our residents and willingness to support staff.”

– **Teresa Stickles**, The Villages at Shrewsbury & Utz Terrace

“They are people of constant positive action.”

– **Kathryn Yaroschuk**, SpiriTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice

Technology enhances life enrichment programming

Enhanced use of technology played a key role in supporting two of our seven dimensions of wellness – physical and spiritual.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, our life enrichment teams expanded their use of technology not only to unite residents and their families, but also to enrich the lives of residents in many other ways. Video calls, utilizing Zoom and FaceTime, provided a means for residents to have social interactions with family and friends no matter the location or time of day and for residents from all six communities to participate virtually in physical and spiritual programs without any risk posed by coronavirus.

The virtual classes have opened “a whole other world of opportunity,” said **Jessica Sheahan**, life enrichment director at The Village at Gettysburg.

Her colleagues enthusiastically embraced her idea of pulling together the six life enrichment teams to share programming to fill voids created by the pandemic. The life enrichment directors tapped into each other’s ingenuity and strengths to offer a variety of virtual programs from chair yoga and strength training to devotions and brain games.

“It seemed logical to pool our resources to create a master schedule to fill the need on all of our campuses rather than trying to navigate the seas on our own,” Sheahan explained.

“COVID reinforced the power of technology and how to connect with people,” added **Lauren Eriksen**, life enrichment director, The Village at Kelly Drive. “It was challenging to use at first, but it made a difference. We learned from it and it is now an integral part of our life enrichment programming.”

Sheahan teaches hybrid fitness classes, which include a mix of in-person and virtual participants. Some of the virtual participants are residents at Gettysburg who enjoy taking classes from the comfort of their own cottages, as well as residents from other communities.



Ginny Kulinski, a resident at The Village at Sprenkle Drive, has been attending virtual fitness led by Sheahan for a year now, noting the classes have been “very welcoming.” She attends fit medley, circuit strength and chair yoga Zoom classes through a click of a button on her computer.

“It is so simple to attend a class,” said Kulinski. “I am a person who thrives on exercise. When it was missing from my life, I felt a void. Now I don’t.”

When Sheahan had the chance to meet her virtual class regular attendee at the agency’s memory walk this past October, she surprised Kulinski with vibrant dahlias from her home garden. “It was really nice to meet in person. I would love to have her attend regular in-person classes,” Sheahan said. “She has been an anchor for my Zoom classes.”

Kulinski responded by saying how surreal it was to see Sheahan beyond the little box on a screen.

Deborah Harrison, a resident at The Village at Kelly Drive, also has been

Jessica Sheahan, life enrichment director at The Village at Gettysburg, teaches hybrid fitness classes, which include a mix of in-person and virtual participants. When Sheahan had the chance to meet virtual class regular attendee **Ginny Kulinski** at the agency’s memory walk this past October, she surprised Kulinski with vibrant dahlias from her home garden.

attending fitness classes from her home using Zoom. “I think the availability of it has been wonderful, especially during COVID.”

In addition to fitness, **Michelle Dougherty**, life enrichment leader, The Village at Utz Terrace, saw an opportunity to offer virtual social hours and crafting groups to residential living residents through Zoom.

“The hybrid programming we now offer since reopening the community center has allowed residents to engage safely at their own comfort level in two ways,” Dougherty said. “It allows us to offer in-person engagement for residents who feel comfortable and are ready to be in a small group setting. It also virtually engages those who prefer to stay in their apartments or cottages, but want a chance to engage in the activities they enjoy as well as socialize with peers.”

The Rev. Tricia McMackin, chaplain at The Villages at Kelly Drive and Sprenkle Drive, expanded her chaplaincy role during the pandemic when she became chaplain at The Village at Kelly Drive this past January. Although she was not able to visit in-person at the Kelly Drive campus due to COVID-19, Eriksen

See **TECHNOLOGY**, page 17

Spiritual support helps residents and clients persevere through pandemic

“There have been many hard times since the pandemic started and people have suffered greatly, but we have been able to persevere and are in a better place spiritually than last year,” said **The Rev. Aaron Cope**, chaplain at The Villages at Shrewsbury and Utz Terrace. “We have each other and we have God’s promise to be faithful to us always. God didn’t promise us there would not be difficult times, but he did promise us that he would be with us through it.”

“Because of the vaccine we are protected in a way they were not a year ago and were able to resume in-person worship services earlier this year,” added Cope. “Gathering together for worship has helped our residents tremendously, as have our special services of remembrance.”

“Remembrance has always been a powerful tool to keep the memory of a loved one alive and this was never more evident than during the pandemic,” said **The Rev. Amy Wagner**, chaplain at The Villages at Luther Ridge and Gettysburg. “Due to COVID-19 and other factors this past year, we felt more loss at SpiriTrust Lutheran than we would normally experience.”

“When you are grieving, it is nice to lean on others for support as you work toward closure,” added Wagner. “Not being able to grieve in a public forum like a church or a gravesite service makes the grieving process harder.”

Each year on All Saints Sunday, our chaplains traditionally hold a Service of Remembrance at each life plan community to remember those who have gone before us. Several communities hold services of remembrance at other times of the year as well. **The Rev. Tricia McMackin**, chaplain at The Villages at Kelly Drive and Sprenkle Drive, also incorporates remembrance and loss during Sunday worship services throughout the year.

“We take a moment to remember residents who have passed recently and let them share memories of the person who passed away,” McMackin said. “It helps people to talk about how they knew the person and reminisce about their shared experiences,

whether the person was a roommate or someone who enjoyed similar activities.”

In 2020, we did not hold in-person services due to COVID-19; however, a video of the services provided a tangible means to remember those we lost. Wagner recalled how meaningful it was for residents and family members to have that acknowledgment that we had not forgotten their loved ones and friends. This year, we were fortunate to be able to host the services of remembrance in-person.

Earlier this year when we were not permitted to hold in-person worship services, all three chaplains collaborated with the Communications & Public Relations team to produce Holy Week worship service videos. “The videos provided a means for those we serve to worship and celebrate Christ’s resurrection, even though it was not possible to be together physically,” Cope said.

“It was also a time for the chaplains to come together, have fellowship with one another and support each other,” added Cope. “We were able to talk, laugh and support each other when the camera wasn’t rolling.”

The role of the chaplain on the hospice team differs somewhat from that of a chaplain in a life plan community in that hospice chaplains administer to the spiritual and emotional needs of clients and families, as well as members of the hospice team. Hospice chaplains pray, read scripture, sing, offer pastoral counseling, actively listen, provide a shoulder to cry on, help clients find closure and assist families in the bereavement process.

They even add a dose of humor and creativity at times, said **The Rev. Ricky McCarl**, hospice chaplain. “One of my personal goals is to bring joy and humor everywhere I go because if there is one thing we all need in the midst of the work we do, it is a good laugh here and there.”

On a more somber note hospice chaplain **The Rev. Karen Brown** said, “At the onset of pandemic, many healthcare settings denied chaplains access to their facilities to minister to those in need of spiritual support. During these times, prayers, phone support and video conferences helped

us reach those clients. Since the vaccine became available we have been given greater access to medical facilities. The one remaining obstacle occurs when a call is made for a chaplain to visit a client who is in a critical hour and we are delayed in ministering or comforting families due to rapid testing and screening requirements.”

“Being prohibited from visiting many facilities was a significant challenge to our work and presented a number of issues,” concurred McCarl. In some cases, we had to get creative. One family requested last rites for their loved one, but the facility would not budge. I was able to arrange with the funeral home to anoint the body immediately after death, providing the family with some comfort at that difficult time. Although that was a first for me, it is an example of how we have strived diligently to provide the same level of care to clients and families despite pandemic restrictions.”

Both Brown and McCarl are firm in their belief that God is present during the hospice experience.

Brown shared an uplifting experience that occurred during a client visit at a critical moment of life. “The client had dementia and responded with only faint humming sighs to the questions I had asked up to that point”, said Brown. “I finally asked, ‘Do you believe that Jesus died and rose again for your sins? Do you accept Him as your Lord and Savior?’ Without hesitation, the client responded with a confident and clear, ‘Yes!’, but every response after that point returned to faint humming and sighs. At the memorial service, the client’s daughter shared how her parent was not religious while she was growing up so she was not going to have a memorial service. However, after witnessing those final moments, God was able to get ahold of her heart, too.”

McCarl praised his fellow hospice team members for their bravery and commitment during the pandemic, saying, “Our nurses, social workers and aides have made huge sacrifices to make the suffering of others more bearable and in that I have seen God revealed in mighty ways.

Caregivers and families share insight into home care & hospice

Hospice nurse says there is much to learn from those dying

I have been a hospice nurse for 21 years with SpiriTrust Lutheran® Home Care & Hospice. I have provided care to many clients as they transitioned to hospice care. During this time, I have learned many lessons from dying clients and their families. I have learned what was truly important in their lives and what did not make any difference as they lay in their beds in their last days. I have always taken more away from these home visits than I ever give.

There is so much to learn from a client in their last days. I love listening to the "I love you", "I forgive you" and "I remember when..." heartfelt thoughts spoken by clients. It is so important for people to have those conversations but many do not. Hospice gives our clients the chance to have these conversations while we control the symptoms of their terminal illness so they can enjoy and have some quality of life in their last months of life. As hospice caregivers, we encourage and educate families to have these conversations. This is a very intimate time for clients and family members and to be a witness to these conversations is a true honor.

You cannot work in hospice and not have a strong faith. During my time as a hospice nurse, I have had the profound experience of two clients awakening from a deep coma and telling me what their transition to heaven was like. Both of these clients were upset they were still here. They did pass within 24 hours of awakening, but their words were amazing and the love they said they felt as they transitioned was like no other here on earth.

Just recently, I admitted a client who had been under the care of another hospice for two months. The family members said they had more support and education in the first hour of service from SpiriTrust Lutheran® than they did in two months with their previous agency.

I am so proud to work for a reputable

agency like SpiriTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice that has dignity and respects its clients and their families.

*Lisa Beaver, RN
Hospice Nurse
SpiriTrust Lutheran® Home Care & Hospice*



Social worker describes gift of presence

I never thought I could handle the sadness of death and dying. I never imagined myself working in hospice, but here I am working in hospice and loving what I do.

In my early days as a hospice social worker, I recall going on my first visit to a client who was actively dying. I was shocked to hear my preceptor say these are her favorite visits. We sat with this woman, who would otherwise have been alone at the time, providing what I call "the gift of presence" – holding her hand, playing music and giving gentle reassurance and encouragement. Afterward, I was still unsure why she would say those are her favorite visits – we did not really 'do' anything.

Now, seven years later, end-of-life visits are my favorite visits – especially with family present. Visits with just the client are peaceful. They allow me the opportunity to provide comfort and the gift of presence at the bedside through relaxing music, a friendly voice and the warm touch of a gentle hand. However, visits with both the client and family present are different. Love, laughter and tears fill the time as family members recount stories and memories of their loved one. This is what the end of life should feel like – comfortable and surrounded by love. The end of life is as important as the beginning of life and I am grateful to experience it with each person under my care.

*Kaitlyn Nicewonger, MSW, LSW
Medical Social Worker
SpiriTrust Lutheran® Home Care & Hospice*

Hospice philosophy provides assurance to family

Across our service lines you will find many

examples of our direct caregivers supporting our mission, vision and core values in the daily care they provide to those in need. November is National Home Care & Hospice Month so it seems fitting to acknowledge hospice team members **Lisa Beaver, Barbara Kozak, Megan Booher, Joshua Reinard** and **Donna Shoop** for the remarkable difference they made recently in the life of a hospice client and family. According to **Kathleen M. Shroyer, BSN, RN**, director of Clinical Services for SpiriTrust Lutheran® Home Care & Hospice, the family of the client recognized this team of dedicated caregivers for the support, compassion and empathy they provided to a hospice client who was transitioning to hospice care.

In October, the hospice team admitted the client amidst concerns the family had in regards to making sure they had the necessary support to transition their loved one to hospice care. During the admission process, the family said they felt they were not getting the care and support they and the client needed prior to contacting SpiriTrust Lutheran. After a review of our hospice philosophy, the family said they felt assured we would provide the care and support their loved one, who was declining rapidly, would need during this end-of-life transition.

From the outset, it seemed as though the family could not express its gratitude enough for the care and support they and the client were receiving from our hospice team. The client's family was appreciative that their loved one was able to pass peacefully at home with many family members present due to the care and support provided by the hospice team.

Family expresses gratitude

This is long overdue, but I wanted to say how much we were blessed by all of you during my dad's (*Bob Gray, Fayetteville*) hospice time last summer. He passed in August. You were so kind and compassionate during such an incredibly difficult and heartbreaking time. I have a whole new level of respect for

See **INSIGHT**, page 17

Cancellation of signature events cuts into fundraising opportunities

Appeals aim to bolster funds that enable us to serve some of our most vulnerable residents and clients

Keeping the safety of our community at the forefront, we made the difficult decision to cancel both of our annual signature fundraising events, the Cornerstone Dinner and the SpiriTrust Lutheran® Hospice Golf Tournament, for the second time since the start of the pandemic. Limited in-person contact with residents, donors and business partners due to COVID-19 along with these cancellations unfavorably affected our 2021 charitable gift income.

“It is very important that we be able to cover our costs to be a viable, long-term agency,” said **Rob Bowen**, treasurer, SpiriTrust Lutheran® Board of Trustees. “The cost of the pandemic has been enormous. It has cut into several of our opportunities to raise money to support our services.”

Since its inception in 2004, the Cornerstone Dinner has raised nearly \$2.9 million to support our programs and services that serve some of our most vulnerable populations. Since 1981, the Hospice Golf Tournament has raised funds to provide care to hospice clients who lack insurance and do not have the resources to pay for the care they need.

Although we could not gather in person for these signature events, donors continue

| How Benevolent Care Dollars are Spent at SpiriTrust Lutheran | |
|--|--------------------|
| Program | \$ Amount |
| Skilled Care | \$5.75 million |
| Personal Care/Assisted Living | \$600,000 |
| Residential Living | \$50,000 |
| Home Care & Hospice/LIFE | \$500,000 |
| Total | \$6,900,000 |

to answer our call for support to help us overcome some of the financial challenges presented by the pandemic. Through a combination of personal outreach to past event sponsors, appeal letters to present, past and prospective donors, and two videos produced by the Communications & Public Relations team, the SpiriTrust Lutheran® Office of Philanthropy launched two appeals focusing on the Hospice Benevolence Fund and Benevolent Care Fund. These critical funds enable our agency to provide services to residents and clients who cannot afford them.

Benevolent Care Fund

An end-of-year appeal launched in November focused on our Benevolent Care Fund, which benefits residents of our six life plan communities who, through no fault of their own, have outlived their financial resources or cannot afford the services they need.

If someone outlives their resources and is not able to pay the full cost of their care, not only do we cover their costs, but we preserve their dignity and continue to provide their

care in the same compassionate and caring manner without their friends and caregivers ever knowing their need for benevolence.

“All of our residents at SpiriTrust Lutheran are eligible to apply for benevolent care at any level of care,” said **Pam Conrad**, executive director, SpiriTrust Lutheran®, The Village at Kelly Drive. “We do not ask anyone to leave. We cover anything that is needed to live a healthy and safe life.”

“By making it easy and by making it so private, it gives residents some peace and comfort to know they will always have someone take care of them,” said **Lucille Demyanovich**, a resident at The Village at Kelly Drive. “And as you get older, you need that assurance.”

Last year SpiriTrust Lutheran® provided more than \$6.9 million dollars in benevolent care. Currently, 52 residents are receiving benevolent care support in our personal care/assisted living residences and 55% of our skilled care residents have Medicaid as their payment source.

“You never know when it’s you or a loved one that is going to need the benevolent care of SpiriTrust Lutheran,” said **Larry Young**, chair, SpiriTrust Lutheran® Board of Directors. “I’ll use my mother-in-law as an example. She lived at SpiriTrust Lutheran and was supporting herself for years. Then the money eventually ran out. As far as

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INSIGHT, continued from page 16

those of you working in this field. It take a very special person to do this line of work. So, on days you may feel like you’re not sure if you’re making a difference, trust me, you are! You are front line workers. May God bless each and every one of you.

Sincerely,
Tammy Hartman
(Robert & Nancy Gray’s daughter)

TECHNOLOGY, continued from page 14

arranged FaceTime calls for McMackin to meet and build relationships with residents as a way to stay connected with those we serve.

“Technology gave us the ability to be in touch, even though we couldn’t physically be face-to-face,” McMackin said, noting the virtual calls were her primary means of communication with individuals in the personal care residence for the first three months after she began serving as chaplain. In addition, a weekly virtual Bible hour allowed her to fulfill spiritual needs of

residential living residents during this time.

During the height of the pandemic, McMackin started to record her Sunday service as a podcast, a tradition she has continued so residents and team members can download her services when they are not able to attend in-person. Her podcast offers another opportunity for residents to stay in touch with their spiritual side. McMackin credited the life enrichment team for helping her use technology and find innovative ways to reach those we serve. “I’m very grateful for the life enrichment team for helping me integrate technology into my work.”

Preparing for the Future

We never anticipated the dramatic changes COVID-19 brought to our daily lives during the last two years. As 2021 draws to a close, I am preparing for a new year filled with uncertainty. Even as some events are out of our control, there are steps we can take to mitigate a few things that we know will eventually happen.

As much as we hate to admit it...we are all getting older. At some point, the likelihood of experiencing a health issue increases. Eventually, we will all have to face the fact that someday we will not be here to care for our loved ones.

I finally forced myself sit down this year to review my estate plan and put it in writing. Yes, I had a simple will in place, which I have already rewritten 2-3 times over the last several decades. However, there were other issues that I had simply neglected to either do, review, or change in a long time.

As a never-married, single woman with no children with a mother living in another state, who would be making decisions for me should I become incapacitated or die unexpectedly? I took the time to name beneficiaries of all of my assets including bank accounts, retirement plans, investment accounts, life insurance policies, etc. I created a document with all of those account numbers, contact information, user names and passwords, etc. so my mother has everything in one place.

That information is a gift that I can leave to my mother. Otherwise, she would be at a loss as to what assets I hold and how I want them distributed to family members, my church, and ministries that I support.



It was time consuming and the exercise forced me to deliberate and make some difficult decisions; however,

I feel good about being prepared for the future... no matter what it holds. I hope you have your estate plans in place but, if you do not, the start of a new year is a good time to take care of those decisions or review and update your current plan.

I would encourage you to remember your church and charities that are important to you in your estate plan. Residents and community members have blessed SpiriTrust Lutheran by leaving legacy gifts through their estate. It is as simple as naming SpiriTrust Lutheran as a beneficiary in your will or a financial account, with either a percentage or fixed dollar amount of your choosing.

I truly enjoy sitting down with folks to talk about their charitable goals and how they can best achieve them through their estate plans. I would invite you to contact me for a no obligation and confidential discussion. Sometimes just talking is the best way to start...and we all certainly need the fresh start a new year offers us.

Deborah J. Strong

Deborah Strong
VP of Philanthropy

NOTE: Deborah joined the executive leadership team in June. She is responsible for overseeing the daily operations of the Office of Philanthropy and directing the strategic planning, marketing and external relations of the agency's philanthropic initiatives. To learn more about Deborah visit <https://www.spiritrustlutheran.org/about/>.

Combined Brndjar and Weissgerber endowment funds expand opportunities for nursing team members

With the blessing and approval of the Brndjar family, SpiriTrust Lutheran® rolled \$93,000 in principal from The Rev. Dr. John M. Brndjar Endowment Fund into the Weissgerber Continuing Education Fund. The combined funds, totaling \$165,000, will provide more resources for scholarships for committed team members who wish to strengthen their skills and advance in their careers.

Established in 1999 at the time of his retirement, the fund honors **The Rev. Dr. John M. Brndjar**, former president & CEO. Proceeds from the fund supported our life enhancing programs until the last program closed this past June.

The Weissgerber Continuing Education Fund also honors a former executive of the agency – **Sister Charlotte Weissgerber**, who served as the first executive director of Lutheran Welfare Service, the founding name of SpiriTrust Lutheran. The permanent fund, which remains open to additional contributions, distributes income each year to help attract and retain outstanding caregivers at SpiriTrust Lutheran. In honor of both of these remarkable leaders, we will now call the fund the Weissgerber/Brndjar Continuing Education Fund.

Contributions help members of the nursing team continue their pursuit of clinical excellence by providing funds for certified nursing assistant training, licensed practical nursing and/or registered nursing classes along with other professional development opportunities.

“We are so appreciative of having additional funds to help our staff reach their educational goals,” said **Carol Hess**, CHRO, VP of Human Resources. “These funds will enable more team members to get certified as nursing assistants and grow into LPNs and RNs and, therefore, better serve our residents and clients.”

If you are interested in learning more about the fund, please call 717.854.4425.



Follow us on social media to see all the wonderful things happening throughout SpiriTrust Lutheran.



Walk to End Alzheimer's

In addition to sponsoring the 2021 York and Adams/Franklin Walks to End Alzheimer's events, SpiriTrust Lutheran® hosted a local walk at The Village at Sprenkle Drive on October 20 in support of the Alzheimer's Association worldwide Walk to End Alzheimer's. In total, SpiriTrust Lutheran raised nearly \$9,000 for Alzheimer's care, support and research!



VIDEO: Participants explain what inspires them to walk in this event.
<https://youtu.be/MSFvPi6wsmA>



End of Summer Bash

The Village at Kelly Drive residents and team members closed out summer with an afternoon full of fun, laughter and games with friends during their End of Summer Bash! **Clarence Brenneman**, director of Building & Grounds, bravely entered the dunk tank and was subsequently dropped in the water after a perfect throw by resident **Helen Quickel**! Other activities included corn hole, ladder golf, a smash wall, miniature golf, K-PETS and ice cream treats to enjoy.

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I could tell, the level of care, the level of concern, the level of simply love and affection that was shown to her never changed.”

To learn more about the Benevolent Care Fund, watch our video on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/BUCPKN0cSg8>.

Hospice Benevolence Fund

To help minimize the impact of the cancellation of the Hospice Golf Tournament, the Office of Philanthropy launched an appeal in September focusing on the Hospice Benevolence Fund, which offers hope to hospice clients who cannot afford their much needed end-of-life care and comfort. Each year, SpiriTrust Lutheran provides more than half a million dollars in benevolent care for hospice clients and their families.

Donations to the Hospice Benevolence Fund help provide in-home medical care, spiritual and emotional support and caregiver respite to those who need help during one of the

most difficult times of life. “Hospice care is a team approach. We are not there just for the client, we are there for the caregiver, too,” said **Lisa Beaver, RN**, hospice nurse.

The hospice interdisciplinary team is comprised of the medical director, the client’s primary physician, nurses, social workers, pharmacists, chaplains, home health aides, volunteers and therapists are available 24 hours a day to support clients and their family members.

Appreciative of the care his wife Bonnie received, **Bob Wolff** has donated to the Hospice Benevolence Fund for the last three years on their wedding anniversary. When the couple, who had been married for 51 years, learned in 2019 that Bonnie was dying from a disease she had been battling her entire life, they knew they needed help but were not sure where to turn. Bob sought the guidance of a close friend, who recommended the couple contact SpiriTrust Lutheran® Home Care & Hospice to care for Bonnie.

“Bonnie was able to pass at home, which was her wish, instead of in the hospital,” Bob said. “Debbie (*SpiriTrust Lutheran Home Care & Hospice*) was an angel. She not only took care of Bonnie, she took care of us, the family. She comforted us and explained everything that was going on.”

After Bonnie passed away, Bob continued to receive support from our hospice program through our grief support services, which are available at no cost and open to anyone in the community who has experienced a loss.

To learn more about the Hospice Benevolence Fund, watch our video on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/jMofB4C4UU4>.

“Community support is vital to the fulfillment of our mission,” Bowen said. “It is so important we provide compassionate care to people as they age and at the end of their life, regardless of their age. I ask the community to stand behind us by putting dollars into these benevolent care funds to help us serve the people we are called to serve.”



1050 Pennsylvania Avenue | York, PA 17404
www.SpiritrustLutheran.org

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Merry Christmas!