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# spirit

M A G A Z I N E

*Celebrating the Spirit®*

## Symposium: Abundant Aging in the 21st Century

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# A WORD FROM THE CEO



Rev. Kenneth Daniel  
President and CEO

## TRANSFORMING AGING THROUGH EDUCATION, INNOVATION

As an organization with 100 years of experience in providing housing and other services for older adults, we see the call to teach what it means to age in the 21st century. Innovative technologies and practices will assist people living longer to enjoy more independence and stay engaged with their communities.

The Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging was launched in 2016 to recognize United Church Homes' most generous benefactor and to create a learning and teaching center where professionals, caregivers, ministers and others can work together to improve the quality of life for older adults.

The late Ruth Frost Parker, a business and church leader from Sandusky, Ohio, gave generously to United Church Homes over the years. Her generosity supported educational scholarships, leadership development and capital improvements, especially to Parkvue Community in Sandusky.

At the center's second annual Symposium that was held Oct. 20 in Columbus, United Church Homes leaders and experts in the fields of gerontology, healthcare and geriatrics discussed *Abundant Aging in the 21st Century*.

Keynote speaker Dr. Laura Carstensen, a longevity and aging expert, professor of psychology at Stanford University and founding director of the Stanford Center on Longevity in Stanford, California, enlightened the crowd by debunking myths and misconceptions about aging.

For example, she discussed the ideas that growing older is associated with loneliness and unhappiness, and that only the genetically blessed live well and long. Instead, Dr. Carstensen said seniors today are living longer, healthier and more productive lives than previous generations. She also said there are psychological and emotional benefits to growing older. She helped us see how this phenomenon is changing the way we view older adults, support them and continue to integrate their wisdom and needs into our society.

The mission of United Church Homes — to transform Aging by building a culture of community, wholeness and peace — demands we must change the way we think about aging.

Given the changes in the area of aging services and the rising number of older adults, United Church Homes' Parker Center seeks to educate the public and provide intellectual dialogue about older adults, the opportunities available to them, the challenges they face as they age and the impact longevity has on their lives.

By gathering thought leaders like Dr. Carstensen and others whose work impacts various aspects of elder living — physical, social and spiritual — we can provide a safe place for interprofessional dialogue and plan future efforts that create age-affirming communities and supportive services.



**ON THE COVER:**  
 Dr. Laura Carstensen, keynote speaker for the 2017 Symposium of the Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging on Oct. 20 in Columbus, Ohio.

# spirit MAGAZINE

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# 2017 SYMPOSIUM *Abundant Aging in the 21st Century*

*"When time is perceived as constrained, as it typically becomes as we grow older, people are motivated to focus on what is most important. They are more likely to invest in sure things, deepen existing relationships and savor life. Under these circumstances, people are less interested in banking information for a long and nebulous future and instead invest in pursuits that are emotionally meaningful."*

**Dr. Laura Carstensen, Keynote Speaker**

Experts in psychology, longevity and geriatrics discussed Abundant Aging in the 21st Century at the 2017 Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging second annual Symposium Oct. 20 in Columbus.



UNITED  
CHURCH  
HOMES

About 170 people attended the Symposium held at the Marriott Columbus University Area hotel, which featured education and discussion to help change the way people think about aging and older adults, said Rev. Beth Long-Higgins, executive director of the Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging. The keynote speaker was Dr. Laura Carstensen, a longevity and aging expert, who also is a professor of psychology at Stanford University and the founding director of the Stanford Center on Longevity in Stanford, California.





Fairhaven Community



Steering Committee, Campaign for Abundant Life

On Nov. 17, United Church Homes will kick off a five-year, \$20 million comprehensive Campaign for Abundant Life at the rededication of the Fairhaven Community campus in Upper Sandusky, Ohio.

United Church Homes recently completed a more than \$7 million, multiyear restoration project to enhance Fairhaven. The makeover included new resident rooms, a new memory support neighborhood, a new therapy center, a facelift for the auditorium, a renovated chapel and a renewal of the outside courtyard.

### A Ministry of Promise

United Church Homes began a century ago in Toledo, Ohio, as a faith-based ministry responding to the real needs of aging members of local congregations.

Today, in covenant with the United Church of Christ, United Church

Homes serves more than 4,600 residents in 72 communities in 14 states and two Native American nations. Of these, 59 are subsidized affordable housing settings serving more than 2,700 individuals.

United Church Homes upholds its long-standing promise to provide for residents who outlive their resources. It is committed to eliminating prejudice based on a person's age. It has adopted a policy of inclusion

# Celebrating the JOURNEY, Blessing the MINISTRY and Moving the MISSION into the Future

where all are welcome, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, ethnicity or religious background.

As United Church Homes launches its second century, we make a new promise for the years to come — to transform what it means to age by making older adulthood a time of abundance, personal achievement, meaning and importance. This is a promise for the future of aging that we all imagine.

### Envision

Imagine a world where life in retirement is filled with meaning, purpose and joy. Our society's older adults are energized and look forward with hope, anticipating a bright future. They feel secure in their ability to meet the inevitable changes and challenges that lie ahead. They face each new day with a sense of abundance.

Imagine a world where friendships, learning, exploration, creativity, personal and spiritual growth have no age or income limits. Fears of a loss of meaning, isolation, physical and cognitive decline and dependence are quieted by the prospect of living in community, wholeness and peace.

This is the world that United Church Homes envisions. This is the world we all want for our parents and ourselves.

*"Why this, why us, why now? Because we know we can do so much more. When we harness the talent in the organization, the dedication of our volunteers and the generosity of our benefactors, we can take our care of people to the next level.*

*"Why is it urgent? We see the need. We have the vision. Our donors can make this happen. This is a pivotal crossroads moment."*

**Rev. Kenneth Daniel,  
CEO/President**

*"This is truly important work we are called to do. It takes resources to truly transform aging and provide abundant life. When we look at the socioeconomic need, it will be tremendous."*

**James Henry,  
Chairman, Campaign for Abundant Life**

## Vision for the Future

We at United Church Homes have set our sights on 2027 to develop a 21st century continuum of residential settings that support independence and abundant life for individuals at all income levels.

## Abundant Life

- **Charitable care** for individuals who have exhausted their financial resources
- **Pastoral care** programs with full-time chaplains on each retirement campus
- Model programs of **leadership training and staff development**
- **Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging** to share resources and innovations with the broader community
- **Affordable housing and healthcare services** that are inclusive

## Affordable Housing Settings with Support Services

- Capital upgrades that preserve independence, provide access to community resources and respond to urgent needs
- Programs and services that enhance quality of life, leading to an abundant life of community, wholeness and peace for affordable housing residents
- Sustainable programs that serve Native American nations

## Renewed Campuses

- More independent living options
- Supportive services that preserve independence
- Technology-driven products and services

## Transformed Healthcare Communities

- Appealing accommodations; more private rooms
- Short-term therapies coordinated with acute care
- Memory support and behavioral care

At United Church Homes, we are passionate about our vision for the future. Over the next five years, we will raise \$20 million to transform the lives of people in our residential and healthcare communities, affordable housing settings and in the community-at-large.

**To learn more about the Campaign for Abundant Life at United Church Homes, contact Gloria Hurwitz, CFRE, vice president of advancement and communications, at [ghurwitz@uchinc.org](mailto:ghurwitz@uchinc.org) or 740.751.8702.**



**Robby Lee**, a longtime supporter and friend of United Church Homes, died suddenly on Oct. 13. Robby, 70, was a lifelong supporter of Fairhaven Community in Upper Sandusky, Ohio, a volunteer since 1984, a donor since 1999, and had been a United Church Homes Board Member since 2013. In addition to his Board duties, Robby volunteered to serve as the Annual Giving Chair for the 2017 Comprehensive Campaign for Abundant Life.

*"Abundant Life is God's love, God's gift to us"*

# P R E S I D E N T ' S   A W A R D

## Honors Servant Leadership



### PRESIDENT'S AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Crystal Swayne was in disbelief when United Church Homes leaders recognized her with the President's Award of Distinction, the highest honor for staff and board volunteers.

"I'm very thankful and grateful, but I don't know that it should have been me. I was just doing my job," Crystal said.

UCH President and CEO Rev. Kenneth Daniel presented Crystal with the award at a Donor Appreciation Dinner in July in Beavercreek, Ohio. The award celebrates people who have done something of such merit to significantly advance United Church Homes' mission to transform Aging by building a culture of community, wholeness and peace.

For more than 35 years, Crystal served as director of activities and volunteers at Trinity Community, a United Church Homes life plan community in Beavercreek. She retired from the position earlier this year.

"The job needs youth and it needs energy. I still can get my job done, but I think it takes me a lot longer than it used to," said Crystal, who is 69 years old. "We're growing leaps and bounds, but we're still small enough to get to know all of our residents."

Her relationships with residents and their families are directly responsible for more than \$1.1 million in donations.

Crystal was responsible for asking for a \$1 million donation from a former resident that led to the expansion of the Roy R. and Virginia Sultzbach Healthcare Center, Trinity Administrator Laura Farrell said.



Crystal Swayne

She also was involved with a \$100,000 donation for the development of the community's memory care neighborhood that Trinity named after donor Lofton Philips, the brother of a former resident.

"When you do this kind of work, you get to know the people and the families. Some need more care than others so you just give. Sometimes they pay us back with honorary gifts and donations. But it's never one staff member. It's all of us," Crystal said.

She was inducted into the Greene County Women's Hall of Fame, established key relationships with local United Church of Christ congregations that donated time and financial support to Trinity residents and created intergenerational programs with Beavercreek City Schools.

Her efforts earned commendations including the Citizens Advocate Award from the Beavercreek Education Foundation and the 1997 Governor George Voinovich Award for Intergenerational Programs.

"I cannot imagine our community today without the service of Crystal," Laura said. "Crystal has served our residents and community as director of activities and volunteers, not just in longevity but with compassion and service. At all times, she has exemplified the mission and vision of United Church Homes."





# UCH to sponsor NBC's A Journey Through Alzheimer's



United Church Homes will co-sponsor a one-hour television special Dec. 1 to raise awareness and to support individuals and families dealing with dementia and Alzheimer's disease.



**Colleen Marshall**

*I Want to Go Home; A Journey Through Alzheimer's*, hosted by WCMH-TV (NBC4) anchor Colleen Marshall, began in 2008 when her mother was battling the disease. Colleen's mother died in 2016. She said she hopes the special helps families to find the comfort they need.

UCH leaders decided to co-sponsor the 2017 special after watching last year's program.

"We want to support families caring for loved ones diagnosed with Alzheimer's and other debilitating memory impairments. We want to be a resource for the community and share knowledge about new treatment options and innovative programs that will improve the quality of life for their loved ones," said Chuck Mooney, senior vice president and chief operating officer of United Church Homes.

United Church Homes communities offer dementia care programs such as Music & Memory and Opening Minds through Art (OMA). UCH staff members also are trained in Comfort Matters dementia care, an award-winning palliative care program that improves the quality of life for people living with the disease.

UCH experts in memory care and long-term care will be at the station answering questions by phone from 7-8:15 p.m.



**Caroline James**

Caroline James, memory support director at Chapel Hill Community in Canal Fulton, Ohio, is happy UCH is co-sponsoring the program.

"It gives us an opportunity to showcase what we do as a company. We all want the very best for our residents and their family members," Caroline said.

Amy Kotterman, director of hospitality at UCH, helped to develop a partnership with the Beatitudes Campus in Phoenix, Arizona, which assisted as staff at three United Church Homes



**Amy Kotterman**

communities implemented Comfort Matters, a philosophy, care practice and dementia education program.

The training has helped staff to better care for residents with dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

"United Church Homes recognizes that person-directed care is essential when it comes to working with residents living with dementia. The more we know the person, the better equipped we are to take care of them and provide a high quality of life, as well as abundant life," Amy said.

The special will allow staff an opportunity to educate others about dementia and how to care for those with dementia.

"We have a responsibility to share what we know to help make the journey a little easier for everyone," Amy said.

"Dementia has been referred to as an 'invisible' disease, meaning people look the same, yet the brain is changing due to deterioration as the disease progresses," Amy said. "It is important for families to find a community that can meet the needs of the whole person, meaning physical, emotional and spiritual needs."





# FAITH AND COMMUNITY

**M**ore than 20 residents fled Cypress Run in Immokalee, Florida, by bus in September after local fire officials urged them to evacuate the building before Hurricane Irma hit.

But Barbara Garcia, 74, refused to leave because of her faith in God.

“I trusted Him to keep me safe,” Barbara said.

Cypress Run is one of six affordable housing communities owned or managed by United Church Homes in Florida.

Barbara was among a handful of Cypress Run residents who opted to stay at the building during the hurricane. Other residents were evacuated to the Immokalee High School gymnasium, which served as a shelter for 820 area residents.

Hurricane Irma hit Southwest Florida Sept. 10 and its devastation stretched nearly 300 miles in diameter. About 60 homes and trailers were destroyed and trees were uprooted during the hurricane that hit Immokalee, a rural agricultural city with a population of 24,000 residents. Nearly half of the residents live in poverty.

About 12 million customers in southwest Florida lost power during the storm. Cypress Run, which is home to mostly Haitian immigrants, was without power for nearly two weeks.

Other UCH communities in Florida include Burlington Tower in St. Petersburg, Sterling Place in Lakeland, Citrus Gardens in Orlando and J.H. Floyd Sunshine Village and Meadow Park, both in Sarasota.

At least two residents were hospitalized after the storm because

of stress, said Gina Laine, manager of Sterling Place and Cypress Run.

“It took a toll,” Gina said.

However, none of UCH’s communities sustained any major damage.

“We were lucky that nobody had any issues. Staff was kind of in a panic mode. We were texting back and forth. They were frightened and on high alert,” said Marsha Crewe, a UCH regional housing manager who oversees communities in Florida. “It was bad, but our properties dodged a bullet.”

Barbara watched the devastation unfold in the lobby at Cypress Run.

“The wind was whipping. It sounded like a mountain lion with that horrible eerie growl. The water was tremendous. There was flooding. “A friend of mine had his roof blown

Barbara was among a handful of Cypress Run residents who signed a waiver to stay at the building during the hurricane.



# AMID HURRICANE IRMA

off; some people lost homes. It was devastating. But material things can be rebuilt or replaced. You can't replace a life," Barbara said.

Marsha said some staff who did not live onsite were invited to stay at a UCH community, but chose to evacuate or stay with family members.

Hurricane Irma hit Immokalee the hardest and residents and fire officials say it is the worst hurricane to hit the area in Florida's history.

"The only other hurricane I can compare it to is Wilma. Irma caused more devastation, more flooding. I went through Wilma in Immokalee. I think Wilma was bad out here. This one definitely tops all of the ones I've experienced," said Immokalee Fire Control District Deputy Chief Thomas Cunningham.

Fire officials worried about residents like Barbara who refused to evacuate Cypress Run and a nearby retirement community because the buildings have wooden frames.

"It was a day and a half of hurricane force winds. That just puts a beating on those buildings," Deputy Chief Cunningham said. "We had concerns for the whole community, but with those two buildings we're talking 200 lives and some with severe medical conditions."

Marsha and Gina said firefighters, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Salvation Army, Redlands Christian Migrant Agency and volunteers from Naples and Fort Myers made sure residents at Cypress Run had plenty of food, water and ice.

"They did not have to go without. It was really great that everybody worked together," Marsha said.

Barbara said she was thankful that so many in the community, especially younger residents, helped people at Cypress Run.

"When people reach out to care for elders that means the world to me, especially the youth. Younger people don't always realize they will get (older) someday," Barbara said. "It was an experience that we had to go through and one that I will never forget."



# 70½?

## Consider these tax savings...



Every month, I'm blessed to meet with individuals and families in many United Church Homes communities. It's humbling to see the dedication and support they have for the UCH mission to transform Aging by building a culture of community, wholeness and peace. While often the focus is on the residents, UCH also looks for ways to care for its supporters. That is why we strive to educate our supporters on the most efficient ways to give. This allows supporters' hard-earned dollars to go further toward helping their families and the community.

In recent years, there has been a lot of talk about the IRA Charitable Rollover that was made a "permanent" part of our U.S. tax code at the end of 2015. Still, many of the individuals I meet within Ohio and across the country don't take advantage of it. The IRA Charitable Rollover can be a great benefit, especially to those who don't itemize on their tax returns.

Steven and Lori are a great example. They always have been faithful donors but didn't give enough to exceed the standard deduction. They have been meticulous savers and worked hard to build up their retirement nest egg. When they reached the age of 70½, they were required to take

distributions from their IRA. However, instead of taking the full distribution themselves, they directed a portion to the charities they were supporting.

By utilizing this giving technique, Steven and Lori now were giving more efficiently. Since they didn't itemize, they normally lost out on the charitable deduction. Because the IRA Charitable Rollover allowed them to avoid counting the IRA distribution to charity as income, they were able to avoid paying income tax on this portion. Additionally, this reduced their adjusted gross income and could help reduce the taxation of other items, as well.

While the IRA Charitable Rollover provides unique tax benefits, there are some restrictions. You must be 70½ or older at the time of the gift and there is a limit of \$100,000 that can be transferred to qualified public charities each year. It also is required that the gift come directly from the IRA administrator to the charitable organization. Lastly, the charity cannot have provided you any goods or services in exchange for the gift.



**United Church Homes is pleased to offer our friends and supporters a valuable values-based estate planning service from an expert estate planning adviser. Paul Grassmann, from Thompson & Associates, visits Ohio monthly to meet with and assist families or individuals as they navigate through various practical, emotional and legal issues. If you are interested in learning more about this complimentary service, or scheduling an appointment with Paul, please contact Gloria Hurwitz, vice president of advancement and communications, at [gthurwitz@uchinc.org](mailto:gthurwitz@uchinc.org) or 740.751.8702.**

**Thompson & Associates**  
Values-Based Estate Planning



**Paul Grassmann, JD, FCEP**



## A HISTORY OF SERVICE: Veteran to Volunteer

After spending 33 years in the U.S. Army, Chief Warrant Officer 4 Roger Blakely decided he wanted to spend his retirement giving back to others and serving God.

In July, United Church Homes presented Roger with the Spirit Award for his volunteer work at Patriot Ridge Community in Fairborn, Ohio. “It was a nice surprise. It was an honor,” said Roger, 55, of Fairborn. “I was just doing it to be pleasing to the Lord. I want to serve people.”

Roger, who grew up in Springfield, Ohio, joined the Army after graduating from Tecumseh High School. He retired from the Army in September 2014 and seven months later began volunteering at Patriot Ridge.

Roger visits Patriot Ridge seven days a week. He talks to veterans like 96-year-old Charlie Burke. He visits residents who do not have family or friends nearby. He also takes resident dogs, Rusty and Riley, for walks several times a day.

Patriot Ridge Activities Director Karen LeBlanc and other staff nominated Roger to receive the Spirit Award. “We wanted to honor him for all he’s done for the residents. He’s just a great person,” Karen said.

Bob Spruance, 95, whose wife lived at Patriot Ridge for more than four years, said Roger makes friends with everyone he meets at Patriot Ridge and in the neighborhood. “He’s just a kind-hearted, good solid Christian,” Bob said.

Phyllis Howard, 80, who has lived at Patriot Ridge more than two years, said Roger often visited her and her husband, Oscar, who served in World War II and the Korean War. “When my husband passed away, Roger saluted him,” Phyllis said. Phyllis said she does not have many visitors, but Roger continues to visit her almost daily. “He always speaks to me and asks me how I’m doing. It makes me feel good. It kind of cheers my day a little,” Phyllis said. “He’s a great guy, a great man.”

Roger, who is deeply religious, visits people in hospitals and long-term care communities to lift their spirits and serve God. “I’m a believer in Jesus and a follower of Him, so I want to honor Him in what we do. I just want to honor the Lord and treat people right,” Roger said.

“I love meeting people. A lot of people don’t have families or their family is far away. I’m here every day. A lot of them are going through dementia, Alzheimer’s and don’t remember what they had for breakfast or lunch. They remember people, though, and they remember Riley and Rusty.”

Roger now works at the National Air Space and Intelligence Center at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio. While in the Army, he served assignments in Germany, Kuwait, Illinois, Kansas, Wisconsin, Alabama and many other locations.





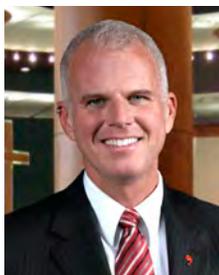
TOGETHER WE CAN

# AGE-FRIENDLY CONGREGATIONS

A new curriculum that explores how to minister well with, to, and for older adults.

Edited by J. Bennett Guess & Barbara A. Powell  
First Printing: August 2017

## A new book encourages churches to rethink the way they attract, retain and minister to older members of their congregations.



The book was co-authored by Rev. Beth Long-Higgins, executive director of United Church Homes' Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging; Rev. J. Bennett "Ben" Guess, executive director of ACLU Ohio and former vice president of the United Church of Christ's Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM); Jan Aerie, a gerontologist, community health planner and family counselor; and RoMa Johnson, a hospice community chaplain.

"Age-Friendly Congregations takes a look at people who are age 65 and older because we haven't been paying attention to the people who have made it to this point in their lives," Beth said.

The book serves as a resource to help churches better minister to and provide programming for older adults. Chapters discuss aging, ageism, caregivers and creating an age-friendly covenant.

"People are aging in place and living longer. How do we reach out and make sure they are not isolated?

How do we make sure we are part of their support system?" Beth asked.

Ben described an age-friendly congregation as one that recognizes that spiritual growth, intellectual curiosity and a passion to build a better world is a lifelong process.

"Vital congregations take seriously life-span development and strive to be places where multigenerational experiences are nurtured and where persons of all ages are honored and valued. Age-friendly congregations are serious about confronting ageism," Ben said.

Jan said congregations that want to become age-friendly should assess the demographics of their congregations, develop new models of ministry, affirm older adult members and area residents and their unique ministry and act on an age-friendly covenant process.

"An age-friendly congregation is one that recognizes, celebrates and affirms the place that older adults have in ministry and mission. Specifically, age-friendly congregations intentionally and regularly present intergenerational classes and

programs building awareness and knowledge of facets of aging, and sensitivity to reaching out to meet the needs of many people," Jan said.

Older adults make up more than half of most congregations. They are the backbone of churches, but often are taken for granted by ministers who assume they always will have them as members, Ben said.

"Many churches incorrectly assume that attracting and retaining older members is a given, so little conversation is invested in how to minister well to seniors. Today's retirees are looking for meaningful engagement and that requires intentionality on the part of our pastors and local churches," he said.

Beth said older adults should not be lumped into one group with an assumption that they all have the same needs. Stereotypes in pop culture about the "church lady," a senior who is against change, also must be dismissed.

Churches need to understand the wealth of knowledge that older adults have and use it to support their ministries.

"We are limiting the wisdom that is present in our pews; the gifts that older adults offer. We should be inviting older adults into new roles. If we change the language and invite older adults to experience new opportunities, we will be surprised at how the spirit can work through them," Beth said.



**Age-Friendly Congregations is available from UCC Resources.**  
The cost is \$6 for a digital download and \$13 for a printed copy.  
For more information, visit:  
[www.unitedchurchhomes.org/AFC](http://www.unitedchurchhomes.org/AFC)

# Let's Talk About Aging — *in Church!*



Written by Beth Long-Higgins, Executive Director, Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging

NEW BLOG

## ABUNDANT AGING: Transforming the Conversation

The Abundant Aging blog will include weekly posts from a panel of regular writers, as well as guest posts on occasion. In the blog, we will explore the concept of abundance as an essential part of aging, continue to combat ageism, redefine longevity and provide resources for individuals, communities and congregations.

Visit us today at  
[abundantaging.org!](http://abundantaging.org!)

When I began my work with United Church Homes, “church relations” was actually in my job title. And so, I hit the road connecting with colleagues who were near to or whose congregations had relationships with our health and retirement communities. It was in those first months as I brought my 25 years of parish ministry with me into this world of older adults and UCH, along with conversations with colleagues, when all kinds of “light bulbs” were illuminating my view of the church in an aging world.

As I became acquainted with the research and best practices that were happening in the world of gerontology and healthcare, I also was paying more attention to how the church talked about the same demographic of people. I had the privilege of participating with the Board of Directors, staff and residents of UCH in the writing of a new statement of vision, mission and values and became more and more aware of the realities of ageism and the need to change our thinking about aging in the larger society. Slowly, I became aware that although the larger church was not talking about aging and the church in the same way that

I was, there were at least some others who were suggesting similar scenarios.

*Age-Friendly Congregations* is a starting point. It gives a wide picture of the aging world in which we live and work. There are resources suggested for further reading. It includes some Bible study centered around issues of aging. Again, these are all starting points. Moving from the larger picture, there is a section to help you assess the details of your own location. What are the realities of those who are aging in your congregation and community? And finally, a suggested process for a congregation to covenant together to be an age-friendly congregation that would help to frame a church’s commitment to and understanding of the aging process from birth to death. This helps a congregation get to the local action level of understanding the implications for ministry, outreach and evangelism.

Meanwhile, back at UCH and the establishment of the Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging, we are working on additional resources for clergy and local congregations. Our annual Symposium is an interdisciplinary event encompassing

fields of study and practice that include the body, mind and spirit. A new website dedicated to the work of the RFPCAA was launched in October in conjunction with the Symposium.

There are additional projects in the planning stages, so stay tuned for upcoming retreats and events to help transform and resource your congregations. Come and join the conversation as we age together and share alternative narratives about what it means to grow older together in communities of faith.



# EXPERIENCING iN2L Engagement Technology



FOUR WINDS  
COMMUNITY

With a few taps on a touch-screen computer, Four Winds Community staff has opened a new world for their residents.

For the past month, Activities Director Jean Ann Moshier has been using It's Never 2 Late (iN2L) in therapy sessions with individuals with dementia and in group activities with other older adults at the community to help bring back memories, improve communication

skills, address problem behaviors and provide recreational activity.

The residents at Four Winds, a United Church Homes community in Jackson, Ohio, sing gospel hymns, listen to jokes, watch *I Love Lucy* and play *The Price is Right* and *Family Feud*.

“When they sing, they’re remembering when they were at home and going to church — same thing with the TV shows. There’s a lot of conversation about the old TV shows, a lot of reminiscing. It keeps their minds occupied. But it has a different effect on each person,” Jean Ann said.

## It's Never 2 Late

dignity through technology

iN2L, based in Centennial, Colorado, is a developer of digital engagement technology for senior living community residents. It provides computer software that includes interactive multimedia and cognitive-based games and adaptive devices that keep seniors active, connected and engaged. The comprehensive wellness touchscreen computer offers a custom-designed computer and content package that puts wellness programming into one system.

The technology includes hundreds of apps that help to meet residents’ spiritual, emotional, physical, social and intellectual needs. Residents can watch classic TV shows and movies, listen to music and participate in music therapy programs. They also can participate with interactive exercise videos that improve strength and balance, access virtual art museums and play games designed to improve brain functions such as memory, attention and language.

Four Winds is one of six United Church Homes communities that uses iN2L.

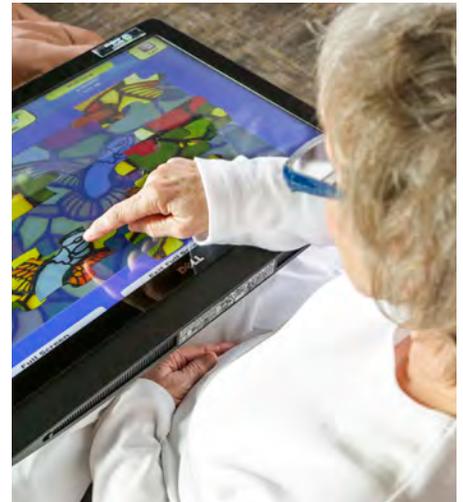
“We’re still learning the system, but what we’ve been able to do with it so far has been very successful,” Jean Ann said. “It’s helped us to address behaviors because the activities give residents something else to focus on.”

Patriot Ridge Community Activities Director

Karen LeBlanc said residents at the community in Fairborn, Ohio, enjoy using iN2L for karaoke, trivia, audio books, music and classic TV shows. “It’s a great way to engage people either in group or one-on-one. We use it a lot. We take it to individual rooms for people who are not mobile. It just has so many things residents can do,” Karen said. “It provides mental stimulation or it can be used just for fun. You can travel to different places and our residents really love that.”

Renee Wilburn, memory care coordinator at Patriot Ridge, said the system helps bring back memories for residents with dementia and Alzheimer’s disease.

“We do karaoke, play matching games, play Hangman, trivia and fill-in-the-blank games. There’s a section called Reminisce that shows old pictures and things that were made (when they were younger). It stimulates the mind, makes them open to talking and makes them happier,” Renee said.



**Interactive multimedia and cognitive-based games and adaptive devices keep seniors active, connected and engaged.**

Jack York, president and co-founder of iN2L, said it currently is used in more than 2,500 retirement communities throughout the United States and Canada. Jack and his brother founded the company in 1999 with the belief that there is a better way to treat people living with physical and cognitive conditions, especially those living in retirement communities.

“What matters is having technology that reaches people where they are. We want them to stay connected and engaged,” Jack said. “When older adults and people with dementia are exposed to music, spiritual content or whatever it is that is important to them, they just come to life. It’s fascinating to see how technology can be used to help older adults stay in touch with the world.”



# Generations Unite

**K**ay Strank, who has a smartphone, laptop and tablet, knows firsthand how Skype can be used to keep in touch with family members. Now, the 76-year-old is part of an intergenerational program at Patriot Ridge Community in Fairborn, Ohio, that uses Skype, a video conferencing app, to connect residents with students more than 20 miles away at Greeneview High School in Jamestown, Ohio.

“I like connecting with the younger generation. I like hearing about what they’re doing for fun. It kind of keeps us in tune with what’s going on,” said Kay, who previously has used Skype to communicate with her daughter in Virginia.

Patriot Ridge residents began Skyping with Greeneview students about three years ago after a staff member asked the school principal if students would be interested in participating in an intergenerational program, said Patriot Ridge Activities Director Karen LeBlanc.

During the half-hour class every Wednesday, residents talk about their education, careers, families and experiences in the military. In September, one resident even shared her concern about family members in Florida who were

affected by Hurricane Irma. The freshmen have talked about their plans for the future — where they would like to go to college and what they plan to study. Some students played musical instruments.

“When we Skype, the residents feel like they’re involved and know what’s going on in the world,” Karen said. “It’s an opportunity to bond with the younger generation.”

The class is just one of several intergenerational programs and activities offered at Patriot Ridge, a United Church Homes community.

Hundreds of mixed-aged programs and activities like the Skype program and Camp Ageless, a one-day youth camp at Patriot Ridge, exist nationwide, said Generations United Executive Director Donna Butts.

Donna said intergenerational programs are increasing due in part to the rising number of older adults in the U.S.



Patriot Ridge Community in Fairborn, Ohio, uses Skype to connect residents with students more than 20 miles away at Greeneview High School in Jamestown, Ohio.



“People are living longer and they’re also living healthier. (Older adults are) going to continue to do that and they want to give back,” Donna said.

The programs are a win-win when relationships are formed between older adults and youth. There are psychological benefits for older adults who feel more optimistic about the future and feel they have a reason to get out of bed.

“Young people, they learn not to fear their own aging. They’re not put off by seeing older people. They’re not put off by seeing wheelchairs, walkers or someone with a cane,” Donna said.

Shanon Benton, an English teacher at Greeneview, said the class helps students with communication skills and teaches lesson planning and compassion for others. “It gets them out of the bubble of me, me, me and it shows them that we are all the same,” Shanon said.

Destiny Laymon, a freshman at Greeneview, enjoys the video chats with residents at Patriot Ridge. “It was very nice to hear their stories and their points of view on different subjects. It was also very neat hearing what differences there are from when they were younger to now. Things have definitely changed and it was a unique experience hearing that firsthand from people who were actually there to experience the change,” Destiny said.

“This is something I will definitely remember and I hope that this continues on for other generations.”

In previous classes, Karen said Greeneview students taught residents about iPhones, iPads and apps. Residents have taught students about the “simpler life,” such as living on a farm and what it was like before cellphones, computers and the internet.

Shanon and Greeneview principal Brian Masser received the LeadingAge Ohio’s Social Commitment Award in September at the LeadingAge Ohio Awards Luncheon.

The partnership between the community and the school reflects the growing understanding that connections between elders and children, often vulnerable groups, are an essential part of our national health, according to a 2017 report from Generations United and The Eisner Foundation.

“We are grateful for the many partners who recognize the dignity and worth of older adults in their local communities,” said Kathryn Brod, president and CEO of LeadingAge Ohio. “In engaging in the Skype project, Ms. Benton and Mr. Masser

are helping to foster a future generation of age-friendly Ohioans.”

Patriot Ridge Administrator Stacie Ward said she is extremely grateful for the partnership with Greeneview and expects it will change the way youth see older adults. “I love the energy of the students and how they bring out the energy in our residents through their discussions and activities. I think this type of program is essential to providing abundant life in our community,” Stacie said.

Jackie Logan, 89, a resident at Patriot Ridge, said young children seem to be way ahead of people of her generation. “I feel like they are eons ahead of us because they have all of this equipment that we have no idea about. They’ve grown up with this and they’re way ahead of us,” Jackie said.

Jim Hutchinson, 73, another Patriot Ridge resident, said Skyping with the students is interesting. “They’re so full of energy and have so much life left to live. I think we can learn a lot from each other,” Jim said.

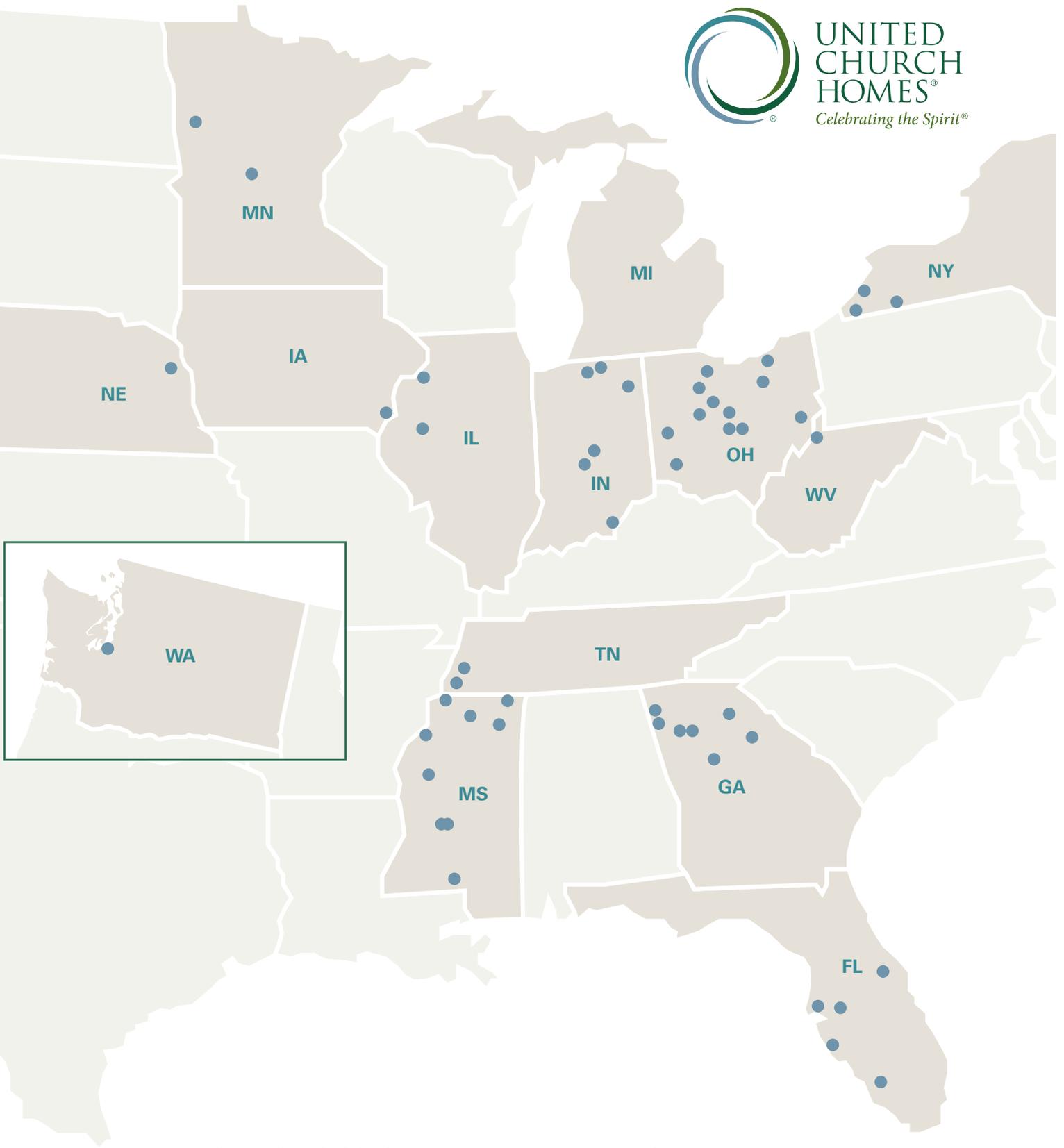
Kay added: “Maybe they can learn that it’s not the worst thing in the world to get old.”



# AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMUNITIES



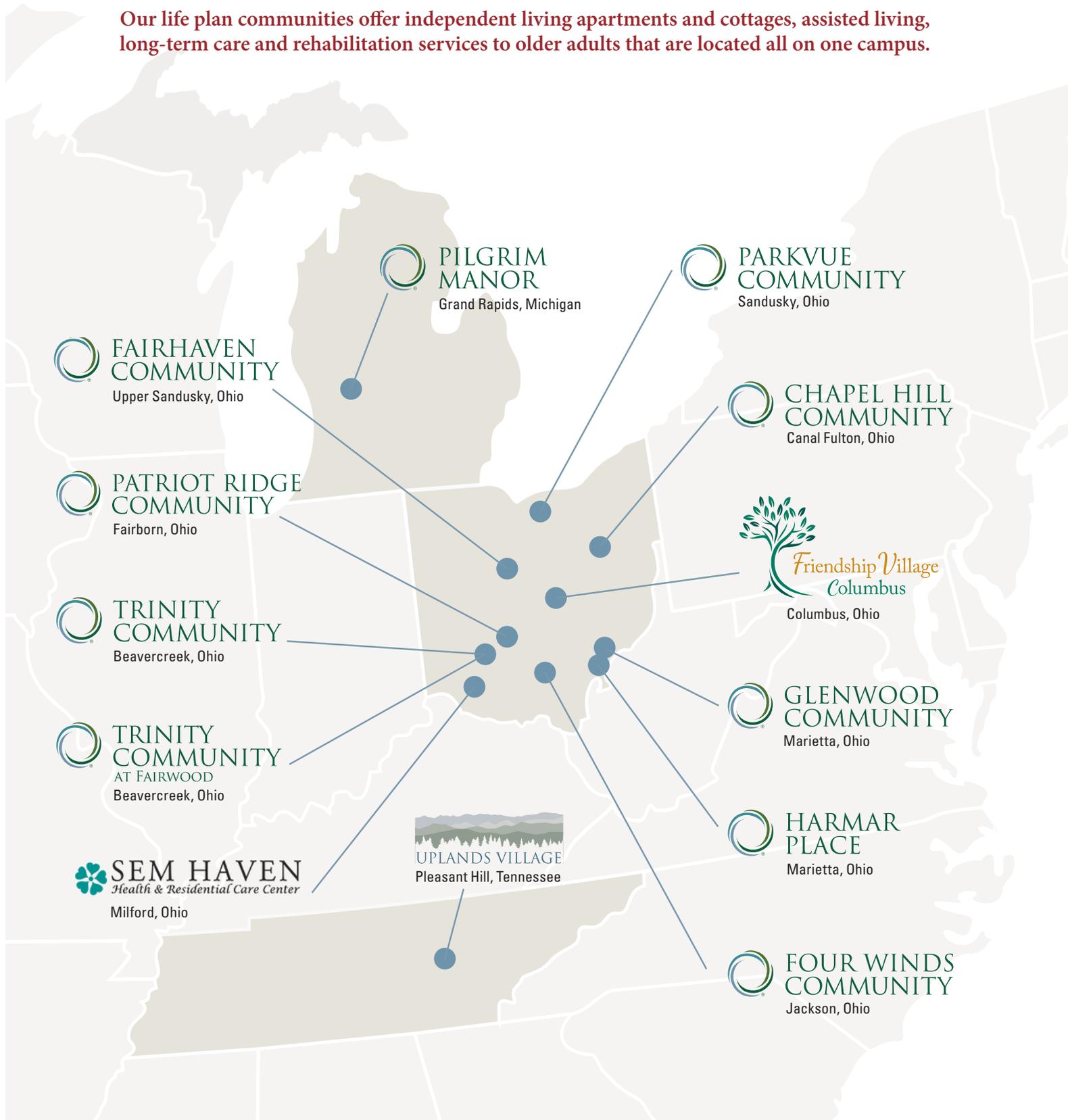
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in 13 states and two Native American nations.**

# RETIREMENT AND LIFE PLAN COMMUNITIES

Our life plan communities offer independent living apartments and cottages, assisted living, long-term care and rehabilitation services to older adults that are located all on one campus.



At United Church Homes, we believe every older adult is meant to live an Abundant life in every phase of life. United Church Homes has provided retirement housing options to older adults for more than 100 years.

# COMMUNITY BRIEFS

NEWS AND NOTES FROM OUR NEIGHBORS



## Seven UCH employees honored with 2017 LUV Award

United Church Homes honored seven of its employees with the 2017 Living UCH Values Award that recognizes those who demonstrate the highest commitment to our core values. All LUV Award winners received a certificate and community recognition. Pictured are LUV Award winners (front row, from left) Rebecca Snodgrass, Chapel Hill Community; Shelly Sheets, Four Winds Community; Carol Reep, Fairhaven Community; and Anna Kender, Trinity Community. Second row: Vice President of Human Resources Scott Slutz; Director of Major Gifts and Grants Alissa Clouse; LUV Award winners Sherry Shaver and Bonnie Chesser, both representing Harmar Place; and Rev. Kenneth Daniel, president and CEO. Award winner Heather Traxler, of Fairhaven Community, is not pictured.

## Glenwood, Harmar Place Name New Chaplain

Rev. Patricia Vargas has been named the new chaplain of Glenwood Community and Harmar Place Rehabilitation and Extended Care, both in Marietta, Ohio. Patricia began her new role Oct. 2. She previously served five years as pastor at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church ELCA in Livingston, California. She also previously served as a pastor in Salinas, California. Patricia follows former chaplain Rev. Erin McCreight, who recently was named chaplain at Chapel Hill Community in Canal Fulton, Ohio, after the retirement of Rev. Sandra Hutchinson. Patricia was born and raised in Argentina. In 2003, she completed her theological studies in Argentina and Brazil.



## Glenwood, Harmar Place Receive Readers' Choice Award

Harmar Place Rehabilitation and Extended Care Community received the *Marietta Times'* 2017 Readers' Choice Award for Best Skilled Nursing & Best Rehabilitation Center. Glenwood Community (The Pines) received the Best Assisted Living Community Award. The communities were recognized as leaders for demonstrating excellence in person-directed care and commitment to quality in healthcare.



## Patriot Ridge, Harmar Place Receive Silver National Quality Award

Patriot Ridge Community and Harmar Place Rehabilitation and Extended Care Community, both United Church Homes communities, each received a 2017 Silver National Quality Award from the American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living. Patriot Ridge and Harmar Place were among the 191 skilled nursing care centers and assisted living communities in 43 states that earned the Silver Achievement in Quality Award. Harmar Place is in Marietta, Ohio, and Patriot Ridge is in Fairborn, Ohio. The award was presented to community leaders during the AHCA/NCAL's 68th Annual Convention and Expo from Oct. 15–18 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Members that received the Silver Award developed and demonstrated effective approaches that improve performance and quality outcomes. The Association's Quality Award program challenges member providers to achieve performance levels through three levels — Bronze, Silver and Gold.



## Four UCH Communities Receive Wishing Well Awards

United Church Homes awarded more than \$16,000 from the Wishing Well Fund to four United Church Homes communities. Salem Manor in Fort Wayne, Indiana, received \$4,448 to pay for a new contract with Community Transportation Network (CTN), which provides transportation for residents at the community. Cherry Arbors in North Lewisburg, Ohio, was awarded \$4,986 to replace furniture. HardinCrest in Kenton, Ohio, received \$4,699 to establish a designated smoking area at the community. Concord Estates in Fredonia, New York, received \$1,964 to pay for two benches, roof repairs and vinyl decorated panels under an existing archway.



# CONGRATULATIONS

to all 2017 United Church Homes Donor Appreciation Dinner award recipients and thank you for your support of our mission!



CHAPEL HILL  
COMMUNITY

**Ben M. Herbster Award** - Maryalice Roush  
**Spirit Award** - Gary and Cheryl  
Oakleaf and Sandra Lee Mercier  
**Diakonie Award** - Trinity United  
Church of Christ, Canal Fulton, Ohio



FAIRHAVEN  
COMMUNITY

**Ben M. Herbster Award** -  
Paul and Sandy Kotterman  
**Spirit Award** - Janet McDaniel  
**Diakonie Award** - St. John's  
Evangelical Church, Kenton, Ohio



PARKVUE  
COMMUNITY

**Ben M. Herbster Award** - Harold Behnken  
**Spirit Award** - Joanne M. "Annee" Smith  
**Diakonie Award** - Saints Peter & Paul  
Catholic Church, Sandusky, Ohio



PATRIOT RIDGE  
COMMUNITY

**Ben M. Herbster Award** -  
Ethel Lucile Phillips  
**Spirit Award** - Roger Blakely



TRINITY  
COMMUNITY

**Ben M. Herbster Award** - Mary Tymeson  
**Spirit Award** - Frederick Feicht  
**Diakonie Award** - David's United  
Church of Christ, Kettering, Ohio



PILGRIM  
MANOR

**Ben M. Herbster Award** - Micki Benz  
**Spirit Award** - Laura LaMore  
**Diakonie Award** - Plymouth United  
Church of Christ, Grand Rapids, Michigan



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**Zion**

**Diakonie Award** - Zion United  
Church of Christ, Decatur, Indiana



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**Housing Services**

**Ben M. Herbster Award** - Alan B. Mikesell, DDS, MS  
**Spirit Award** - Rev. Joyce E. Schroer  
**Diakonie Award** - First United Church of Christ, Marion, Ohio





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Our Mission is to transform Aging by building a culture of community, wholeness and peace.

**NATIONAL AND STATE AFFILIATIONS:**

**American Health Care Association:** [ahca.org](http://ahca.org)

**Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM):** [chhsm.org](http://chhsm.org)

**LeadingAge:** [leadingage.org](http://leadingage.org)

**LeadingAge Ohio:** [leadingageohio.org](http://leadingageohio.org)

**Midwest Affordable Housing Management Association (MAHMA):** [mahma.com](http://mahma.com)

**Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging:** [ohioaging.org](http://ohioaging.org)

**Ohio Healthcare Association:** [ohca.org](http://ohca.org)

**Southeastern Affordable Housing Management Association (SAHMA):** [sahma.org](http://sahma.org)

**UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns:** [ucccoalition.org](http://ucccoalition.org)

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