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Spirit



Symposium 2018:

Palliative Care Expert
Helps People Live
Abundantly Through
End of Life



A WORD FROM THE CEO



Rev. Kenneth Daniel
President and CEO

BUILDING NEW PERSPECTIVES ON ABUNDANT LIVING THROUGH THE END OF LIFE

Oct. 12 marked the third annual Symposium for **United Church Homes' Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging**. Over 200 people attended this extraordinary day of learning that included topics around end-of-life care. Dr. Ira Byock, a leading palliative care physician, author and public advocate for improving care through the end of life, led the day with presentations featuring *Surprising Opportunities for Well-being through End of Life* and *What Mortality has to Teach Us About Living*.

Dr. Byock shared excerpts from his book *Four Things That Matter Most* that are communication tools critically important and extremely powerful at the pivotal time of an individual's life: "I am sorry," "I forgive you," "Thank you" and "I love you." From his over 40 years in hospice and palliative care, Dr. Byock shared engaging stories from individuals who found deeper meaning in life and relationships in their final months. These four simple phrases are part of a widely adopted approach palliative, hospice and pastoral care programs use to guide people in living, and dying, abundantly.

Our intent for the afternoon of the Symposium was to feature a spectrum of interfaith panelists to share their unique perspectives on end-of-life care. Four faith communities were represented: Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish and Christian with panelists Dr. Asma Mobin-Uddin, Rabbi Wendy Ungar, Kathy Sesley and David Ball. The discussion was engaging and revealed to us how various faith perspectives, with their unique practices, are spiritually more alike than different during end-of-life care.

United Church Homes' Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging was launched in 2016 to recognize United Church Homes' most generous benefactor. This Center for Abundant Aging seeks to bring together current theory and practice in the fields of gerontology, geriatrics, spirituality and aging, healthcare, housing and public policy. The Center provides a forum for interdisciplinary learning and collaboration that promotes innovation, advancement of knowledge and improvement of the quality of life for elders through advocacy, education, engagement and outreach.

As we are committed to serving "the whole person" at United Church Homes, we invite you to continue the conversation with us about the way we think about aging. Please plan to join us at the Symposium next year on **Oct. 11, 2019**, in Columbus, Ohio, when we will have the opportunity to hear Joseph Coughlin, PhD, founder and director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology AgeLab, and hear about *The Promise of Technology for Aging Abundantly*.



ON THE COVER:
 Rev. Kenneth Daniel (right), president and CEO of United Church Homes, presents Dr. Ira Byock with an award for contributions to aging at the third annual Symposium

Spirit

CONTENTS

FEATURES

- 10** **Laurel's Edge Housing Manager Brings Lessons Learned in Japan to Role**
Katie Davis reflects on time in Japan
- 12** **After Losing Partner, Man Finds Home at Morning Star**
Steve suddenly lost his partner of 41 years. Now, he finds home at Morning Star
- 16** **Dorothy Eckert Makes Lasting Impact**
From childhood to her 80s, woman gives to United Church Homes



10



12



16

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- LeadingAge Ohio Aging Services Impact Award 2
- RFPCAA Third Annual Symposium 3
- Neighbors Discover They Share an Incredible Bond 4
- Trinity Community: Expanding Its Leadership Roles 6
- UCH Welcomes Amy Bonacuse as New Director of Marketing 7
- Becky Stacy Joins UCH to Lead Pilgrim Manor 8
- Charitable Giving Strategies for Those 70 ½+ 9
- UCH Supports Staff Members through Liver Transplant 13
- Supporters Honored at Donor Appreciation Events 14
- A Journey from Kenya to Friendship Plaza 15
- Campaign for Abundant Life 17
- Weaving a Stronger Bond: UCH Board Visits Mississippi 18
- Moving to an Assisted Living Community 20
- German-Ohio Partnership Celebrated at Chapel Hill 22
- Parkvue Resident Makes Journey from Music Teacher to Artist 23

United Church Homes' Center for Abundant Aging recognized with LeadingAge Ohio Aging Services Impact Award



From left: Michele Engelbach, Rev. Kenneth Daniel, Rev. Beth Long-Higgins and Judy Budi

United Church Homes' Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging is the recipient of the 2018 Aging Services Impact Award from LeadingAge Ohio, a nonprofit trade association that represents nonprofit senior living organizations in more than 150 Ohio towns and cities.

Center Executive Director Rev. Beth Long-Higgins and United Church Homes President and CEO Rev. Kenneth V. Daniel accepted the award during a ceremony at Columbus Hilton at Easton on Thursday, Aug. 30.

The new Aging Services Impact Award is given to an individual or LeadingAge Ohio member organization for communication efforts that promote a positive image of aging services and enhance the public perception of services offered by member organizations.

United Church Homes' Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging is committed to combating systemic ageism by developing and using purposeful language and new standards of care that support aging. The Center serves older adults and their families, healthcare, social workers and direct care professionals, clergy and others.

The Center fosters conversations and education about abundant aging and creates real change for older adults. It is a thought leader on topics of concern and interest to older adults and their supporters, and it is unique in its engagement of congregations as a faith-based provider.

Beth contributed to *Age Friendly Congregations*, United Church of Christ curriculum that provides churches with a framework for ministry with older adults. She also presents to groups including local clergy and congregations about how to examine and improve how they talk about and interact with older adults and also how to support community members who are aging in place.

In 2015, the UCH Board of Directors envisioned a 21st-century continuum of residential settings that support abundant life for individuals at all income levels. This vision includes retirement that is filled with meaning, purpose and joy, where older adults are energized and look forward to the future with hope, security and knowledge to meet the inevitable challenges and opportunities of aging.

The Center hosts an annual Symposium in Columbus, Ohio, that provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and innovation in the fields

of gerontology, healthcare, ministry and aging. This Symposium includes national keynote speakers such as media professional Joan Lunden, who serves as the spokesperson for *A Place for Mom*, and Dr. Laura Carstensen, professor of psychology and founding director of the Standard Center on Longevity. In October, Dr. Ira Byock, founder and chief medical officer at the Institute for Human Caring of Providence Health Services, California, presented *Surprising Opportunities for Well-Being through the End of Life and What Mortality Has to Teach Us about Living*. Since the Center launched the Symposium in 2016, over 550 individuals have attended the event.

The Center also hosts a weekly blog, where United Church Homes chaplains, a local clergy member and guest bloggers address issues related to aging.

For more information about United Church Homes' Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging, visit abundantaging.org. For more information about United Church Homes, visit unitedchurchhomes.org.



Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging Third Annual Symposium: *Abundant Aging Through the End of Life*



2018 ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM



Over 200 people attended the third annual Symposium of the Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging at Marriott Columbus University Area. The Symposium featured education and discussion on end-of-life issues, said Rev. Beth Long-Higgins, executive director of the Parker Center. The keynote speaker was Dr. Ira Byock, a leading palliative care physician, author and public advocate for improving care through the end of life. The afternoon panel consisted of David T. Ball, Dr. Asma Mobin-Uddin, Rabbi Wendy Unger and Lama Kathy Wesley, who shared interfaith perspectives on end-of-life care. The panelists represented the Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Buddhist faiths, respectively.

JOURNEY TO Parkvue:

Neighbors Discover They
Share an Incredible Bond



José Suárez and Dr. E. Anne Eddowes

José Suárez makes it a point to introduce himself to new residents of United Church Homes' Parkvue Community in Sandusky, Ohio. When he did so on a recent day, José did not expect to meet a family member of the man he credits with saving his life — but that's exactly what happened.



José Suárez (2 years old)



New Parkvue resident Dr. E. Anne Eddowes was familiar with United Church Homes because she grew up with Ruth Frost Parker, a former Board member and the largest single benefactor in UCH history. Anne decided to move to UCH's Parkvue campus in early 2018 after splitting her time between Arizona and Ohio for several years. Her son was uncomfortable with her driving so far every winter, and family in the Sandusky area helped her decide to come back home to be closer to them. Shortly after her move, Anne met José in a serendipitous moment when José introduced himself as Anne's new neighbor.

José was only 14 years old when he left his home country of Cuba, alone, without his parents, to come to the United States amid a period of turmoil in the island country in the northern Caribbean.



José fondly recalls his childhood as being "spoiled." Every year, he and his mother would travel to Miami for the summer months, where his father would join them on weekends. José was enrolled in a trilingual school, where he learned English, Spanish and French. Additionally, he was a talented competitive chess player.

"I really had a charmed childhood," José said. "There was a lot of political disturbance and fighting, but in terms of my personal life, it was very, very satisfying."

With a propensity for language, José quickly became a target of the communist authorities. He feared he would be sent to the Soviet Union or face death if he stayed in Cuba.

José was one of more than 14,000 Cuban children airlifted from Havana to the U.S. between 1960 and 1962 as part of Operation Pedro Pan, made possible because of a deal between Father Bryan Walsh of the Miami Diocese and the U.S. State Department that allowed Walsh to sign visa waivers for children 16 and younger.

José met James Baker, a philanthropist and humanist whom José credits with saving his life. Mr. Baker, coincidentally, happened to be Anne Eddowes' uncle. Baker



James Baker

had been a colleague of José's English teacher, a British woman named Penny Powers who first rescued Jewish children from Nazi Europe in the 1940s and did the same for Cuban youth in the 1960s. She was awarded the Order of the British Empire for her work with children.

"Baker and Powers provided the necessary papers for children to enter the United States legally," José said. "They also worked closely with Catholic Charities and other institutions in the U.S. that would be able to provide housing for the children who would be arriving. Some were as young as 2 years old. It was always assumed that this would be a temporary situation until the communists were overthrown in Cuba. Unfortunately, this never happened and the children grew up in freedom and safety in their new country. ... I have always felt that James Baker and Penny Powers saved my life and allowed me to become the person I am today."

José, like many other children in Operation Pedro Pan, traveled alone to the U.S. by plane. He spent about six months in a refugee camp in Albuquerque, New Mexico, before being reunited with his parents in Florida.

The waiting room at the airport in Havana was called the fish bowl.

"You had to go in at 7 in the morning," José said. "It was totally surrounded by glass and there was a loudspeaker where you would hear, over and over, 'The maggots that were born in this country by mistake should leave and never come back.' I heard that from 7 in the morning until 2 o'clock. They strip searched me twice. My parents were on the other side of the glass and I was crying. I waved at them, and a militiaman came over and said, 'Ignore them. If you wave again, you're not getting on that plane.' It was like seven or eight hours of torture."

Despite the traumatic experience, José ultimately made it to safety in the United States.

He and his wife, Margaret, first visited the Parkvue campus for an annual concert. They decided to move to Parkvue immediately. José's new home at Parkvue gives him safety, security and the feeling of family that he left behind. His new neighbor, Anne, and the connection to her uncle who he credits with saving his life, has helped him realize his life has come full circle at Parkvue Community.

"I was transformed from a caterpillar into a butterfly in my new home in America."



Expanding Its Leadership Roles

Long-time Administrator at Trinity Community, Laura Farrell, has been named executive director of the life plan community in Beavercreek, Ohio.

Jeremy Lemon, administrator-in-training, has been promoted to director of resident services for the Trinity campus.

Laura holds a bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Cincinnati and a master's degree in healthcare administration from Ohio University. She started with United Church Homes in 1990 as director of social services at Riverview, a former UCH community. She has held a variety of positions over the years, including her long-term appointment as administrator at Trinity.

The duties of Laura's new role include oversight of operations at Trinity, as well as special projects for United Church Homes. Most recently, she served as chair of the Uplands Village transition team for a United Church Homes community in Pleasant Hill, Tennessee.

Laura is a 2017-18 fellow of the Larry Minnix National Leadership

Academy, a program of LeadingAge, a national organization representing nonprofit senior living communities. Laura also graduated in 2013 from the United Church of Christ's Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM) Nollau Institute.

Laura said she looks forward to expanding the vision of the Trinity Community campus through its master plan for assisted and independent living.

"I hope to continue the innovative spirit of Trinity Community," she said. "I feel one of my biggest accomplishments as a leader, and what I'm most proud of — in addition to the quality of care and love for our residents — is the development of future leaders here at Trinity. The leadership team is comprised of those who have been promoted from within. I'm very proud of them."

Jeremy is a graduate of Sinclair College and The Ohio State University. He started with Trinity Community as a dining services assistant and cook from September 2004 to July 2012. At that point, Jeremy was

promoted to dietetic technician and dining services supervisor. From January 2017 to October 2017, he served as administrator-in-training.

In his new role, Jeremy will oversee assisted and residential living at Trinity Community, along with operations of Trinity Community at Fairwood, a nearby independent living campus. Jeremy will also coordinate Trinity's safety program and work to advance various initiatives and programs, including recruitment and retention efforts and the Hospitality: I LIVE IT culture change initiative.

"There is so much going on at Trinity Community, including our campus expansion," Jeremy said. "It is a very exciting time to be here, and I am happy for the opportunity to take a more active role in what is happening around the community and furthering the mission and vision of United Church Homes."



"I feel one of my biggest accomplishments as a leader ... is the development of future leaders here at Trinity."

United Church Homes
recently welcomed
Amy Bonacuse
as the New Director
of Marketing



Amy joins UCH with a broad background in marketing communications from multiple industries.

Most recently, she was vice president of communications and marketing for The Ohio Society of CPAs. She also led marketing efforts for The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, and worked for clients in the healthcare and logistics sectors at a central Ohio-based marketing agency.

Amy is a native of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and a graduate of Shippensburg University, where she studied communications and public relations. She started her career in retail healthcare, working in public relations for Rite Aid Corporation while that chain was on a fast-track to national growth. Career opportunities brought Amy to Ohio 17 years ago.

Recently, she was looking to make a career change and targeted senior living because she loves the healthcare field and has personal experience with family

members who are living in care communities. A former peer of Amy's knew UCH President and CEO Rev. Kenneth Daniel through the MarionMade campaign, an effort that recognizes the city of Marion's past and focuses on the present and future of the community.

"Some of the most important decisions that families encounter are making sure that their loved ones are cared for. Those are hard decisions to make," Amy said. "It's also a growing field and one that I believe in."

Amy is looking forward to putting her healthcare and consumer marketing experience to work for United Church Homes.

"We are facing growing competition in our industry, but competition isn't all bad," Amy said. "It forces you to become super focused on what you do well and continue to innovate. UCH has a great reputation and is working hard to improve how we enrich people's lives, which is a story I'm looking forward to telling."

To do that, Amy will be working with marketing directors across UCH to leverage their communities' unique strengths in local marketing activities. She'll also be looking at ways to brand UCH signature services and new partnerships as they are introduced.

She was also moved by the vision for the organization and accomplishments UCH has made.

"There's a lot of integrity here and everyone is very driven to grow the organization and continue to expand our services for older adults," Amy said. "I'm looking forward to being a part of that momentum."

In her free time, Amy enjoys traveling, cycling and spending time with her family. She lives with her husband, Tom, in Delaware, Ohio, where Amy serves on the Board for People in Need, Inc. of Delaware County. They have four children.





Becky Stacy recently joined the staff of United Church Homes as the new administrator of Pilgrim Manor in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Becky was searching for career opportunities closer to family when she learned of the position at Pilgrim Manor. While interviewing with interim administrator and United Church Homes Management Executive Director Karen Messick, Becky learned of the organization's mission, vision and core values.

Becky began her skilled nursing administrator career at Hickory Creek Healthcare in Franklin, Indiana, where she was proud to receive a deficiency-free survey.

Becky said the UCH core values align closely with her own personal values.

"I try to live my life with integrity and in a way that shows compassion to others," she said. "A large part of any administrator's role is stewardship and making appropriate decisions with the resources available. This isn't always easy or simple, but it is important that stewardship remains a strong focus."

In her new role, Becky is most looking forward to getting to know everyone at Pilgrim Manor.

"It is important to me that I learn all that I can about the residents entrusted to our care in an effort to best serve them," she said. "The same goes for the staff — learning their personalities, work habits and communication styles will better help me facilitate success in their work."

Having recently attended her first Celebrate the Spirit Gala hosted by the Pilgrim Manor Foundation, Becky added she is excited to be part of an organization with a charitable focus. The 15th annual Celebrate the Spirit Gala, held in October at New Vintage Place, raised over \$100,000 for the Compassionate Care Fund, which provides support for Pilgrim Manor residents who have outlived or depleted their financial resources.

Becky lives with her husband, Mike, in East Grand Rapids, only about 3 miles from Pilgrim Manor. The couple has a 2-year-old daughter, Violet. Becky said she is also excited to live close to her parents and sisters in western Michigan.



Becky Stacy

Joins UCH to Lead Pilgrim Manor



"I was excited to find a community that had values that aligned closely with how I strive to live every day," Becky said. "The staff was friendly, and the residents appeared happy. This was important to me. I felt like this was the type of community that I could make my work-home."

Becky graduated from Valparaiso University in 2005 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism and photography. She received her Master of Business Administration from DePaul University in 2009.

Most recently, Becky was the executive director at Golden LivingCenter — Valparaiso, a skilled nursing and memory care community. Prior to working there, she was the administrator at The Forum at the Crossing in Indianapolis, Indiana. In this continuing care retirement community, Becky managed both assisted living memory care and skilled nursing with a focus on short-term rehabilitation.

Charitable Giving Strategies for Those 70 ½+

The Charitable IRA Rollover



We have seen some major changes to our tax law this year. As a result, many individuals are finding new ways to make their charitable giving even more tax advantaged! Linda is a great example, as she has always been a faithful donor to her church and other organizations, but will no longer be able to give enough to exceed the new standard deduction (\$12,000 for individuals and \$24,000 for married couples filing jointly). She has been a meticulous saver and worked hard to build up her IRA. When she reached the age of 70 ½, she was required to start taking distributions from her IRA. However, instead of taking the full distribution for herself, she now directs a portion of it to charities she supports.

By utilizing this giving technique, Linda is able to give in a very tax advantaged way. The IRA charitable rollover allows her to exclude the IRA distribution to the charities of her choice from her adjusted gross income (AGI). Thus, she is able to save income tax on this charitable gift. Additionally, the reduction of her AGI may reduce the taxation of her Social Security benefits and any deductibility “floors” limiting certain expenses (e.g., 7.5 percent for medical expenses in year 2018) and various other tax items.

While the IRA charitable rollover provides unique tax benefits not found with other types of gifts, there are some requirements and restrictions. You must be age 70 ½ or older at the time of the gift and are limited to transferring \$100,000 to qualified public charities each year. Additionally, the gift must come directly from the IRA administrator to the charitable organization. You can't receive your distribution and then pass it on to the charity. Lastly, the charity cannot have provided you any goods or services in exchange for the IRA charitable rollover.



If you would like to learn more about making a contribution to United Church Homes from your IRA, please contact Gloria Hurwitz, vice president of advancement and communications, at ghurwitz@uchinc.org or 740.751.8702. Additionally, United Church Homes is making available to its friends and stakeholders a complimentary values-based estate planning process designed to help individuals and couples think through their goals and objectives to create a comprehensive estate plan. For more information on how you can be added to the waiting list for this process, you can also reach out to Gloria Hurwitz using the above contact information.

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Values-Based Estate Planning

Paul Grassmann, JD, FCEP





LAUREL'S EDGE HOUSING MANAGER

Katie Davis

REFLECTS ON TIME IN

Japan



Katie Davis was not yet 16 years old when she visited Japan for nearly a year through a youth exchange program, but the experience led to lifelong lessons that the housing manager uses in her role today at Laurel's Edge in Kennesaw, Georgia.

A graduate of George Washington University in Washington, D.C., who grew up in Long Island, New York, Katie decided to major in international affairs with a focus on political science. She minored in Japanese and planned to be a diplomat.

But life had different ideas for Katie's journey.

In high school, Katie took French classes and had a special interest in neoclassical art. Her French teacher offered Katie the opportunity to participate in an exchange program. She wanted to go to France or Italy, study art and experience the culture.

Instead, Katie was accepted as an exchange student in Japan.

"I wasn't really thrilled with that at first because it wasn't on my radar," she said. "But the choice was either to go to Japan or stay home, so I decided to give it a try."

Katie boarded a plane and flew to Tokyo. She spent 11 months and three days in a town called Shimizu in the Shizuoka Prefecture — a prefecture is like a state in the U.S. While in Japan, Katie climbed Mount Fuji just in time for sunrise, saw a live volcano and spent time in Kyoto and Osaka.

"Living in Japan was so drastically different from the way we live here," she said. "It really helped me to adjust to new ideas and perspectives. I learned different behaviors, customs and attitudes. It was definitely a time of exposure for me."

Katie said before her trip, she was a typical self-absorbed 16-year-old. She learned quickly that the world does not revolve around any one person.

"I had to grow up really fast in the sense that I couldn't be self-centered," she said. "If I had walked around like I'm an arrogant American, things were not going to fall into my lap. It really helped me be more aware of my surroundings and appreciative of the people around me. When I returned, I wasn't as concerned with being materialistic and I was able to concentrate more on my education and where I was going after graduation."

Going to Japan as a teenager gave Katie the confidence to apply to the prestigious George Washington University, now her alma mater.

She also learned to be more culturally aware and patient with a diverse group of people. This is important for her current role as housing manager at Laurel's Edge with a population that includes Asian-Americans, African-Americans and other minorities.

Three Korean families live at Laurel's Edge, and another resident has lived in Japan. Katie uses the opportunity to practice her Japanese — a language she learned while in Japan.

When she had first traveled to the country, Katie only knew how to say in Japanese, "My name is Katie and I come from New York." But in six months, she was relatively fluent. At the height of her understanding, Katie knew about 2,000 Chinese characters and both 36-character Japanese alphabets called hiragana and katakana.

Katie also learned what it felt like to be a minority. As a blond American, Katie attracted attention in Japan. In fact, a newspaper reporter saw her at the national soccer championships in Tokyo and decided to write an article about her.

Katie said she grew up with cultural diversity, but she didn't appreciate it until her travels.

"I try to bring my appreciation of unique cultures into the community," Katie said. "In January, we celebrate the Chinese New Year (at Laurel's Edge). I'm always looking for opportunities to partner in a language exchange so I can use Japanese every now and then."

That multiculturalism has opened Katie's eyes to a whole new world.



After Losing Partner, Man Finds Home at **Morning Star**



“I can say with all honesty that living here in some ways **saved my life.**”



Steve had a wonderful life. He and his partner of 41 years, Larry, had a small circle of loyal friends, a beautiful dog and financial security. Larry was a medical doctor who served the community for over 39 years. They lived together in a beautiful home. Steve said Larry was his best friend.

Then, the unspeakable happened. In a freak accident, Larry tragically fell, immediately dying from trauma to his brain. It was Aug. 2, 2017, and Steve was left with nothing.

“Devastated, I didn’t know what to do. Unfortunately, we weren’t prepared for an untimely death. We hadn’t completed a will ensuring the home and finances we shared were allocated properly,” Steve said. “I received nothing from our estate and was left with no home, no money and no idea where to go from here.”

Steve, a stage 4 lymphoma cancer survivor, was frightened and did not know where to turn. Miraculously, he heard about an opening at United Church Homes’ Morning Star Apartments in Moline, Illinois, and was accepted as a resident there.

“I had a safe place to go that allowed me to keep my dog, who comforts me as I continue to grieve my losses,” Steve said.

If he hadn’t found Morning Star, Steve believes his life would have turned out much differently. “I am convinced, with the shortage of housing for someone with minimal income, I would most likely be in a men’s shelter or transitional group home, living in a bedroom and sharing a kitchen and bathroom with strangers.”

Morning Star Housing Manager Laurie Daniel worked with service coordinator Lynee Waterman to help Steve find a place to call home and community resources to help him adjust to life in a retirement community. Steve said Laurie worked hard to get him into his new apartment.

Morning Star has allowed Steve, 67, to remain independent as he learns to navigate his new life. It has provided safety, an apartment to call his own, privacy and dignity. Steve is surrounded by a community of friends and UCH staff members who have helped connect him to resources.

Steve said his partner’s death showed him how quickly life can change.

“I was accepted into Morning Star at a time in my life when I had no other resources,” Steve said. “I can say with all honesty that living here in some ways saved my life, and I will always be grateful.”





UCH Supports Staff Members through Liver Transplant

MaryJane and Mitch, partners who both work at United Church Homes' Cypress Run in Immokalee, Florida, are grateful for the support UCH gave them over the years.

On Aug. 27, MaryJane received a clean bill of health from doctors at her 11-year checkup after receiving a liver transplant.

In 1997, MaryJane was diagnosed with Hepatitis C, a viral infection that causes liver inflammation and eventually led to cirrhosis. In 2000, doctors told MaryJane she would need a liver transplant, but she waited another seven years before receiving the gift of life.

MaryJane is a former housing manager and the current service coordinator at the Immokalee property, while Mitch serves as maintenance director. Throughout MaryJane's health journey, UCH has provided support and love to the couple.

When MaryJane was first diagnosed with Hepatitis C, she started walking at least 5 miles every day. She lost weight, going from about 250 pounds to 130 today.

"They told me that, for my transplant, I would have to be in pretty good shape or I might not get it," MaryJane said.

The last six months before the transplant were the hardest on MaryJane's body and spirit.

"I was still in good health, but I was taking pills for water retention because my liver wasn't working at 100 percent," she said.

Two weeks before the scheduled transplant, MaryJane boarded a small plane that would take her from Painesville to Jacksonville, Florida. Angel Flight Southeast, an organization that flies patients to life-saving medical treatment, had donated travel expenses. But minutes after boarding the plane, MaryJane received devastating news — she had an infection that would keep her from receiving a new liver.

After seven months, on July 6, 2007, MaryJane finally received her transplant. One anti-rejection medication caused MaryJane to be nonresponsive for almost a month, and doctors told Mitch that MaryJane was in a coma.

"It's very tough on a person and the people who are around you," Mitch said. "The last four to five months before the transplant, she would have to go get water removed from her abdomen twice a week. They would risk an infection every time they put a needle into her belly. Her liver was almost nonexistent."

Throughout the transplant and healing process, UCH has been supportive of MaryJane and Mitch, who have been together 29 years.

MaryJane said she is thankful someone chose to give the gift of life.

"Through an act of selflessness, several people are walking around today because that one person decided to donate," Mitch said. "That made me become a donor."





Supporters Honored at Donor Appreciation Events

United Church Homes honored supporters at annual Donor Appreciation Dinners from May through October.



At each event, UCH presented three awards — the Diakonie Award, the Spirit Award and the Ben M. Herbster Award.



The Diakonie Award is presented to congregations to honor those who have demonstrated faithfulness in their support of the mission of United Church Homes and its communities.



The Spirit Award is presented to individuals who best exemplify the volunteerism, advocacy, inspiration and spirit for the residents and their families of United Church Homes communities.



The Herbster Award is presented to individuals who best exemplify the philosophy, leadership, philanthropic spirit and achievements of the late Rev. Dr. Ben M. Herbster, the first president of the United Church of Christ. After his retirement, Rev. Dr. Herbster served as a member and chairman of the Board of Directors of United Church Homes.

1. Rev. Jean Montgomery, St. John's, Massillon, Diakonie Award recipient. 2. Allan Norris, Glenwood Community Spirit Award recipient, and his wife, Carol. 3. Sherry McKay, Calvary Baptist Church, Parkvue Community Diakonie Award recipient. 4. Fairhaven Administrator Lori Marsh, Herbster Award recipients Mark and Nancy Johnson and Rev. Kenneth Daniel, president and CEO of United Church Homes. 5. United Church Homes President and CEO Rev. Kenneth Daniel, United Church Homes Management Executive Director Karen Messick, Anne Marks Gaertner, Herbster Award recipient, Jim Gaertner, David Marks and Cathy Green, Board chair of United Church Homes. 6. United Church Homes President and CEO Rev. Kenneth Daniel, Four Winds Spirit Award recipient Frank Doenges, Four Winds Chaplain Rev. Hannah Niday and Administrator Mary Casey. 7. Members of the Trinity Community Auxiliary, the Spirit Award recipient for Trinity Community.



A Journey from **Kenya** to Friendship Plaza



Friendship Plaza, one of United Church Homes' affordable housing communities, isn't just home to Yvonne, but her brother Paul also lives there. When he was 11 years old, Paul also lived with Yvonne as he spent a summer vacation with her in Nairobi, Kenya. Today, they live in Lincoln Heights, Ohio, one of America's first black suburbs, according to an article by The Atlantic, *The Destruction of a Black Suburb*.

When it was incorporated in 1947, Lincoln Heights was the first primarily black self-governing community north of the Mason-Dixon line. Today, it has one of the highest concentrations of African-American residents in the state of Ohio — 95.5 percent — according to the census.

Yvonne's journey to Friendship Plaza included being a resident in Kenya. Yvonne and Peter met as students at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. He pursued her for



nearly two years while she studied English. At first, she was hesitant to accept his admiration, but Peter won over Yvonne and they married after graduation. They moved to Kenya in 1962, a time of turmoil for the African country as it sought independence from British rule.

"I thought he looked lost, so I went to help him and he fell in love with me," Yvonne said. "I used to tell him, 'You're not in love with me — you're just homesick.'"

Peter, who passed away in the 1990s, served as the assistant secretary of state of Kenya. Through this role, the couple met and dined with dignitaries and heads of state for African countries.

In Kenya, Yvonne was a housewife and mother of two children, a boy and a girl, who both decided to stay in Kenya as adults. The family visited London and France for sightseeing and often went to the game park in Kenya. The wildlife refuge featured all sorts of animals, but Yvonne distinctly remembers the lions.

"It was neat to be able to get close to the wildlife and see them in their natural habitats," she said.

Yvonne hopes to return to Kenya in the future to visit her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.



Dorothy Eckert Makes Lasting Impact



Dorothy E. Eckert, 84, has made a lasting impact on United Church Homes. Dorothy is a longtime donor and volunteer. Her generosity as a donor, volunteer and Board member has spanned decades, and her passion for helping older adults is second to none.

Dorothy has served more than 30 years on the Fairhaven Community Volunteer Service Group and, at one time, as volunteer coordinator.

Dorothy remembers her grandparents and parents canning fruits and vegetables for Fairhaven when she was a little girl. Her parents, John and Mary Rinnert, and her grandparents, Harry and Emma Cieg, were longtime supporters of Fairhaven Community through their church, First United Church of Christ in Marion.

Dorothy was a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher. When Dorothy accepted the 2018 Housing Services Spirit Award this summer, she gave everyone in attendance homework — give to United Church Homes in some



capacity and visit at least one UCH housing community.

Dorothy served on the United Church Homes Board of Directors for about 10 years and continued on the Housing Board for nearly 10 more years until she moved to Colorado. Throughout her years on the Board, Dorothy made it a priority to visit each of United Church Homes' housing communities, where she learned of the great need for affordable housing for older adults

and of UCH's commitment to this ministry. In total, she has visited 49 housing properties.

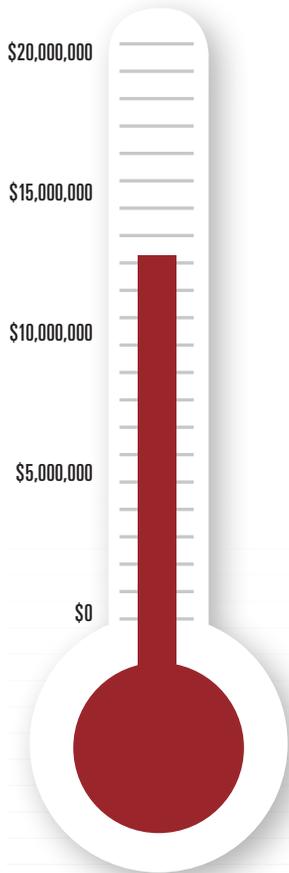
A Board trip to Mississippi in the 1990s opened Dorothy's eyes to the need for low-income, subsidized housing for older adults throughout the U.S. While in Mississippi, Dorothy met residents at multiple housing communities who shared their stories with her.

"One man was very tall and thin. We asked the residents what they liked most about living in this community," Dorothy said. "He responded, 'I like that I don't have to carry my water.' I approached him after the meeting and asked what he meant. He previously lived outside of town, and would carry 4-gallon jugs to the city pump and back home. It was over a mile each way."

Another resident told Dorothy she was glad she no longer had to live near drive-by shootings. Still others informed Dorothy that before living in a UCH community, they did not have indoor plumbing or electric stoves. The housing managers found they had to educate residents about a new way of living that included modern conveniences that most people take for granted.

"Dorothy has made a lifelong impact on United Church Homes through decades of support and volunteerism," said Cheryl Wickersham, vice president of housing services at United Church Homes. "There are few people who give so much to an organization over 30 years in so many ways, and Dorothy has gone a step further and challenged others to give, as well. Her influence on United Church Homes will be felt for years to come."



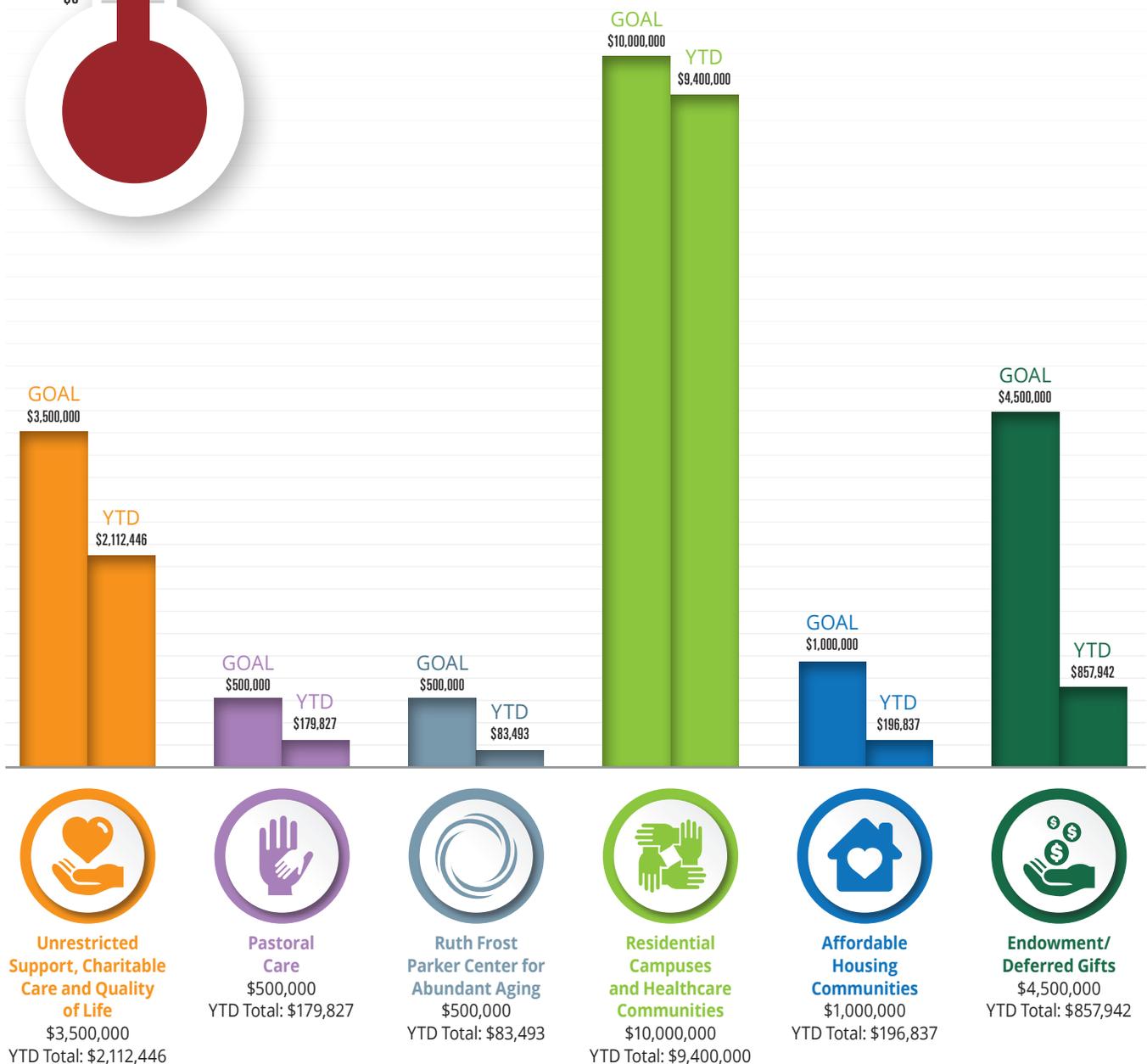


Campaign for Abundant Life

Goal
\$20,000,000

Results as of September 30, 2018
\$12,830,545

The Campaign for Abundant Life is increasing in momentum as more individuals, churches and community partners respond with support. 2018 marks year two of the five-year comprehensive campaign. The goal is to raise funds for charitable care, pastoral care, the Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging, updated campuses for long-term care communities and supportive services for affordable housing. To date, United Church Homes has raised over \$12.8 million. Below is a breakdown of funding raised:





Weaving a Stronger Bond

UNITED CHURCH HOMES BOARD VISITS MISSISSIPPI

United Church Homes Board members heard first-hand from residents of six UCH housing communities in Mississippi during the annual Board trip in September.

Board members Rev. Geoffrey Black, Rev. John Cramton and Rev. Dave Schwab flew to Mississippi with President and CEO Rev. Kenneth Daniel, Vice President of Housing Services Cheryl Wickersham and Vice President of Advancement and Communications Gloria T. Hurwitz.

“It was profound to hear that all of the residents had left situations that were pretty undesirable and they’ve found nirvana with United Church Homes,” Dave said.

In Mississippi, they visited residents, toured the Mississippi



Civil Rights Museum and met with representatives of Tougaloo College, a historically black college with a rich history of advocating for civil rights. Geoffrey is a trustee at Tougaloo College and the two groups discussed a potential partnership for the future, including learning and intergenerational opportunities.

The group started at Indian Run Estates in Pearl, followed by stops

at LeFleur Haven and Jackson Run, both in Jackson. They then went to Cottonwood Glen, Greenwood; Boardtown Village, Starkville; and Gateway Commons, Columbus.

Through group conversations, each Board and staff member learned about residents’ lives before moving to UCH communities and their current lives.

Boardtown Village and Gateway Commons were the latest housing communities to join UCH in April. During stops at each community, UCH staff and Board members celebrated with a dedication ceremony that included creating an artistic weave together, signifying the covenant between the organizations.

“We give thanks for those who had the vision to give birth to this

community in order to serve the needs of older adults,” Rev. Daniel said. “We honor the decades of those whose labors have cared for this place to this point in time, and we rejoice that this setting provides the place for individuals to continue to live in community and grow in purpose and meaning.”

At Indian Run, residents range in age from 40s through 90s. Residents were pleased with the friendships they had made, along with the peaceful and quiet environment. Residents said they weren't sure where they would be if they didn't live at the UCH communities. Together, residents enjoy movie nights, celebrate birthdays and attend Bible study, art classes and games. One resident said she wanted UCH to add a karaoke machine at Indian Run. UCH housing communities also partner with local organizations to provide services such as physical therapy and exercise classes in community spaces.

Bonnie worked as a licensed practical nurse in Mississippi, Ohio and Pennsylvania before moving to Indian Run. She misses her grandchildren, who she hasn't seen in 23 years.

At nearby LeFleur Haven, residents shared their journeys to UCH communities. Several have lived at LeFleur for over 10 years. Transportation services from the community take them to appointments, although a large portion of the residents still drive.

At Jackson Run, Marsha was one resident who shared her story. She had been living with her daughter and paying her half of the rent with Social Security, but often was late because she received her check after the rent was due. This led to considerable stress for her each month.

She learned of the affordable housing community of LeFleur Haven and moved in, causing her stress levels to decrease and her relationship with her daughter to improve.



Billie, who shares a name with her mother and grandmother, grew up near Tougaloo College, where her mother went to school to become a nurse. Billie's home in Mississippi was destroyed by a hurricane and the insurance wasn't enough to cover the costs of rebuilding. She still owned the land but had no place to live until she moved to Jackson Run.

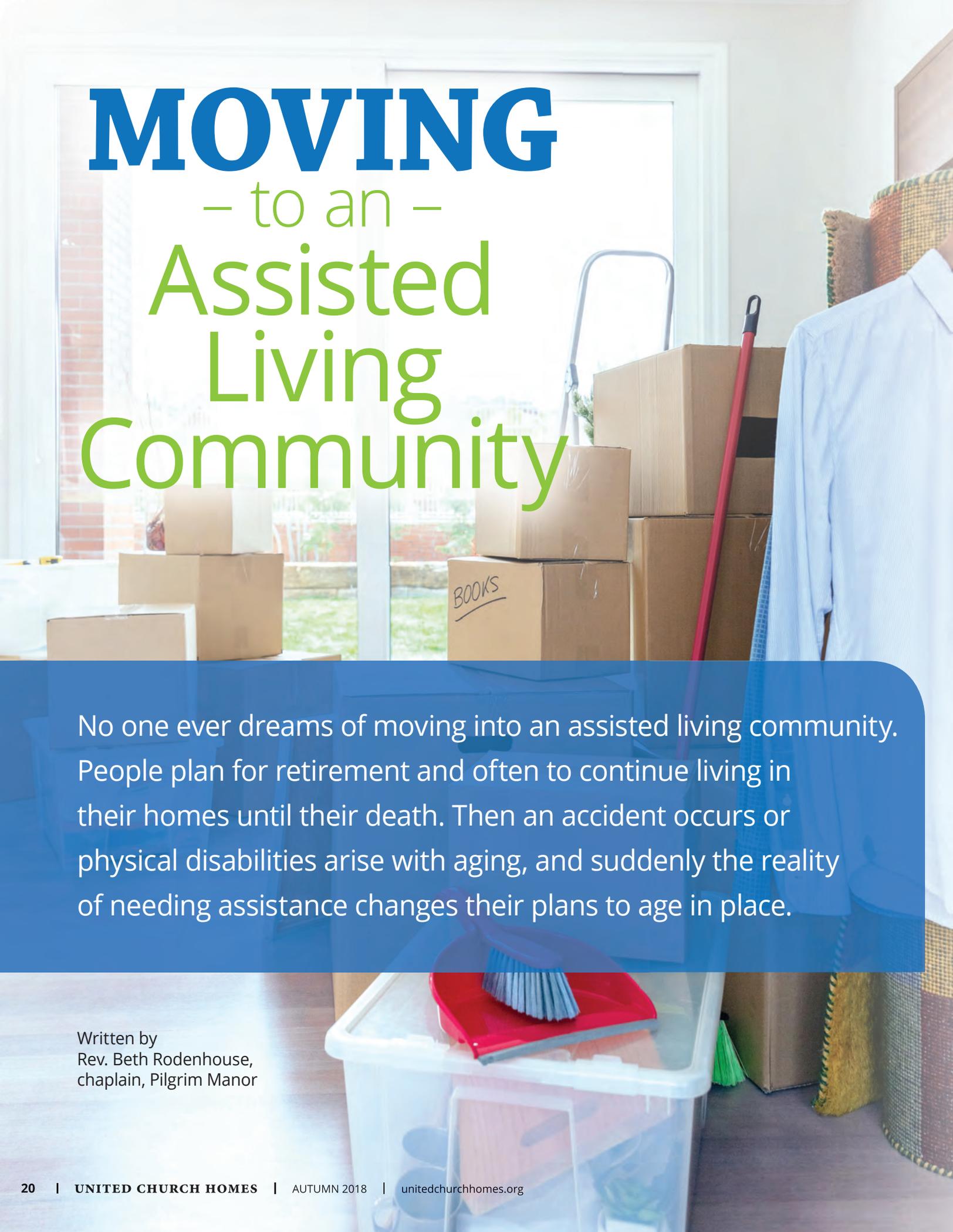
Most of the residents of Jackson Run still drive and attend community churches, but one important activity offered at the community is Bible study.

The diverse community builds on the strengths of all who live there.

“White or black, we all get along because we love each other,” Linda said.



“White or black, we all get along because we love each other.”



MOVING

– to an –

Assisted Living Community

No one ever dreams of moving into an assisted living community. People plan for retirement and often to continue living in their homes until their death. Then an accident occurs or physical disabilities arise with aging, and suddenly the reality of needing assistance changes their plans to age in place.

Written by
Rev. Beth Rodenhouse,
chaplain, Pilgrim Manor

For many, moving into an assisted living community feels less like a choice and more a necessity. It's natural for people to grieve the loss of the future they planned, as they try to ease into a new reality. Moving into an assisted living community can evoke feelings of surprising grief as well as joy.

Experiences of Grief

We often think of grief associated with the loss of a loved one. However, we also experience grief over many other life changes: a child leaving home to head to college, moving into a new season of life or changes in our families. Moving our home to a whole new place often causes feelings of loss, sadness, anger and grief. It might feel like you've lost more than your home — you may feel you've lost both independence and your identity.

It reminds me a bit of when I went to college for the first time. I didn't know anyone; I felt so homesick. College initially didn't feel like home — it was a strange place full of strangers. After several months, I felt more settled because I became part of the college community and felt a sense of belonging. Making friends takes time, but caring relationships help make a place into a home.

In Residents' Words

When I asked residents what helped them move in and get settled, Dick said, "Our kids helped us with the move. They measured the rooms and figured out where our furniture should go. They even bought us a TV. We couldn't have done this without them."

What Sally found most helpful was that several women in the dining room made her feel welcome. Relationships with family and the welcome from other residents help change a "strange place" into a home.

People are sometimes surprised by the intensity of their sadness or anger when they move in. When Fred moved into Pilgrim Manor last week, he said, "I didn't realize I'd be so sad."

Grief as a Process

Grieving a move is normal and natural. But it's also a process. Just like when I went to college for the first time, my feelings of homesickness were intense at first, but over time decreased. So it is for people moving into assisted living communities.

One way residents can help themselves through the grief process is by talking about it and naming their feelings. For some older adults, expressing feelings might take work. Some were taught to "swallow" their feelings and keep them private. Instead, I encourage them to express them. If you need to cry or complain, allow yourself. Only by experiencing these feelings will you be able to move through them to a new normal. It takes time, but feelings do change in intensity and duration.

Supporting Your Loved One

One way family and friends can support loved ones moving into assisted living communities is to lend a listening ear. First, it's important to realize that you — family, children, spouses — are "safe," meaning you have a relationship of trust built on love. Don't be surprised if you get the brunt of feelings of loss and anger. As much as humanly possible, try not to personalize your family member's grief. In addition, try not to take responsibility to "fix" their problem.

Grief isn't a problem to be resolved, but a process to be experienced.

Listening is so helpful because the way people move through grief is by talking about their feelings and losses, sharing memories that are important to them. Whenever you can, quiet your own heart that worries for them, and express a calm and quiet presence. They will appreciate your

loving support, best expressed with loving acceptance and tender hugs.

I first met Caroline when she was admitted to Pilgrim Manor's rehabilitation neighborhood following a stay in the hospital to repair a broken hip. At first, Caroline felt anxious and homesick. Within a few days, Caroline met Shirley, who was also in our rehab neighborhood. They became fast friends, sharing similar perspectives on faith and life. At the end of rehabilitation, Caroline went home, but Shirley transitioned to our assisted living community. But Caroline and Shirley kept in contact, and within three months, Caroline moved back to Pilgrim Manor in our assisted living community. She had found a true friend in Shirley, and realized living at home was more lonely than she remembered. For both Shirley and Caroline, finding an unexpected friend made each of their lives better.

New Sense of Self

Grieving is normal when you move into an assisted living community because you experience the loss of home. But it's also equally normal to find a new sense of meaning and self as you experience community. As Vicky, one of our residents said to me, "I didn't expect to make friends and laugh so much. I hadn't realized how small my circle of friends had become living by myself."

You might be surprised how a sense of belonging in a community also gives you new feelings of happiness and joy.



This article first appeared on the [Abundant Aging blog](#). For more or to subscribe, visit [abundantaging.org](#).



German-Ohio Partnership Celebrated at Chapel Hill



United Church Homes welcomed a German delegation to Chapel Hill Community in September to celebrate a 28-year partnership.

It had been a decade since Rev. Ralph Quellhorst saw his friend, Christa Kronshage, from Germany. During a special ceremony at Chapel Hill Community, the duo was recognized for their critical role in the German-Ohio church partnership.

About 40 people gathered to celebrate Ralph and Christa for their parts in starting the full communion or kirchengemeinschaft.

"It's more than a partnership," said Andreas Duderstedt, press secretary for Praeses Annette Kurschus. The praeses, which is similar to a bishop in the United States, and her delegation visited Chapel Hill after stops in Indiana, Kentucky and the Cleveland headquarters of the United Church of Christ.

"Ralph and Christa together are representing both sides of our kirchengemeinschaft," Transitional Conference Minister Rev. Dave Long-Higgins said. "They each represent the original leadership from each church

who started this relationship. They each carried significant leadership in the history of this partnership, bringing it to this point in time."

Through his daughter, Rev. Mindy Quellhorst, Ralph, who has Parkinson's disease, said the most important part of the program has been the relationships he has formed with members of the German regional church in Westphalia. Those relationships have continued over multiple generations.

Christa said that without Ralph, the dream would never have come to fruition.

Rev. Beth Long-Higgins, executive director of United Church Homes' Ruth Frost Parker Center for Abundant Aging, shared the history of UCH with the German delegation. From its inception in 1916, United Church Homes has always been a welcoming and inclusive place for all. Pastors serving the German Reformed Church in the United States were instrumental in starting UCH.

In 1916, Ohio was populated by many immigrants. In the Toledo area, five pastors serving German Reformed Churches observed that older members of their congregations had few options.

The forebears of United Church Homes rented a house in Toledo in 1920 so older congregants would have a place to live, and immediately had five residents who lived there. By 1922, they had raised enough money to purchase a farmhouse in Upper Sandusky, and that began the ministry of United Church Homes.

"United Church Homes really began as an immigrant mission," Beth said. "We now know this was important because as the immigrants aged, they could go somewhere where someone would speak their native tongue — including the first superintendent, Rev. Ruf, himself an immigrant from Switzerland. We know today that older persons who can speak two or more languages often will resort back to primarily using the first language that was spoken. This ministry on which we stand today really was a ministry to immigrants who were aging in a new land."

Following the ceremony, residents joined the German delegation for a reception. The Germans were so moved by the bell choir's performance that they offered a song in their native tongue.





Parkvue Resident Makes Journey from Music Teacher to Artist



Faye Waldron, a resident of United Church Homes' Parkvue Place in Sandusky, Ohio, has been playing piano for 80 years. She leads monthly sing-a-longs and plays piano often for fellow residents during mealtimes.

Faye started playing piano at age 7. She continues to play "because it makes people happy." She plays by memory and by ear.

"Music was a fun subject to teach," Faye said. "When students are introduced to a new concept in another subject, it can be daunting. But in music, students can let out their breath and relax a little bit, and they think, 'I can do this.'"

More than 20 years ago, at age 70, Faye started a new art — oil painting.

She grew up on a farm in southern Ohio, and has lived at Parkvue for about 18 months. She is a retired public school music teacher who studied piano and music education at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. She taught every grade from first through 12th during her 30-year career.

Faye was living at a retirement community in south Texas when she first started painting. An art instructor offered classes and Faye challenged herself to begin a new hobby.

"I wanted to see if I could do it," she said. "It's been great fun, and I was surprised by how well I could paint."

Faye, now 94, said she was fortunate to have an instructor who provided constructive criticism.

"That's what a good teacher does," she said.

Faye's paintings fit into the category of realism, which attempt to represent the subject matter truthfully, without artificiality. Faye started painting sunsets, and now she recreates photographs and scenes from real life in her paintings.

"It's something I like to do," Faye said. "At this age, you might as well do what you like."

At one point in her painting career, Faye would set aside at least two hours per week to spend on her art. She has never entered any art contests, and a recent art show at Parkvue Place was her first attempt at sharing her artwork with the greater community.

This past summer, Parkvue held an art show that featured pieces by residents, staff and members of the community. Faye's paintings were a popular attraction.

Faye has learned it's never too late to try — and excel at — something new, and to live abundantly in the process.



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

NEWS AND NOTES FROM OUR NEIGHBORS

Fairhaven, Four Winds Earn Silver Awards

Fairhaven Community in Upper Sandusky, Ohio, and Four Winds Community in Jackson, Ohio, are recipients of 2018 Silver Awards through the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living.

The award is the second of three possible distinctions through the AHCA/NCAL National Quality Award Program, which spotlights providers across the nation that have demonstrated their dedication to improving quality of care for residents and patients in long-term and post-acute care.

"Fairhaven and Four Winds are committed to implementing processes that better the lives of those we serve," said Lori Marsh, administrator of Fairhaven Community, and Mary Casey, administrator of Four Winds, in a joint statement. "We are proud to receive the Silver Award and look forward to continuing our efforts to improve quality."

Four Winds Named Top Skilled Nursing Center in Ohio

The Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, a division of the Ohio Department of Aging, has released results of the 2017 Long-Term Care Resident Satisfaction Survey. Four Winds Community, a United Church Homes community in Jackson, ranked the 22nd best skilled nursing center in the state.

The survey, conducted through face-to-face interviews with residents of skilled nursing care centers and assisted living communities, gauges residents' satisfaction with an array of focus areas related to their care and everyday life.

Athena Gardens Earns Superior HUD Rating

Congratulations to Athena Gardens in Athens, Georgia, for receiving a superior rating from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The Management and Occupancy Review checks for compliance with HUD guidelines and regulations. A superior rating is difficult to achieve, United Church Homes Vice President of Housing Services Cheryl Wickersham said. The ratings are superior, above average, satisfactory, below average and unsatisfactory.

"Achieving a superior rating is a testament to the work of Housing Manager David Davis and Service Coordinator Sherell Wilson," Cheryl said. "This is an outstanding accomplishment for Athena Gardens."

Fairhaven Community Residents Seek Change Amidst Gun Violence

In late 2017, residents of United Church Homes' Fairhaven Community in Upper Sandusky, Ohio, began a new Bible study resource from the United Church of Christ called *Faith vs. Fear: A Faith Response to Gun Violence*.

One resident wanted to do more than simply study the issue, so the group began brainstorming ways to move their learning into action. They came up with a plan — send orange hearts, representing gun violence awareness, to local UCC congregations for Valentine's Day with a simple message: "Residents at Fairhaven Community in Upper Sandusky recently completed the *Faith vs. Fear* UCC Bible study. For Valentine's Day, our response is to send orange hearts, the color of gun violence awareness, to show our choice to make a difference and to choose love over fear! All hearts have been colored by residents. Blessings!"

St. John's UCC in Milan sent a note back to the residents, thanking them for their witness to love with the gift of an orange heart.

"It came in the mail the day after the Parkland shooting and deeply touched me," wrote Rev. Wendy of St. John's UCC, who shared it with the congregation on the following Sunday. Other churches opted to hang the orange heart on a bulletin board to spread the message with the congregation.



**RUTH FROST PARKER
CENTER FOR
ABUNDANT AGING**



**Rainbow Elder Care
of Greater Dayton**

Miami Valley LGBT HORIZONS of AGING SUMMIT

Join us in this inaugural event that recognizes the journey for equality and dignity of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender older adults and learn how to help ensure affirmed abundant aging for this underserved population.

Breakout sessions will cover healthcare and social justice issues, including health disparities among sexual minority populations; intersectionality; dementia among LGBT older adults; understanding the needs of long-term HIV survivors; senior living options and affordable housing; transgender aging; end-of-life concerns; and more, featuring:

Jason Flatt, PhD, MPH

Assistant professor in residence at the Institute for Health & Aging, Department of Social & Behavioral Sciences, at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), School of Nursing. Dr. Flatt will address Alzheimer's disease and related dementias among LGBTQ older adults.



✓ Mark Your Calendars!

Feb. 11 – 12, 2019

9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

**Sinclair Conference Center
444 West Third Street
Dayton, OH 45402**

Registration Options:

Both days, includes lunch and CEUs \$150

Single day, includes lunch and CEUs \$75

Students and older adults (age 55+) \$20

Please visit **abundantaging.org** for more information about event and registration details.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Stu Maddux

Stu Maddux is an award-winning producer and director of nonfiction media with international credits including PBS, Showtime, TLC, VH1, Spike, Logo, CMT and BBC.



Presenting the Film:

Gen Silent

Gen Silent is a documentary chronicling the lives and travails of six older LGBT adults. The film was produced by Joe Applebaum and Stu Maddux.

WITH SUPPORT FROM:



We do not discriminate based upon race, color, creed, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, age, disability, genetic information or ancestry.





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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

Council for Health and Human Service Ministries (CHHSM): chhsm.org

LeadingAge: leadingage.org

LeadingAge Ohio: leadingageohio.org

Midwest Affordable Housing Management Association (MAHMA): mahma.com

Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging: ohioaging.org

Ohio Healthcare Association: ohca.org

Southeastern Affordable Housing Management Association (SAHMA): sahma.org

UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns: ucccoalition.org

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