



St. John's Lutheran Community *Fall/Winter* 2023

In this issue

From the Administrator	1
Featured Employee	2
From Kathy's Desk	3
Giving Options	3
Volunteer Spotlight	3
Memorials & Gifts.....	5
Activities & Photographs ..	5-7

Mission Statement

St. John's mission is to provide physical, emotional, social and Christian care for all people, with dignity and respect, in an environment of God's grace.

You'll find a *home*
in our community.

St. John's Lutheran Community
901 Luther Place, Albert Lea, MN 56007
Phone (507)373-8226 • Fax (507)379-9506
www.stjohnsofalbertlea.org



Caring Times



Many wonderful changes ahead

Shanna Eckberg, NHA, MHA
CEO/Administrator

The Fall season is upon us. A crisper bite to the air, humidity levels dropping, and the beautiful leaves changing color. Our St. John's community stays busy with many activities, welcomes more team members, and enjoys times with our friends and families. St. John's mission is "to provide physical, emotional, social, and Christian care for all people, with dignity and respect, in an environment of God's grace." With this in mind, we have focused on our residents and team members. We are working hard on appreciating each stakeholder of St. John's and are re-centering ourselves on the most important things to St. John's, residents, families, and the team.

Change can be difficult yet rewarding and exciting. As we move forward toward positive change, it is crucial to keep in mind that we are serving seniors in their homes, and they are our reason for existing. I'm sure that many have seen the exterior improvements being made as we've been able to focus on deferred maintenance items such as new mulch, paving, repairing damaged items to the building, and a variety of other things.

As part of our newsletter, I thought it would be helpful for everyone to read about a few of the overall challenges being faced by senior living providers.

1. Increased costs for both providers and customers.
2. Tight labor market.
3. Increased amount of paperwork and regulations.

St. John's is facing these challenges head-on. We are reviewing ways to reduce expenses, streamline processes for efficiency, and use technology where possible. We are also focusing on our team members. We have allocated resources for retaining and recruiting, are re-invigorating our scholarship program, and have added career paths for those who desire to become certified nursing assistants, trained medication aides, and nurses. To be ready for more paperwork and regulations, we are educating ourselves on what we can do to be prepared. We are reviewing software that is the most helpful tool to our team members and effectively utilizing the skills of those already on our team. Regulations are constantly changing and growing. We have brought on a policy and procedure manual that will help us be ready for these, focusing on quality of care and ensuring compliance with these regulations through audits, monitoring, and training.

We all at St. John's look forward to meeting you. Here is the quote for the quarter.

"Don't limit your challenges; challenge your limits. Each day, we must strive for constant and never-ending improvement".

– Tony Robbins

St. John's Lutheran Community Board Of Directors

Randy Nicol, *Chairman*
Shane Koepke, *Vice Chairman*
Dean Jensen, *Secretary*
Jerry Noland, *Treasurer*
Mark Light
Camilla Kolker-Sparks
Brenda Wichmann
John Holt
Jim Munyer
Mark Anderson

St. John's Foundation Board

Darryl Meyer, *President*
Jim Munyer
Charles Reindal
Joel Erickson
Jerry Vogt

Ascension Lutheran
Bear Lake Lutheran
Bethlehem Lutheran
Central Freeborn Lutheran
Community Lutheran
Concordia Pickerel
Lake Lutheran
Cross of Glory Lutheran
East Freeborn Lutheran
Emmons Lutheran
First Lutheran of Albert Lea
First Lutheran of Ellendale
First Lutheran of Glenville
Grace Lutheran
Hayward Lutheran
Lunder Lutheran
Mansfield Lutheran
Moscow Lutheran
Oakland Lutheran
Round Prairie Lutheran
St. Paul Lutheran
Salem Lutheran
Trinity Lutheran
Trondhjem Lutheran
West Freeborn Lutheran

Answering a call to serve

Randy Nicol, St. John's Lutheran Community Board Chair



When my wife and I retired and moved to Albert Lea almost seven years ago, we did not know a soul that lived here. Being a part of organizations in

our old community, we decided to call and ask some questions about those organizations. I reached the local Gideon camp, and my wife called the local PEO chapters. One of the questions we asked was, "What will we love most about Albert Lea?" All three individuals gave the same answer, "You will love the people." It has definitely been so and we still believe that to be the case; there are many great people in our community, and these are the kind of people I have met who work at St. John's.

I was asked to serve on the board at St. Johns almost six years ago, and at that time, I knew nothing about this senior living campus as the new St. Johns was just being built. When I retired, I planned to volunteer and serve my new community any way I could, so I said yes. We have experienced a lot of ups and downs during the past six years, but I believe God has a plan for us, and the future looks great. Hiring Shanna Eckberg as our new CEO/Administrator has been great for

the St. John's community. We are looking to the future now that our finances are in order. We have moved our Luther Place residents to The Woodlands, and I look forward to repurposing Luther Place to help our Albert Lea community. We have been told we are 800 units short of housing, and hopefully, with some financial support, we can provide many new options for elderly housing at Luther Place.

Many companies are short-handed today, and St. John's is no exception; however, I am very proud of our staff for stepping up to help cover those vacancies. My mother is in a nursing home in another state, and I wish I could bring her to St. John's for the caring staff, excellent facilities, and great meals. I have visited with many residents, and they feel like they are part of a big, happy family. It's a home with many friends to associate with and a very caring and dedicated staff to help them. I hear all the time from staff that their main concern is the happiness and welfare of the residents. St. John's team truly has a passion for loving and caring for the residents.

There are many staff with 40+ years of service to St. John's, which shows it's not just a job but a career with family. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to experience this community and the chance to get to know the staff and residents at St. John's.

Randy Nicol

FEATURED EMPLOYEE

Name: Jill Bangert

Position/title at St John's:
Housekeeping/On Call
CNA (Certified Nursing
Assistant)

Years at St John's:
18 years

What makes you unique: I feel pretty comfortable around the residents and staff. I don't mind helping others and taking care of the daily needs of the facility and helping keep St. John's nice.

Tell us about your family members: My three children attend Alden-Conger school. Eva is in 4th grade; Sam is in 8th grade and Ein is in 11th grade. They are very special to

me and my husband. We enjoy farming and simple things in life.

What are your hobbies or interests outside of work:

My flower gardens and plants. Yard work, hiking, bird watching, two pet cats keep us entertained. Audio books are nice to help unwind and we enjoy going to a concert once in a while.

What do you like most about working at St. John's:

The work is dependable and not as strenuous as other jobs that I've had. It's good to see residents and staff that smile and get along well with each other.



The Holidays are an excellent time to give back.

Kathy Woodside, Director of Public Relations, Fund Development, and Volunteers



Fall is here, and the holiday season isn't far behind. The holidays are a season of giving.

Whether you give your time, talents, or treasures, it warms our hearts to share gifts with neighbors and friends.

There are many opportunities to give in our beautiful community. One way is by volunteering. We

are always in need of volunteers year-round, but especially during the holidays. We have many fun and engaging activities and church services where residents could use an extra hand. Holiday decorating, baking, and crafts are just a few opportunities to volunteer your time and talents. Whether helping transport residents to and from events or lending a caring ear, volunteers strengthen our community.

Another opportunity to share your gifts is through financial donations. There are many different funds to which you can donate, and this is a beautiful way to do so. Gifts often are given in tribute to a loved one or in memory of a loved one. All these funds benefit St. John's in substantial ways.

Giving makes us happy! This all means that giving is a much more important element of happiness than receiving. Being able to give makes us feel like we are making a significant impact in someone's life or community and encourages us to do good and uncover a different perspective of happiness.

I hope you will consider sharing your blessings in one way or another. YOU truly can make a difference in someone's life and, in turn, maybe even yours.

Please reach out to me to become a volunteer or to donate to our beautiful community.

Have a blessed and wonderful fall and holiday season.

Kathy Woodside

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



Giving is receiving.

I am Kathy Paul, a volunteer at St. John's on the Lake campus. When my husband, Dick, and I moved into our condominium located near the Luther Place campus, we started volunteering to help with the programs at St. John's.

For six years, we helped with the parties, celebrations, and programs. Due to my husband's health issues, we were unable to continue our participation. Then,

we went into the COVID period, which limited our activities. But, I knew something important was missing from my daily life. When I was asked in July of 2021 if I would be interested in calling Bingo every Monday afternoon at St. John's on the Lake, I said I would be glad to try it. So, here I am, two years later, still calling Bingo and enjoying it immensely!

At 82, I am so happy I can do the volunteer work that I like so much. I also volunteer in other places - I participate in Reader's Theater, a program with children in the Albert Lea elementary school system, at church, at the Condominium Association, and am a Golden K Kiwanis Club member.

A delightful group of residents come each Monday to play Bingo. After setting up the Bingo machine and distributing the cards, we have a lot of fun talking and sharing as we await the start time. I have learned much about the Albert Lea community and some surrounding communities

as the folks have shared their stories. It is a true joy to be with them!

I was chatting with a neighbor here at the Condominiums, Carol Miller. She volunteers at the Luther Place campus of St. John's. On Friday mornings, she takes residents to the beauty shop and returns them to their rooms when they are finished. She has been doing that volunteer service since April and likes doing it. Not only does she enjoy the people she works with, but she also gets her exercise as she pushes the wheelchairs to the beauty shop!

We agreed that when you volunteer, you think that you are helping others, but you realize that you actually gain so much from the friendly relationships you form as you work with the people with whom you are volunteering. I am so thankful for the opportunity to volunteer in St. John's warm, caring atmosphere.

Kathy Paul,
St. John's Volunteer

For more information regarding the St. John's Foundation please contact:

Kathy Woodside at 507-473-1013 or Shanna Eckberg at 507-473-1011.

To make a gift to the St. John's Foundation, please send your tax deductible donation to:

**St. John's Lutheran Community
Attn: Kathy Woodside
901 Luther Place
Albert Lea, MN 56007**

**Giving Options:
St. John's Foundation**

St. John's on Luther Place

Knutson Place

St. John's on Fountain Lake

There are many different funds in which to donate, including but not limited to:

Activity Fund

Building Fund

Chapel Fund

Garden Fund

Dietary Fund

Maintenance Fund

**Specific
Neighborhoods &
Households**

Interested in joining our team?

Contact St. John's at 507-373-8226 for information about job or volunteering opportunities!

“A Journey From Fillmore To Albert Lea: a New Direction For a Seasoned Pastor”



*By Chaplain
Michael Harris*

Living in Minnesota has its challenges. Moving just before winter and not being ready to move is a bigger challenge. My wife, Jamie, and I have only been residents of Albert Lea for one week and we already had sticking snow on October 29, 2023. The boxes are not unpacked, and the house is still a bit of a mess.

We are thrilled to be here to serve at

St. John's Lutheran Community. I have been a pastor for 15 years and moving is a constant. I pray that serving here with our new family will be full of many years and the journey can be spiritual. I come from the Free Methodist Church as an ordained elder and now your new chaplain. God is bringing us into a new season, and I am so excited.

The holidays are just a few weeks away from getting started and we hope we can celebrate with all our residents and staff and bring reminders of what Thanksgiving and Christmas are truly about. I love the winter season because it reminds me of the reasons, I must be thankful for family, friends, and salvation. Christmas is only about Jesus even though our consumer-driven world tells us otherwise.

Scripture tells us in Hebrews 12:28, “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our “God is a consuming fire.” (Favorite Bible verse by the way!) Let's find ways to make new relationships and love God together as we get to know one another and celebrate the holidays.

May you be blessed abundantly and may your family be well.

P.S. Pray for Jamie and I to only see boxes wrapped in Christmas paper very soon.

***Blessings and Grace,
Chaplain Michael Harris***

Welcome to Fall!

Christina Farris, Activities Director



seasons change, we also have some

Welcome to Fall! For the activities department, the change of seasons means new recipes to bake, new games to play, more coffee time, and more indoor time. As the

changes happening in the activities department. We are very excited to add a new position to our team.

Carter O'Brien will join us as the Wellness Director for St. John's Lutheran Community. Carter will lead more exercise groups and bring NEW wellness-focused events and activities to St. John's. This is a very exciting opportunity for our residents and tenants to learn and become more active.

Starting in November, we will be offering entertainment every Friday afternoon for all residents/tenants to

enjoy during the cold months when we all begin to feel a little cooped up. The activities team is also working on plans for a Halloween Party, a Veteran's Day event, a Christmas celebration, and a new event...a Holiday Bazaar! The Holiday Bazaar will be a time for all to come and do a little shopping and socializing as we look forward to the Christmas season. Even though we aren't thrilled at the thought of colder temperatures and snowflakes falling, we are excited to provide fun and new activities for the St. John's Community.



GET SOCIAL WITH US!

Stay informed and up-to-date on happenings at St. John's Lutheran Community.



FOLLOW US ON
Social Media



St. John's Lutheran Community | 901 Luther Place, Albert Lea, MN 56007 | 507.373.8226

Memorials & Gifts

MEMORIALS & GIFTS

Designated memorials & gifts - Totaling \$6,302.00

LIBRARY

In memory of Lavaun Houg
Given by Vickie Olsen

CHAPEL

In memory of Ruth Perry
Given by Wanda &
Mike Wangness

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Wanda &
Mike Wangness

GARDEN

Special Gift

Given by Norm & Joyce Fredin
Given by Karen Houge
Given by Amanda Braun
Given by Mark & Allison Ciota
Given by Jim & Kathy Borkowski
Given by Jon & Magdalen Judd
Given by Timothy &
Susan Kozelsky
Given by Ethel Kopischke &
Elaine Trejo

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Brandy & Michael
Boettcher

In memory of Larry Lillibridge
Given by Brandy & Michael
Boettcher

WATERS EDGE

Special Gift

Given by Gwen &
Jerome Wuerflein
Given by Norm Fredin

In memory of
Arlene Hobbiebrunken
Given by Doug &
Diane Wichmann

In memory of Richard Tavis
Given by Alice Jensen

In memory of Richard Tavis
Given by Kathryn Fredrickson

In memory of Richard Tavis
Given by Barbara Tullberg
In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Mary Ann Martinson

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Phyllis Tavis

Special Gift

Given by Gretchen Claussen

In memory of Evie Eglund
Given by Alice Jensen

In memory of Evie Eglund
Given by Sharon Seidel

MEADOWS

Special gift from Fraternal
Order of Eagles Aux 2258

FOUNTAIN LAKE

In memory of Theresa Klingenberg
Given by Family & Friends

ELACTIVITY FUND

Special Gift

Given by Anonymys
Given by Norm & Joyce Fredin

In memory of Louis Tomschin
Given by Robert & Donna Nelson

In memory of Beulah Wiegand
Given by Sara & David Obermeyer

In memory of Patricia Kermes
Given by Sara & David Obermeyer

In memory of Lavaun Houg
Given by Phillip & Jane Kronlage

In memory of Pembie Erickson
Given by Doug &
Diane Wichmann

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Doug &
Diane Wichmann

In memory of Richard Tavis
Given by Cynthia Sorenson

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Alice Jensen

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Rex & Lois Stotts

In memory of Gene Utzka
Given by Rex & Lois Stotts

In memory of Larry Lillibridge
Given by Rex & Lois Stotts

In memory of Susan Storlie
Given by Doug &
Diane Wichmann

In memory of Julie Jerdee
Given by Doug &
Diane Wichmann

In memory of Luella Sharpe
Given by Doug &
Diane Wichmann

In memory of Janae Clausen
Given by Doug &
Diane Wichmann

In memory of Susan Storlie
Given by Bev & Jerry Noland

Special Gift

Given by Norm Fredin

KNUTSON PLACE

In honor of Darlene & Don
Kenison 75th Anniversary
Given by Fred & Sue Kline

In memory of Erma Nelson
Given by Steven & Kaye Tuft

In memory of Erma Nelson
Given by Thomas & Deann Nelson

In memory of Erma Nelson
Given by Joann Nelson

In memory of Arlean Stadheim
Given by Doug &
Diane Wichmann

FOUNDATION

In memory of Pembie Erickson
Given by Bonnie Trampel

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Carol & Clifford Rask

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Dale & Marilyn Matson

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Phyllis Hamborg

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Joan & Lynn Wittmer

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Jon & Kathy Woodside

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Joyce Halvorson

In memory of Nancy Lahs
Given by Erna Berthelsen

In memory of Richard Tavis
Given by Phyllis Martinson

In memory of Nichole Koester
Given by Bear Lake
Women of the Church

In memory of Eilene Davidson
Given by Eilene Davidson Estate

In memory of Arlean Stadheim
Given by Phyllis Hamborg

In memory of Patricia Erickson
Given by Jon & Kathy Woodside

In memory of Harvey Tolzman
Given by Bear Lake
Women of the Church

In memory of Pembie Erickson
Given by Phyllis Tavis

In memory of Tom Sheehan
Given by Julie Schewe

MEMORIALS & GIFTS

Undesignated memorials & gifts - Totaling \$5,942.77

Special Gift

Given by Salem Lutheran Church
Given by Mansfield
Lutheran Church
Given by East Freeborn
Lutheran Church
Given by First Lutheran

Church Albert Lea
Given by Ascension
Lutheran Church
Given by Scot Spates
by Thrivent Giving Plus
Given by Rex Stotts
by Thrivent Giving Plus

Given by Anita Helland
by Thrivent Giving Plus
Given by Amazon Smile

In memory of Richard Tavis
Given by Jerome &
Gwen Wuerflein

In memory of Richard Tavis
Given by Joy Tavis

In memory of Pembie Erickson
Given by Joyce Halvorson

In memory of Shirley Berg
Given by Earl &
Rosemary Colstrup

Donations Made April through September 2023



THANKS A LATTE!

Happy National Coffee Day! We brewed up smiles with delicious and fresh coffee from Caribou! It was the perfect day to “Espresso” how much we appreciate our fabulous team! Thanks a “latte” for all you do for our beautiful community!

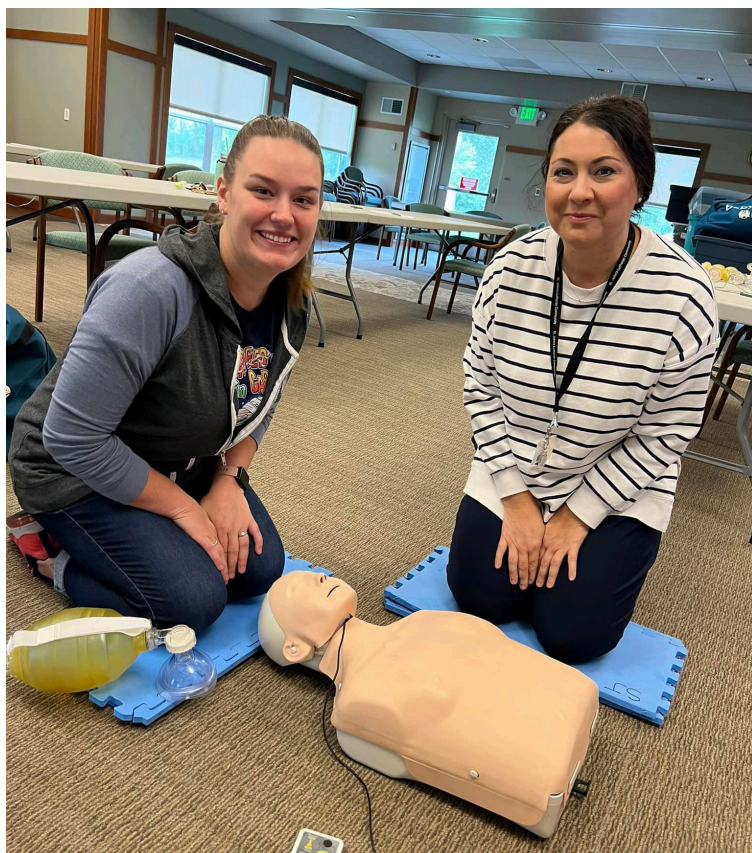


We are excited to add a Wellness Director to our amazing St. John’s Lutheran Community team. Carter O’Brien joined our team and has added many wellness activities for all levels of care. One of the many programs he has added is individual fitness assessments, group fitness classes, and social walks.



Thank you to our dedicated team at St. John’s! We recently celebrated and thanked them with a delicious picnic meal! Thank you to everyone who helped make this a fun-filled event. The celebration was complete with fun, games, and savory food by Scott Fadden!

Staff/Events



As part of our continuing education program at St. John's Lutheran Community, team members took a refresher course on CPR Training. Thank you to Tim Harves, Basic Life Saving Instructor with the Albert Lea Police Department.



Congratulations, Peggy Jo Johnson, on celebrating 40 years of dedicated service at St. John's Lutheran Community! Peggy Jo started at St. John's in 1983, working in housekeeping. She served the residents as a housekeeper, laundry, a substitute van driver and has been the Luther Place Condo manager for over 20 years.



Events & Happenings



Knutson Place tenants enjoyed fun and laughter during their weekly fitness class! Good job to everyone on staying active and healthy!



Winner winner chicken dinner! St. John's residents hit the jackpot with a super fun and exciting outing! They enjoyed a fun-filled morning at Diamond Jo casino with good friends and neighbors!

Events & Happenings



It was a gorgeous day for a road trip to Austin, MN! Knutson Place tenants enjoyed a lovely afternoon eating lunch, shopping and just spending time with friends and neighbors!



Cletus Goblirsch entertained everyone with his wonderful music! Residents and tenants enjoyed listening to his beautiful voice and polka music!



Events/Thank You



We welcomed our final resident from St. John's Luther Place to our beautiful Fountain Lake campus. Residents and staff are getting settled into their new homes and adjusting nicely. This was a team effort and we truly appreciate everyone's assistance in moving all our residents.

A special thank you to Nate Riley and his sister, Joy Scholl, for performing beautiful music for us!

The duo entertained residents at our St. John's Fountain Lake campus. You both have amazing talent and everyone enjoyed every minute.



Another beautiful morning creating adorable crafts! Water's Edge tenants spent time with neighbors and friends while making cute pumpkins! Thank you to St. John's volunteer, Bonnie Wedge, for always leading this fun activity!

Thank You



A huge thank you to the community for donating to the Hollandale Christian school mum fundraiser. You have blessed both St John's communities with beautiful mums. Thank you to The Hebbelwhite family for delivering a trailer full of mums for both locations.



We are honored and blessed to receive a donation of a beautiful granite birdbath. This birdbath was donated in loving memory of Dale Lamp by his family members. The birdbath is located in the resident gardens at the St. John's Fountain Lake campus for all to enjoy!



The Gideons International organization in Albert Lea so graciously shared Bibles with our St. John's communities! Thank you to Melford Bohonek and James Johnson, both members of the local Gideon organization, for delivering Gideon Bibles!

THANK YOU!

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 6
ALBERT LEA, MN 56007



ST. JOHN'S
LUTHERAN COMMUNITY

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN COMMUNITY
901 LUTHER PLACE
ALBERT LEA, MN 56007

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

HOLIDAY BAZAAR



**OPEN
TO THE
PUBLIC**

**FREE
EVENT**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6
1:00PM-6:00PM

ST. JOHN'S FOUNTAIN LAKE CHAPEL
1761 EAGLE VIEW CIRCLE - ALBERT LEA, MN 56007



**SHOP LOCAL CRAFTS, FOOD, BAKED
ITEMS, CLOTHING, JEWELRY, HOLIDAY
GIFT ITEMS AND MORE! ALL IN ONE PLACE!**

WWW.STJOHNSOFALBERTLEA.ORG



**FOR QUESTIONS
CALL 507-373-8226**