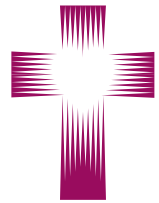


# Link-Age

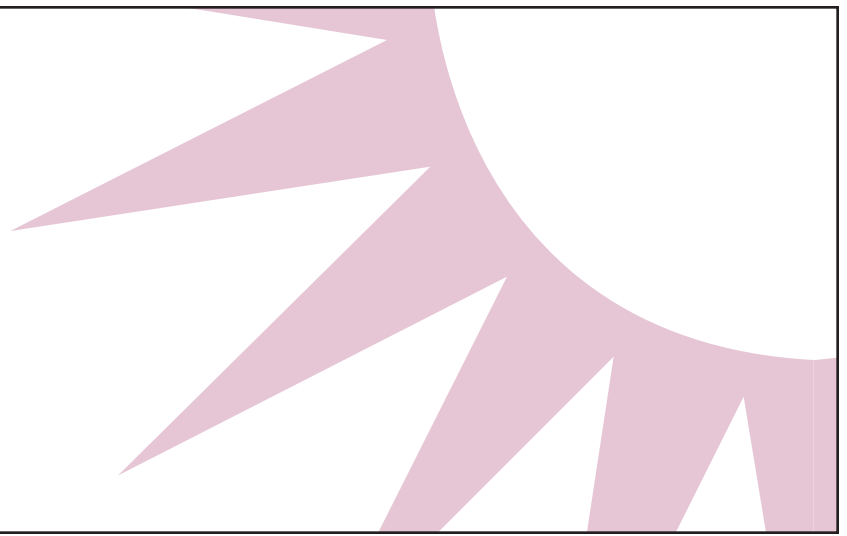
NEWSLETTER • FALL ISSUE 2007



## The Lutheran Home Association

Where the Care of the Soul is the Soul of Care®

National Ministry Offices • 337 South Meridian Street • Belle Plaine, MN 56011-1919



## A cup of coffee for the road... a teacher learns from the students

*It's Monday, June 25, at 5 a.m., and I kiss my wife goodbye and try to do the same to my now one-year-old daughter without waking her up. I mentally run through my list of things I've packed just one more time and grab that last cup of coffee for the road. My destination? Olivia, Minnesota. I think to myself how it was only two days ago I carried my luggage and briefcase into the house just in time to celebrate my daughter's birthday. Now here I am packed and leaving again. With ten other things on my mind I back out of*

*the driveway, travel a mile and realize I forgot my cup of coffee on the counter. "Not a big deal," I think as I turn around, "I'm not that far." Ten miles later I now realize I forgot my Bible. "Do I turn around or just borrow one?" I ask myself. At this point I decide I am too far into my trip and can always borrow a Bible from someone, if I need one.*

A few weeks later I thought more about what I had done. Part of my work for The Lutheran Home Association  
**A cup of coffee - continued on page 5**



Participants present the story of Jonah being swallowed by the big fish. This skit was one of two stories that the Summer Ministry Experience students shared throughout the summer in a variety of settings.

## Kingsway Retirement Living growing quickly at the Belle Plaine Campus

June



August

November



Shingling is well underway! We have reservations for 50% of the independent living and assisted living homes as of Thanksgiving. To learn more about this exciting community for seniors 55 and older, please contact Karolee Coppoc, Administrator/Director of Marketing, at e-mail: info@tlha.org, (952) 873-2022 or 1-888-600-TLHA (8542).

## Frontlines

### Forgiveness

It is nearly eleven o'clock on this cold, early winter evening. You can feel a change in the air as the light during the day shortens and the calendar says the holidays will soon be upon us. On this night, nurses and nursing assistants hurry to prepare the next shift of dedicated workers with their observations from the past eight hours. The lights throughout The Lutheran Home Campus have dimmed. There is a feeling of serenity throughout the building. There is a feeling of peace in every resident room--every room, except one.

In this one room is a resident named Sam (name changed). Sam is dying. He no longer is walking into eternity; death is running up to overtake him like an Olympic sprinter passing by a junior high school student. The news that he is

**Michael R. Klatt**

**President and  
Chief Executive  
Officer**



dying is not new information for him. It is why Sam came to us several months ago. His doctor made it plain that his cancer would kill him eventually.

Some would describe Sam as crusty. Others might say that crusty was a bit kind. For the past months, he had been rude and short to his caregivers. He had no time for the few family members who did visit. Our full-time chaplains couldn't get in a word at all. Sam had no time for the chaplains. He was open-

ly impatient when they were around. He showed no interest in God.

As eleven o'clock approached, the nurse who faithfully served Sam for months despite his attitude went to take Sam's vitals. She knew inside that Sam was dying. As the nurse checked Sam's blood pressure, Sam grabbed her arm. "I need to see the chaplain--now." The nurse thought she had misunderstood him. His eyes and soft-spoken words repeated the plea, "Please get the chaplain."

The nurse called the chaplain at home. He had just gone to bed for the night. She described that Sam wanted him there. The chaplain wanted clarification. "Are you sure?" he asked. "Yes, pastor. Sam asked for you."

Some time later, the chaplain arrived, acknowledged the staff, and then  
**Frontlines — Continued on page 3**

## Inside . . .

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With our thanks, Take stock . . . and more, Carrying on the legacy and Tax-free gifting from IRS to charities ending in December

# Christian Insights

## "What do UPS, GPS and Jesus Have in Common?"

In case anyone doesn't know what the letters mean, I'll tell you. Most know that UPS stands for United Parcel Service. Usually someone in a brown work uniform driving a brown UPS truck knows the way and travels the route to wherever you are to deliver your parcels.

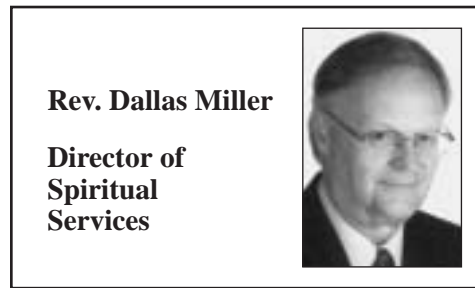
GPS is a little more complicated to explain, but it knows the way also and shows the route to where you want to go. My son and I were recently talking about purchasing a GPS unit. He is doing most of the research, but as I did a little reading my mind wandered to thinking about what a GPS and, to a certain extent, the UPS have in common with Jesus.

First I read about a man who had been elk hunting. As evening approached in the darkening forest, every tree looked the same. Instead of finding the trail he expected to see as he turned and went to his left, he searched and cautiously proceeded further than he thought he should need to go. When he started going down into an unfamiliar rocky ravine he stopped and went back the way he had come. Just before dark he managed to get back to the camp, but vowed he would never be in the woods like that again without a GPS. This little device about the size of a cell phone is an electronic global positioning system (GPS). It runs on two AA batteries and has maps of the world included in its computer-like memory. Using satellites, it triangulates its position anyplace on those maps of the world. With the help of a local area map or by following the recorded route

and destination you've chosen, you can find your way. Airplanes, ships, and even UPS drivers use similar equipment to keep from getting lost and to reach their destination.

The article's author went on to say that some people feel choosing which GPS to buy and learning how to use it can be almost as difficult as finding your way out of the forest without one. The high tech or otherwise new terminology, the vast variety of included features, strange acronyms like WAAS and the user manual all make choosing and using a GPS challenging. And finally the author insisted people should always carry one or two sets of extra batteries. Choosing, owning and knowing how to use a GPS are all useless if the batteries to operate it have gone dead.

So, what do these things have in common with Jesus? Often we are so busy and bothered that we just "don't know which way to go". Sometimes our daily lives are filled with opportunities and possibilities and at other times with challenges and difficulties. At those times it is easy to miss the right path and find one's self in a rut as deep and dangerous as that rocky ravine. Stop, ask the One who knows, "What do You want me to do, Jesus; which way do You want me to go?" God knows what would be the best way; He is the best directional Guide for life. But people often use the excuse that the information and manual (that would be the Bible) are too difficult, so they haven't really learned much about God. Like



the electronic gadget buyer, they have not really tried to do the research.

When we note, in regard to high tech gadgets, how much easier it is to let someone who has read and understands the manual explain it and share their knowledge with us, we parents, pastors, friends, and relatives need to share their knowledge of God's manual with those who are lost in the labyrinth of life's distractions.

Jesus knows the way, shows the way and, most importantly, is the way. He truthfully says, *I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.* (John 14:6 NIV). All people have a conscience that tells them they are lost and can't qualify for salvation on their own. The same people sometimes know in their heads that Jesus is the Savior who knows and shows the way, but sadly don't make use of the power source for the faith that saves. Even some who once had saving faith alive in their hearts have let it go dead by ignoring or being apathetic to it. That is like being lost in the woods with a GPS in your hand, knowing that it will show you the way back to civilization and safety, but letting the

batteries go dead and not replacing them. The Apostle Paul said, *I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile* (Romans 1:16 NIV). And again, *Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.* (Romans 10:17 NIV).

At The Lutheran Home Association and as Christians in general it is our mission to make sure everyone has the opportunity to hear the message of the word of Christ. We are not ashamed to speak the truth in love. We know that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We know that the wages of sin is death and the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus. These saving truths clearly show that the way to forgiveness and eternal life is found in Jesus. That these saving truths might be alive in hearts and bring comfort and peace to all we serve, we maintain our chaplaincy to share the Word of salvation. The Gospel light from the Bible shines with power regularly in devotions, Bible studies and worship services. With the freshly charged batteries of His powerful word of truth we see more clearly our destination is not just a global position. Our route is accurate and our position is certain. We will sit at His side at the heavenly banquet of God and because Jesus, the Son of God, knew the way and walked the route to bring us safely home. That is way beyond what either GPS or UPS could ever do.

## Opportunities before us

The bag connected to my arm by a needle and plastic tube filled quickly. "Record speed," said the technician as she made small talk. "You'll be out of here in no time."

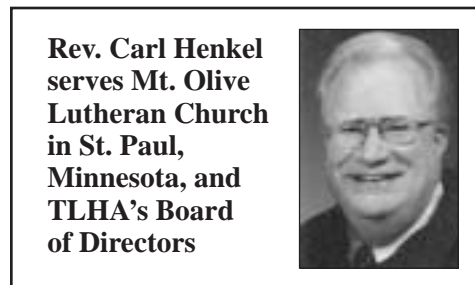
I was donating blood to the American Red Cross. Christmas would soon be here and blood was in short supply.

As we continued to talk, she learned that I was a Lutheran pastor, and I learned that she wasn't "into the church thing." She also told me that her mother and grandmother were Christian, but that she had "never gotten into it."

But she was interested. She asked several questions. It seems her biggest fear and concern was "where do I

start?" I encouraged her, that since Christmas was just a couple days away, she start by attending Christmas Eve services. I told her that was a very good place to start because that was when God sent His Son to start His life on earth as our Savior from sin. She thought that was a good idea and that she and her children may do just that. She mentioned again how pleased her grandmother and mother would be if she were to join them at a Christmas Eve service.

I know that her questions and our discussion were more than just casual chitchat to her because of what followed. She removed the filled bag from my arm along with the tube and the



needle. She was so engrossed in the conversation that she forgot to leave the needle and tube in to draw blood for the vials that are used for testing, etc., and that must accompany the bag.

She apologized and said she'd have to take the blood for the vials from my other arm, which meant moving to the other side of the bloodmobile. I said that it was no problem and that she didn't have to apologize.

Well, three different technicians poked and prodded and poked some more, trying to locate the vein in my other arm, each without success. They said they were sorry! As time went on, the patient must have been getting pale because they quickly cranked up the air conditioning and changed the position of the bed.

What began as an uneventful "record speed" blood donation had now reached the maximum time limit, and they had to stop.

My technician was very, very sorry. She knew that because she was engrossed in conversation she had made a mistake. I was sorry for her because she was so sorry!

Because the testing vials were missing, my bag of blood would have to be thrown out. It couldn't be used.

My prayer that afternoon – and many times afterwards – is that the Lord would use that conversation and "mistake" for a higher purpose. That He would use it to bring this lady and her children into a faith relationship with Him. She won't soon forget her "mistake" nor will she forget the conversation that led up to it.

My prayer is that even though my blood donation will not be used to save a life, the Lord will use it to save a soul. That would be so wonderful and amazing!

As we enter the New Year, I pray that each of us look for – and seize – the opportunities the Lord places before us to share the life and love of Jesus with others. Wouldn't it be great if, in heaven, someone were to come up to you or me and say, "You probably don't remember me, but it was because of you that I came to believe in Jesus! I'm here in heaven because of you!"

Isn't that what our life on earth is all about?

## Mission Statement

*In Christ's love, the mission of The Lutheran Home Association is to provide for the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional needs of people entrusted to our care.*

The purpose of The Lutheran Home Association is in keeping with the words of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 25:34-36, 40): "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. ... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' "



# From Jesus Cares Ministries

JCM Publications, the publishing arm of The Lutheran Home Association, offer books, CDs and videos to help share God's Word with people with special needs. The following materials are available:

## Dear Christian Friend

*Bible History Curriculum: Old and New Testament portions*

A series of Bible lessons from the Old and New Testament designed to be used with children and adults with developmental disabilities. Each lesson contains a memory verse, song idea, pictures in a Rebus illustrated Bible story. The lessons in the teacher's manuals consists of a lesson overview, optional presentations, check for understanding, application, sample activities, song ideas, copy masters, crafts, and a devotion. Teacher's manual CD is in a convenient PDF and functional Word format.

- Teacher's Manual, Old Testament: \$37.75
- Teacher's Manual, New Testament: \$55.75
- Student Pages, Old Testament: \$6.00
- Student Pages, New Testament: \$8.95

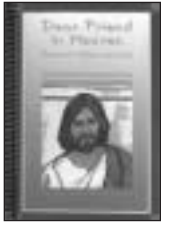
\*The prices listed do not include taxes, shipping and handling.



## Dear Friend in Heaven Prayer Book

This devotional booklet can be used in a variety of settings. The book contains 50 prayers with easy-to-read vocabulary and includes the topics of thanksgiving, praise, repentance and help in time of need.

- \$8.95



**To order, please contact Jesus Cares Ministries**

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## Frontlines - Continued from page 1

walked into Sam's room shutting the door. This time Sam did not curse, argue or in any way protest. This time, as the chaplain sat on a chair near him, Sam told the chaplain, "I've done lots of bad things in my life." To Sam's surprise, the chaplain responded, "Sam, so have I."

For the next hour (maybe two) the pastor shared God's Word with Sam. He shared how the Law of God convicts all, whether their sins are known by every one or only by God. And then Sam also got to hear about the man named Jesus, the Son of God. In His love, Jesus suffered and died, not only to soften and remove the exterior crust of our lives, but to cleanse to the very center of our being. Sam accepted the assurance that no matter how bad his life had been, Jesus died for his sins. On that cold, dark night Sam felt the deep shame for his sins and received the assurance of forgiveness. Then he rejoiced that he could know and believe his sins were all forgiven through faith in Jesus.

The next day Sam died. As people stood around at the funeral many stories were told about Sam. Some remembered and talked about his crustiness. Others talked about the cancer and how it took his life. Still others, especially caregivers who heard of the chaplain's visit, noted how God permitted cancer to be a part of Sam's life. They noted how God in His infinite grace allowed cancer to show him his need for the Savior. And the Lord also used the ministry and the people of The Lutheran Home Association.

In the end, God permitted Sam to call upon people around him. It would have been pretty easy to ignore Sam as his life ebbed. He was a difficult person to be around. Yet, neither the caregivers nor the chaplains ignored Sam.

Sam had cancer—a terrible diagnosis for some. He was dying, desperate and lost. The diagnosis for Sam's soul was worse than cancer. On that cold, dark night, Sam needed to hear that truth about his sins and his Savior, and he did.

For 109 years our ministry has been allowed, by God's grace, to share the message of Jesus the Savior with the people in our care or using our services. The mission of The Lutheran Home Association invites many people to come to us. We serve the elderly, persons with developmental disabilities, those needing skilled nursing care or assisted living, and active seniors wishing to live independently. All need that

assurance of God's forgiveness. We are deeply privileged to have this wonderful opportunity and responsibility.

God blesses us in many ways. Over

time the Lord doesn't change. His teachings remain the same, relevant, life-breathing promise and guidance

that we all need. Your prayers, volun-

teerism and support help us to maintain the spiritual mission of sharing the Gospel of Jesus in our programs. Sam can't thank you. I will.

## St. Michael's Lutheran Home celebrates 60th anniversary



Fred & Louise Roettiger



The Original Home

Sixty years ago, St. Michael's Lutheran Home was formed under the leadership of the Rev. Herbert Nommensen, then pastor of St. Michael's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fountain City.

The sponsoring association was made up of interested members of St. Michael's congregation, which purchased the former residence of the late Fred Roettiger and converted it to a comfortable home. Deaconess Martha Herzberg served as the first matron. Miss Herzberg has a unique bond with the first Lutheran Home in Belle Plaine, Minnesota. Miss Herzberg served as the matron of the Belle Plaine home from 1933 to 1949. She then went to St. Michael's and faithfully served here as the deaconess until 1953. Since its beginning, St. Michael's has been committed to providing care for the body and soul.

Through the years, additions and renovations were made to the original building, along with the introduction of new care practices, which provided opportunities for the home to serve more individuals.

In January of 1997, we became a part of The Lutheran Home Association, based in Belle Plaine, since 1898. At that time a chaplain was Called to serve St. Michael's Lutheran Home part time. Prior to this time, the pastor from St. Michael's Lutheran Church served this home.

**Today, thanks to the dedication of our team members, St. Michael's Lutheran Home continues to provide quality care and Christian care for the people of our community and the surrounding area.**

**Thank you to our team members!**

### Today we offer:

- Medicare/Medicaid-certified rehabilitative therapies (physical, speech and occupational) available for residents and out patients
- 24-hour Medicare/Medicaid-certified skilled nursing care (short and long-term care, respite and hospice services)
- Dr. Andrew Edin serves as our Medical Director
- Adult daycare services
- A Called chaplain serves the home
- Chaplaincy services
- Beautiful setting overlooking the Mississippi River



Chaplaincy

### Caring for the Soul

Our chaplain serves part time at St. Michael's providing weekly Bible classes and worship services. He is available and schedules devotions and one-to-one personal Christian counseling with residents, their family members, volunteers or team members. He is also Called by The Lutheran Home Association to serve at The Lutheran Home: Cochrane and with our Jesus Cares Ministries programs. Other clergy who have members residing in our home also visit their members regularly.

*We thank the Lord for allowing us to serve our friends and neighbors for the past 60 years and thank our residents, families, supporters and volunteers throughout the community.*



**St. Michael's Lutheran Home**

*Where the Care of the Soul is the Soul of Care®*

270 North Street • Fountain City, WI 54629-0007 • E-mail: info@tlha.org • www.tlha.org

To learn more about our services, contact Dean Dixon, Administrator, at (608) 687-7721.

# Link-Age

The official newsletter of  
The Lutheran Home Association  
Fall Issue 2007

**President &  
Chief Executive Officer**  
Michael R. Klatt

**Editorial Staff**  
Lisa L. Woestehoff, Editor  
Karen L. Lambrecht,  
Editorial Assistant

*Link-Age* is published three times per year by The Lutheran Home Association (TLHA). This ministry provides numerous services from seven communities and is owned and operated by an Association of more than 200 Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) congregations and those in fellowship. TLHA provides health care, housing and service options to active seniors, the elderly, persons with developmental disabilities, mental illness, Alzheimer's disease, dementia, and other unique needs. TLHA also offers a national evangelism outreach program through Jesus Cares Ministries. Please direct correspondence or inquiries to:

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Campus . . . . . (715) 425-5353  
Watertown . . . . . (920) 206-9448  
The LEAD (Lutheran Elder  
And Disability Institute)  
(Milwaukee) . . . 1-877-505-3675  
(414) 259-0292

# From Jesus Cares Ministries New JCM Bible classes

The mission statement of our Jesus Cares Ministries (JCM) is "In Christ's love our mission is to assist congregations in meeting their responsibility to share the Gospel with people who have a developmental disability, their families and their communities." Our JCM Program Coordinators meet with and assist pastors and outreach/special ministries committees in congregations to explain the JCM program. They are willing to assist finding volunteers, certifying teachers, locating group homes where people with developmental disabilities live, and helping to start Bible classes for people with special needs.

During the past year new JCM Bible classes have started in a number of our Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod congregations. Classes started at Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church at Willmar, MN,

on September 26, 2006; at St. Peter Ev. Lutheran Church at St. Peter, MN, on October 14, 2006; and at Grace Ev. Lutheran Church at Hutchinson, MN, on May 7, 2007. Upcoming classes starting this fall are at Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church in Beaver Dam, WI, and Manitowoc Lutheran High School, Manitowoc, WI.

*Worship at the Cross* services, in which we use a simplified liturgy, sermonette, symbols, songs and rhythm instruments, began at Christ Ev. Lutheran Church in North St. Paul, MN, on July 26; at St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church in Wisconsin Rapids, WI, on August 26; and at Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran Church in Beaver Dam, WI, on August 28. The following congregations are planning to start new *Worship at the Cross* services this fall: Shepherd of the Hills Ev.

Lutheran Church, West Bend, WI; Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church in Manitowoc, WI; Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, WI; and Mount Calvary Ev. Lutheran Church in Menasha, WI. Please check our web site [www.jcministries.org](http://www.jcministries.org) for a complete listing. We are now bringing God's Word to well over 1,000 people with special needs.

We are striving to carry out Christ's Great Commission by teaching His Word to people with developmental disabilities in our Bible classes and in our *Worship at the Cross* services. We have observed time and time again how the Holy Spirit has worked faith in the hearts of our participants and has led them to express their faith and to sing their songs of praise to His glory.

Pastor Roger Vomhof  
JCM Program Coordinator

## What one of our volunteers says

*Debbie Ottesen volunteered her time as a JCM Camp Nurse at Camp Phillip at Wautoma, Wisconsin, where she has been serving our JCM campers for the last five years. Here are some of her thoughts from the interview that I had with her.*

Bill – For several years you have volunteered your expertise as a nurse for our JCM Camp week at Camp Phillip. How did that start?

Debbie – One year another volunteer from camp asked if I could help campers with special needs, and I said "okay." There was a need, and I could do it, so I said "sure." I have had a lot of fun so I keep coming back.

Bill – Did you know all what was involved at the time?

Debbie – No, I didn't know all it entailed at the time. It was a lot more than I thought. They have a lot of medicines aside from their special needs. They are on a lot of medications, and I didn't realize how many different medications they take. They need to take those medications at different times of the day and each patient or camper is different. If they look familiar or look similar or have the same disability, then I had to be sure I gave the right medications to the right campers. Sometimes they won't be able to tell me their names. So it is up to me to know who they are.

Bill – In working with these campers, what have you seen?

Debbie – Just how open they are, how trusting they are, and they are uninhibited. They will say exactly what they think and what they feel. Even as far as God's Word, they just believe it. They don't ask a whole bunch of "how can that possibly be" questions. You tell them the story and they believe it. They might not be able to verbally speak it, but if they hear it and know it in their hearts, it's there. The Holy Spirit has come into them. He can't come in without them hearing the Word.

Bill – Is there one moment that sticks out for you?

Debbie – One year one of our campers passed away during his sleep.



Debbie Ottesen

It was very sad for all of us to know that he had passed away. But during one of our devotions one of our Jesus Cares campers stood there and said, "No, he's not dead. He's in heaven!" And he really got it. So what we are doing does have a purpose. Without telling them about Jesus they would

never know. Even though we may not know how much they understand, they understand more than we think. Whether you're mentally not as smart as everyone else or able to function as well as everyone else, you can hear and still believe it when you hear it in your own way. In that way the Holy Spirit allows you to believe it.

Bill – What would you tell others if they thought about volunteering in this way?

Debbie – If someone asks you, "would you like to try this?" or says "we have a need," go ahead and try it. Even if it is just for one day, one week, one month, one semester. Try it and see. You might like it, whether it's working with people with special needs or any need the church might have to spread God's Word. You might be surprised by the types of things that are rewarding to you.

Bill – What are your closing thoughts?

Debbie – I am just being blessed to know that I have this (opportunity), that I've been trained to do what I can do as far as being a nurse. I pass their medications and, God willing, I do it exactly how it is meant to be. It is satisfying to

**Volunteer — Continued on page 6**



A summertime craft project at Camp Phillip in Wisconsin

## A cup of coffee - Continued from page 1

(TLHA) includes coordinating the Summer Ministry Experience (SME). This program allows Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) college students an opportunity to learn ways to share their Savior with people who, due to their age or a developmental disability, have special needs. The SME lasts nine weeks and is designed to provide a special ministry experience for future congregational leaders in the WELS and ELS. The SME is funded entirely through donations. The participants work in TLHA's nursing homes, group home, and assisted living homes and with Jesus Cares Ministries' programs in WELS/ELS congregations in the Midwest. There are also learning opportunities for them through special orientations, visitation of care providers in special fields, observation of and participation with the professionals and volunteers of TLHA.

Two different experiences took me back to that late June day. The first was my interaction with some of our participants with developmental disabilities attending a Bible day camp. Another reminder came from Olivia Monday, a SME participant. Olivia commented, "... during my week at Camp BASIC, a camp for people with developmental disabilities, I saw two men read their Bible nearly every time they had a free moment. Later in the summer, a woman

set an example by eagerly inviting many of her friends from work to our Bible day camp. These people and many others truly modeled an active and childlike faith."

These two encounters gave me some insights upon my actions. It wasn't just that the camp participants never forgot their Bibles like I had. Their attitudes were inspiring. They were always yearning to learn more about Jesus. They knew why the SME students came to visit and were excited to hear the message they brought! You could see it in their faces! Joel Sankey, another SME participant, even noticed the intensity of the campers' questions. "...our guests were not only able to tell us exactly what we wanted to hear, but they also asked us deep doctrinal questions far deeper than we ever thought we would discuss this summer."

I realize now how easy it had been for me to go back for my coffee that I felt I really needed that June morning. But I made an excuse for why I didn't need to turn around for my Bible. While I enjoy my work with the SME students, there are some mornings I really need that cup of coffee. What I need even more, everyday, is to begin with Jesus. The caffeine will eventually wear off, but my Savior will always be at my side.

The SME days and evenings involve a very full schedule for all. It would be

very easy for me to focus on appointments and schedules rather than what our main focus should be--to share Jesus with people who have special needs. If I was to ever forget our mission, I had seven college students and the people we worked with around to remind me. The people with developmental disabilities at our Bible day camps can sometimes put you in your place. And that's a great place to be! The campers helped the SME students and me remember what is really important and forget about getting caught up in the trials and troubles of this world. Each day brought new people and blessings into my life. I never ended a day without thanking God for all that the college students and the people with special needs taught me. This teacher learned from all of the students.

The SME participants brought a new definition to what it means to share God's Word to people with special needs. One example is how their unique gifts and talents helped them put together an amazing presentation. They helped everyone in the audience know and understand what it means to be "a fisher of men." They also shared with people with developmental disabilities how God will go with us to tell others His message through the story of Jonah. Jonah didn't immediately trust that God would be with him. Sometimes it seems like we forget, too and try to run as far away from God as we can. While the WELS/ELS college students' presentation was always entertaining, it also gave everyone of them, me and the audience confidence that God is always at our side and will give us the right words to share Jesus with others.

It can sometimes be very easy to place our needs and wants in life as a priority. Even something as simple as a cup of coffee can take our minds off of the one thing that is really needed. What a joy and privilege it is to prepare for such an amazing summer and to work with such fine young adults! The SME participants continue to share their experience with classmates and friends.

Here is one example:

"I have come out of this summer with a love for people with developmental disabilities and a stronger support for mission work and the call to be a fisher of men." --Jesse Hieb

What a blessing it is to meet so many people with a developmental disability and share God's Word with them! Often they give back and teach us so much more than we expect or are ready for. When I remember some of the comments both groups shared with me, I'm confident I will wake up the next morning and remember what it is I really need: Begin the day with Jesus, and take him with you the rest of the day.

If you have been involved in any way with the SME, I thank you. I hope that it was a blessing to you as it was for me. If you would like to become involved next year, I hope we see you next summer. While the SME program continues to improve year after year, it has always had the same focus--to share the love of Jesus with people who have special needs. I pray that you will consider us in your plans next summer, support this ministry through the gifts you have been given, and pray that more doors will be opened to share the love of God with those who need to hear it just as much as we do.

If you would like to see more photos from the summer, have a presentation at your church, or simply would like more information, please contact me at [mhenig@tlha.org](mailto:mhenig@tlha.org) or call our National Ministry Offices at (952) 873-4745 or 1-888-600-TLHA (8542).

Michael Hennig  
Staff Minister

Editor's note: Michael has accepted his Call to be the coordinator for the Summer Ministry Experience and the "New Friends" Youth Leadership Initiative, which works in partnership with WELS and ELS college campus ministries. "New Friends" encourages youth to follow Jesus' example to serve others by actively reaching out with the Gospel to people with developmental disabilities, sometimes referred to as a "hidden community". We wish Michael the Lord's blessings in his work!



The Summer Ministry Experience Students (Left to right): Debbie Voigt, Olivia Monday, Carla Plouffé, Julianna Liewergen, Robert Bruss, Jesse Hieb, and Joel Sankey.

# Heritage Homes celebrates milestones



Heritage Homes

Heritage Homes, a Christian community for independent seniors, is celebrating its 10-year anniversary. Built in 1997, Heritage offers carefree living for over 70 residents.

Heritage Homes was originally the dream of a few members of St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Watertown, Wisconsin. One of these was Roy Zastrow, who currently resides at Heritage with his wife, Betty. He says, "For a small-town boy to have started a project this huge, I think the Lord has blessed me very greatly to have a hand in something like this."

The other Heritage Homes' founders include: Edgar & Francis Rieck, Mr. Charles Spafford, Mr. Rudolph Voigt, Mr. Roger Hopmann, Ms. Doris Buchta, Mr. Larry Schuett, Mr. Raymond Tomhave, Mr. Edgar Schleef, and Mr. Vernon Zastrow.

In December of 2002, Heritage Homes merged with The Lutheran Home Association based in Belle Plaine, Minnesota.

The residents and team members at Heritage Homes are also looking forward to some exciting plans for the future. An assisted living facility is planned for the campus. "We are delighted to offer

both independent and assisted living on our campus," says Laurie Rehm, Administrator. Among other services, the new facility will offer 24-hour professional staff to assist with activities of daily living, home-style meals, and a specialized memory care unit. For more information on independent or assisted living options at Heritage Homes, please contact Laurie at (920) 206-9448 or 1-888-600-TLHA (8542).



Lois & John Bloedorn, residents of Heritage Homes, celebrate the homes' 10th anniversary during a dinner reception. The Bloedorns have resided at Heritage Homes since 1998.

## Association churches profiled



### St. John Lutheran Church Redwood Falls, MN

Rev. Michael Otterstatter, Lead Pastor, and Rev. Jonathan Kruschel, Adult Ministry Pastor, serve the 895 baptized and 744 communicant members at St. John's. A Jesus Cares Ministries program is part of the congregation's outreach. The congregation was organized in 1898.

Six teachers serve the students at St. John's school. The preschool has an enrollment of 28; kindergarten through eighth grade has an enrollment of 78 students.

### Faith Lutheran Church Prior Lake, MN

Organized in 1968, this congregation is served by Rev. Daniel Schumann.

The congregation is comprised of 160 baptized and 119 communicant members.



## Dates to remember

**December 16:** 10th Anniversary of Heritage Homes becoming part of TLHA's ministry

**January 15, 2008:** Annual meeting of TLHA in Belle Plaine, Minnesota. *Due to renovation projects at The Lutheran Home Campus, the meeting will be held at Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church, (500 West Church Street) in Belle Plaine, MN.* The day begins with lunch at noon, a 1PM chapel service, followed by a business meeting and workshop. Please call our National Ministry Offices at (952) 873-6000 or 1-888-600-TLHA (8542) if you have questions.

**March** is Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.

## Mailing note

**Individuals:** If you do not wish to receive this publication, are receiving duplicate copies, have moved, or wish to add a friend or family member to our mailing list, please contact Karen Lambrecht, Support Systems Coordinator, at 1-888-600-TLHA (8542), extension 115. You may also mail *both* sets of labels to: The Lutheran Home Association, National Ministry Offices, Attn: Karen Lambrecht, 337 South Meridian Street, Belle Plaine, MN 56011-1919.

**Congregations:** If you wish to change the quantity of *Link-Age* received or make an address change, please contact Karen Lambrecht (See above).

## Letters are people . . . Here's what they say

### To St. Michael's Lutheran Home (Fountain City, WI):

Dear Dean,  
Words of Congratulations on the celebration of the 60th anniversary of St. Michael's Lutheran Home! In recognition of this occasion, I am pleased to send you the enclosed Citation of the State of Wisconsin State Assembly, which I authored. I wish you and St. Michael's all my best.

Sincerely,  
Rep. Barbara Gronemus  
State Representative--  
91st Assembly District  
Note: Every team member at St. Michael's received a note of congratulation from Rep. Gronemus.

### Dear TLHA,

Our Women in Christ group at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Menomonee Falls [Wisconsin] chooses a mission organization to support each year. We take a collection at the door at each of our meetings. The mission

group chosen for the 2006-2007 year was Jesus Cares. Please accept the enclosed check . . .

In Jesus Name,  
Linda Wenzel  
Treasurer

## Volunteer

Continued from page 4

know that everyone is safe and gets the appropriate things they need. It is challenging, but a lot of fun. But then I also watch the counselors that work with these people and that is rewarding too — just to see the young people work with them and how much their love for God is shown. They take their time to be with them too and let them know the message of Jesus.

To learn more about the JCM volunteer opportunities that exist in your local congregation, please contact our JCM office at (414) 259-0292 or (877) 505-3675.

Bill Truebenbach  
JCM Program Coordinator



## This Is My Story

My name is Armin Karnitz.  
I have lived in the Belle Plaine community for most of my life. My grandfather, Pastor C.F. Kock, was the second President of The Lutheran Home Association from 1902 to 1934.

Many things have changed in our community since then. Yet, together, we all want to make the future of Belle Plaine better.

I've watched and supported the ministry of The Lutheran Home Association for many years.

I think my grandfather would be pleased to see how they still make a difference every day more than a century later.

## This Is My Ministry This Is The Lutheran Home Association



The Lutheran Home Association

Where the Care of the Soul is the Soul of Care®

National Ministry Offices • 337 South Meridian Street • Belle Plaine, MN 56011-1919

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# Mission Advancement

## With our thanks

The holiday season is upon us, and we soon will end another calendar year. On behalf of the residents, clients and team members of The Lutheran Home Association, please accept our sincere "thank you." We deeply appreciate the many prayers, volunteer efforts and financial contributions to our mission and ministry this past year. Your gifts enable us to share the good news of Jesus our Savior every day throughout the year.

Through you the Lord has richly blessed us in 2007. We have been able to expand our chaplaincy programs, our Jesus Cares Ministries outreach to persons with developmental disabilities and our services at our campuses. Throughout our homes and programs, new techniques, practices and other improvements allow us to continue providing quality care that especially includes the care of the soul.

Thank you so much!

Wishing you a blessed holiday season,  
The Mission Advancement Team

## Carrying on the legacy

November 6, 2007, was the 109<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of *das Alten und Waisenheim* — the Aged and Orphans' Home — in Belle Plaine, Minnesota. Sophie Boessling, age 83, had seen a need for a Christian home to take care of the widows like her and orphans. Her gifts of her family farm and cash (the saved government benefits she received after her son's death during the Civil War), were the foundation for that first home. Her dream was completed on November 6, 1898, with the dedication of the building. She was among the first residents moving into a new modern facility. Sophie passed away unexpectedly two days later.

One hundred and nine years later, things have dramatically changed in the medical and housing communities. The original building has been long gone at the Belle Plaine campus. But the one thing that hasn't changed is Sophie's legacy — to provide a Christian home in which to share God's Word. In fact, the legacy has grown to six other communities in Minnesota and Wisconsin providing Christian care for the soul, along with quality health care and housing options. During the 1970s this ministry expanded its services to people with developmental disabilities at The Lutheran home: Hope Residence in Belle Plaine. This expansion continued in 1998 as Jesus Cares Ministries (JCM) became a part of The Lutheran Home Association (TLHA). JCM assists congregations by providing support, education, worship, fellowship and evangelism using



trained volunteers.

As we approach Christmas, God's gift of salvation will once again be celebrated.

Jesus' coming to earth, leading a perfect life in our stead, dying for our sins, defeating death by rising again and preparing our new eternal home in heaven gives us a legacy worth sharing with others.

TLHA is humbled by the love of our friends and families. This past fiscal year, we were made aware of a number of matured estates that remembered TLHA, our foundation, our campuses, or Jesus Cares Ministries as a recipient of a life-end gift.

Through faith in God's gift, His Son, these precious souls are enjoying God's heavenly estate forever. By sharing their earthly estates with us, they help TLHA, through our spiritual services, continue to reach lost souls for Jesus. What legacies! Their impact will be forever.

If you would like to join our Sophie Boessling Society and help perpetuate TLHA's mission and ministry, please call our Office of Mission Advancement at 1-888-600-TLHA (8542) or visit us at [www.tlha.org](http://www.tlha.org). Our staff can help you establish an estate plan that assists you in leaving a legacy for your family and the Lord's work here on this earth.

Thank you to all the families of those who, in their estate plans, have remembered the wonderful work the Lord allows us to do. Through God's gracious work in them, your thoughtfulness will have eternal-lasting results.

## Take stock...and more

During the 1990s many of us were enjoying unprecedented gains in our personal investment portfolios. Investments were experiencing growth of 20 to 30 percent or more during a single year. Many individuals were even considering early retirement because their assets, under management, could support them for years to come.

The same decade was also a boon to charitable institutions, with a large influx of contributions in the form of stocks, bonds and mutual funds. Investors with a love of supporting their local congregations, denominations and other ministries learned early on that they could make larger and more tax-wise gifts by transferring a portion of their investment assets directly to charities.

Beginning in 2000-2001, we saw the market crash. Portfolios had lost up to 60 percent of the previous years' values, and the amount of gifts given directly to charities through investments had dried up.

The year is now 2007! The market is higher today than anytime in its past. Gifting of appreciated stocks, bonds and mutual fund portfolios is once again a great and profitable idea. Even in moderate investment strategy techniques, average gains are ranging from 12 to 20 percent per year. Once depleted asset values have been made whole, and appreciated gains are again very substantial. Now is the time to take advantage of making a tax-wise gift of appreciated assets, receive a charitable deduction for the full amount of the gift and eliminate the capital gains tax connected to the investment. These options all help to support the important mission and ministry of The Lutheran Home Association (TLHA). They sup-

James C. Klein,  
CFP®

Director of  
Mission  
Advancement



port TLHA's many spiritual and physical services offered by Jesus Cares Ministries, the chaplaincy programs, homes, and services.

The process of making a gift from appreciated assets is not a difficult one. Our Office of Mission Advancement will make it easy for you. We help you work with your broker to transfer the stock, bond or mutual fund directly to our investment company. A direct transfer eliminates the capital gain issue, assures that the value that you want your gift to be is accurate, and ensures that the proper paper trail is there for your charitable deduction amount for your itemized income tax return. You are turning highly taxable assets into valuable charitable gifts and keeping more cash assets to live on or reinvest, thus building your investment cost basis. If you need to maintain an income stream from these investments but still want to make a gift, we will help you with tools such as a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust for this purpose.

We are here to help you complete any and all gifts you desire to make. Contact us for personal assistance or more information. As always, there is no obligation on your part to receive this personal service.

*Please note: None of this information is intended as legal advice.*



## Tax-free gifting from Traditional and Roth IRAs to charities ending in December

The Pension Reform Act of 2006 includes a provision giving owners of Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), who are at least 70½ years old, a one year window (2007) during which they

are permitted to distribute some or all of their IRA assets to a non-profit organization and to pay no taxes on the distribution. (Normal IRA withdrawals are taxable).

If you find this option interesting, please consider the Ministry of The Lutheran Home Association and/or its Jesus Cares Ministries before December 15, 2007. Your legacy will have a pro-

found impact upon many whom we serve. Please contact the Office of Mission Advancement at 1-888-600-TLHA (8542) for more information.

# Gifts of Love

The following gifts have been received and are used to minister to the spiritual, mental, emotional and physical needs of families, persons with developmental disabilities, older adults, Alzheimer's disease, various forms of dementia, the elderly and others whom we serve. We wish to thank them for their support!

## IN HONOR OF:

**EMMA ENDERLE**  
Daniel W. Bublitz  
**COURTNEY & CALEB EPPEN**  
Amy & Jeff Eppen  
**ROGER & SHEILA FREY**  
Rev. Curtiss & Char Seefeldt  
**HAROLD GALL**  
Rev. Curtiss & Char Seefeldt  
**MAYNARD GJERDE**  
Pat & Stuart Gray  
**OUR 60TH ANNIVERSARY**  
Eldrid & Wilmay Karnitz  
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Becky Nazario  
**BRANDON LEGG**  
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**HOWARD & GERT MAERTZ'S**  
**50TH ANNIVERSARY**  
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**MY FALLEN BROTHERS**  
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Michael & Shari Klatt  
**DEBLERT & EVELYN WETZEL'S**  
**50TH ANNIVERSARY**  
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**REINHARDT & HELEN WILL'S**  
**70TH ANNIVERSARY**  
Ruth Andersen  
Dave & Shirley Laabs  
**OUR WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**  
Dennis & Cheryl Zwaga

## IN MEMORY OF:

**HAROLD AGRIMSON**  
Dallas & Gloria Henn  
**WILLIAM AMYOTTE**  
Joyce Peltz  
**EMIL ANDERSON**  
Rev. Dallas & Mary Miller  
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Ken Neisen  
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**JACK OTT**  
Dallas & Gloria Henn  
Michael & Shari Klatt  
**ALFRED OTTO**  
Anonymous  
John & Carol Buszmann  
Lila Laabs-Schwecke  
Mary Pat & Dan Murphy  
John Nagel  
Elmira Otto  
Carole Smith  
Earl & Ardella Tieg  
Wally & Gerry Witt  
**VI OVERLINE**  
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