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# Conference Care Facilities Newsletter

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*“And went to him, and bound up his wounds...and took care of him”* Luke 10:34  
*“But that the members should have the same care one for another”* 1 Corinthians 12:25

## Editorial

It has been said that the number one fear in the elderly is that of helplessness, hopelessness, and homelessness. May this second issue of the *Conference Care Facilities Newsletter* continue to inspire us, as God’ children, to look around us and endeavor to help our fellowman where there is a need. There is much opportunity to work in a care facility in one of the congregations of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite.

There is another opportunity that we have, and that is volunteering. Most of our care facilities have volunteer programs. Volunteers really are useful and needed. These volunteer programs are not just there to give you a chance to serve; rather, volunteers are needed and greatly appreciated. Having said that though, it must also be noted that the volunteer program is also very useful for the one who is serving. It makes you, the volunteer, feel useful and it promotes an intrinsic sense of worth.

Why are volunteers needed? One nursing director made the comment, “How would we survive without our *volunteers*?” We need them for survival. There are often short blocks of time where other employees find it difficult to keep up with the schedule, for example, at meal times, after supper, or at bed times. The facility cannot hire someone just for these short periods of time. That’s where volunteers come in. They are indispensable. Also, volunteers can add a “quality of life” for residents when they visit with

them and read to them when the employees, because of other duties, don’t have the time.

Some things that volunteers can do are feed, take the lunch cart around, read, fold laundry, maintenance, bulletin boards, drive on outings, or they can just visit and be a companion.

Volunteering need not just be done in a care home. Do we not find many opportunities to be a volunteer in our everyday lives? Are our very lives not journeys of volunteering? A Christian is a volunteer.

Here is the invitation: Be a part of someone’s life during a time when that someone desperately needs companionship. Make someone happy. Making someone happy makes you happy.

One more comment: this newsletter is in its infancy. Its purpose is to share concerns, inspirations, and ideas about caring for those in our facilities, and also about caring in general for those who are less fortunate, handicapped, or troubled in any way. **If you have something you would like to share, please write to the editor. The name and address is noted at the bottom of the last page. We need your inspiration to make this paper a success.**

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## The Great Mission of Caring

“Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). Let us consider the

great responsibility of caring for, and helping bear the burdens of, our dear elderly folks and those with certain handicaps or disabilities.

The Lord willing, and if time continues, we are all future senior citizens. In one way or another, we are all somewhat handicapped, some more and some less. We all need help at some time or another. We all carry burdens of some kind, and we need help to carry them. Fulfilling the law of Christ is to help those who carry burdens.

The majority of us were cared for by our parents until the age of eighteen or twenty years. We were provided with food, clothing, shelter, and much more. Emotional and spiritual care was given. Our parents were there when we were burdened, when we were in trouble, or suffered injury or sickness.

So we have a debt to pay! We owe our parents, our elders, kind, loving care and compassion in the sunset years of their lives. Let us not defer to pay the debt we owe!

Jesus Christ was the most caring person that ever lived, the greatest care giver the world has ever known. He was the kindest burden bearer of all time, without partiality or respect of persons. He reached out His hand of love, His hand of compassion, of healing, of restoration, and of forgiveness. He cared and reached out to the sinner and the saint, the poor and the rich, the beggar and the king, the halt and the lame, the old and the young, the sick and the healthy, and the widow and the parents. Jesus truly did care!

There is a call, a certain cry within the Kingdom today! Do we hear that cry? Do we hear the heart cry of those that need a little help, a little care and love, a little visit and company? It may be just being by someone's side, maybe a bedside, and lending them your listening ears, or to share a couple of hymns at evening time, or a little prayer and scripture reading. Oh, how this can help lift those lonesome burdens that someone carries, to hold the hand of someone who cannot speak, who cannot walk, or who cannot see. It could be for someone who has no children to come visit them, or someone with very few close friends, and feels so alone. Have you ever felt or heard this cry somewhere?

The mission call to service should be part of our vocation. The scriptures teach, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). There is a continued call and need for dedicated workers in the mission of caring

for our elders and handicapped. God has rich rewards in store for those who respond to the call of helping fellow humanity with their burdens and needs. There is much opportunity. There are positions that presently need to be filled. Be prayerful and concerned and the Holy Spirit will lead you. Contact one of the many care homes within the Conference and God will richly bless you.

Jesus has walked this way before, the way of heart-felt care, and has left us a perfect example. May we "fulfill the law of Christ" in the great mission of showing and sharing our love and care with those who are less able than we.

Marvin Friesen, committee member

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## Activities at Grace Home

As activity director at Grace Home, I often find myself in many different situations. Some are heart-warming, some are humorous, and some are heart-wrenching. Just to give you a brief insight of what I do here at Grace Home, imagine that some tragedy occurred and you are no longer able to care for yourself. Inevitably, you find yourself in a nursing home. Because of your lack of ability to care for yourself you may no longer be able to pursue activities that meant a lot to you before. This is where I come in. I find out your past hobbies and try to get to know you. I then try to meet your spiritual, social, emotional, cognitive, and creative needs.

At Grace Home, every morning except Sundays, at 10:00 A.M. we have a time we call reading. It consists of Bible reading, story time, newspaper, or reminiscing for half an hour. After that we have fitness fun, which is probably one of the most popular activities here. Every day at 11:30 A.M. we sing for 15-20 minutes and then we have a prayer before lunch. At 2:45 P.M. there is an activity planned that may consist of bingo, birthday parties, quilting, target toss, or many other things. Twice a month we have outings where we take the residents to McDonalds for ice cream or apple pie, and then on a drive to see animals or the lake. We have taken them to the zoo and to the Hilmar cheese factory. For our lower functioning residents I do sensory stimulation. This consists of stimulating one or more of the five senses. For example, you can show them a picture of an

apple, have them feel an apple, let them smell an apple scented candle, and then have a sip of apple juice. Just those simple things stimulate four of the five senses. When a resident does not participate in activities for more than one day, we are required to have room visits with that resident at least every other day until he or she starts coming to activities again. A room visit can consist of reading, visiting, playing a game, or basically whatever the resident wants to do.

Things get a little humorous sometimes when you hear some of the residents calling each other "Grandma." There are also times when I just sit and listen to someone tell me about their families and their lives before they came to Grace Home. And then, there are the times when I offer my hand or a hug and cry with them when they are having a dark day. Working at Grace Home is very rewarding and fulfilling to me. I am very blessed to be a part of it.

Corinna Loewen

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## From the Administrator's Desk

There appears to be a need among us for information regarding "Advance Directives." I am not a lawyer and do not intend for the following material to be used as legal advice. I only wish to share what we have experienced here at Moundridge Manor. Forms are available at your local hospitals and/or nursing homes as well as at your local attorney's office. Please check with your attorney if you desire, however, you can fill out these forms for yourself and get your signature notarized before a Notary Public. In Kansas you cannot sign advance directives for someone else even if you have "Power of Attorney" authority.

Powers of Attorney are the single most important document to put in place so that the family member or trusted friend will have legal authority to carry out your wishes if you can no longer speak or act for yourself.

There are four basic Advance Directives as follows:

1. General Power of Attorney or Durable Power of Attorney (POA)

This form is used to delegate someone you trust to make financial decisions in the event you are no longer competent. There are forms

that attorneys use that allow you to delegate, first to a primary agent, and then to alternate agents. Two names should be sufficient. It complicates matters to list the whole family. Power can be granted to allow the delegate to act immediately or only upon the time that you are no longer capable to make decisions.

2. Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care Decisions

This form is for Health Care Decisions. On occasion an attorney will combine these two into one form; however, the majority are created in separate forms. A person may make a new form at his/her option, however, creating new forms will usually annul or revoke any previously made Power of Attorney. At this time Kansas requires this form after you have been admitted to a nursing home.

3. Living Will or Living Declaration

A living will or declaration is you speaking for yourself, in advance, to reject sustaining procedures which would only serve to artificially prolong the dying process. It gives direction to such questions as whether you wish to be kept alive by breathing machines and/or feeding tubes especially if two doctors, one being your personal physician, have determined that you have an incurable disease and that your life may end without the above measures.

4. Do not Resuscitate (DNR)

A DNR Order may be written by a physician in the patient or resident's chart, which is sufficient. A DNR Directive is signed by the declarant and affirmed by the physician. If the declarant has a court appointed guardian, court approval must still be obtained.

What happens if a person is no longer capable of signing or delegating authority? The court will have to appoint a "Guardian" for health care and a "Conservator" for financial duties. This can be an expensive and time consuming process.

POA's cease upon death of the declarant. The only exception is that the POA for Health Care has the authority to dispose of or give direction regarding the declarant's body. Upon death, all other decisions are handled by the executors of the declarant's will.

I would like to encourage children to assist their

elderly parents in completing these forms while they are still capable of making sound decisions. Ideally, these forms should be completed prior to nursing home placement. Hopefully, this information will be helpful or will encourage you to seek professional help, as needed.

Ron Classen

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## Disbursing Our Assets

We often say we are saving for our old age or for a rainy day. When we get older and disburse our assets to our children, are we really saving for old age or are we saving just for our children? If this then causes us to go on welfare, what is the motive behind this? We all would like to hand something to our children, but if this causes us to live off of others, is it something that is right for a Christian to do? It may be legal, but is it ethical and scriptural? “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel” (1 Timothy 5:8). This is speaking particularly of the duty of children towards a widowed mother, but is it a lot different if the children take the assets of their parents, and then take no responsibility for their financial care, but rather expect the government to take that responsibility?

What spirit prompts us if we, as children, press or at times insist that our parents disburse their assets to the extent that they go on welfare? Is it not covetousness? Do we think money will bring us happiness?

In Exodus 20:12 we read, “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.” This is called the first commandment with promise (Ephesians 6:2). Our parents have given us so much in our childhood and youth and we should honor them by helping in whatever way is necessary for their wellbeing. Has money blinded our eyes to our responsibility? I am sure we all want the Lord’s will in our lives. Let us pray that He will give us direction in this matter and that we may find peace and happiness in following His leading.

Warren Wiggers

## The Night Before Tomorrow

(an evening at the manor)

’Twas the night before tomorrow, and all thru the home  
The CNA’s started to grumble and moan.  
Supper was over; the moment had come...  
There was so much to do; could they get it all done?  
So with a big sigh they all got to their feet  
And made mental note of the goals they must meet.  
They gathered supplies for the warfare ahead,  
For all of the residents must go to bed.  
Toothbrushes, washcloths, pajamas, and gloves—  
Now comes the job that *nobody* loves.  
We’ll skip a few details, move right along;  
There may even be some time for a song.  
They gather their books and all start to sing;  
When the first verse is over they hear a light ring.  
As they trudge down the hall, they make up their  
mind;  
They have to be cheerful and loving and kind.  
All that was needed was a “popstar” to eat;  
They grant the request on tired aching feet.  
They all wish the company would leave for the night!  
Will they get the hint if we turn off the light?  
Three people, two people, one person more.  
Someone is checking alarms on the door.  
Push out the laundry, haul out the trash,  
Back to the desk for the charting they dash.  
It’s done! They are finished! Each one is in bed.  
With a satisfied feeling to home they now head.  
They put in a day doing all that they can,  
And tomorrow they’ll come back to do it again.

Karianna Becker

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*Conference Care Facilities Newsletter* is published quarterly by the Conference Care Facilities Committee to share concerns, inspirations, and ideas among the care facilities of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite. Articles and suggestions should be sent to Roland Toews, editor, at Box 295, Linden, Alberta, Canada T0M 1J0. Phone/fax: 403-443-2215.

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