
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

We have numerous scriptures in the Bible that speak about God’s care for his people. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” (1 Peter 5:7). “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:29-31). “The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee” (Jeremiah 31:3).

We can be sure that God cares for us. He not only cares for us in the sense of taking care of us, but He really CARES. We often feel the need of talking to someone who really cares. Sometimes the person we talk to doesn’t even really have the answers for our needs at the time, but we can sense that he cares about our needs, frustrations, burdens, or problems. Often, just that sense of caring is enough to lift our burdens.

Our Heavenly Father, on the other hand, includes the answers and direction for the future in His caring. We don’t always see it all right away, but He gives it as we need it.

The scriptures also give us examples of people who cared. “But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you” (2 Corinthians 8:16). “And went to him...and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed...and said unto him, Take care of him; and...I will repay thee” (Luke 10:34, 35). “And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king...” (2 Kings 4:13).

The very essence of a Christian’s life is love for his fellowman. “And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity” (1 Corinthians 13:13). “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Galatians

5:14). As we consider the care that God has for us, and the love that we are to exercise toward our fellowmen, we cannot escape the fact that we are to care as our Heavenly Father cares. We don’t exactly do it to return the favour, but rather, because of what God has done and is doing for us, we love Him enough to lavish that love upon each other. The Bible says, “We love him, because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19). We also might say, “We love others because God first loved us.”

So the ministry of caring is not really an option for a Christian, but an expression of the love we feel in our hearts toward our Heavenly Father who gave us the wonderful gift of salvation. As you will again see in this issue of this newsletter, there is much inspiration and many rewards available for serving. There are rich blessings in store for those who care from the heart and there is an eternal reward awaiting the faithful.

Our church care facilities are often in need of workers. As you read this issue, note the blessings the contributors speak about when they have given of themselves to this great work of caring. Also, the Conference Care Facilities Committee has received many encouragements that this paper is appreciated. Take note that it would not be possible without your contributions.

The Shunamite woman served and cared, and the prophet said, “Wouldest thou be spoken for to the king...” (2 Kings 4:13). Think about it. The New Testament says, “And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water...he shall in no wise lose his reward” (Matthew 10:42).

Giving

Giving is a very little word, but with a meaning that can change a person’s life around. It makes me wonder, have I done my share of giving? I’m sure there is no end to giving.

God is the greatest example of giving. John 3:16 states, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." God, in love to us imperfect humans, sent His ONLY SON to this wicked Earth. Jesus died on the cross and willingly gave His life so that we could be saved and reach Heaven someday! What a sacrifice!

Giving is a very rewarding thing to do. If you believe your talents are few and all you can do is sit and watch life speed by, stop right now. God has saved you from destruction. He has given you the ability to give others a happy outlook on life.

What is more rewarding than buying a handful of flowers and handing them to your Mom or Grandma with a smile on your face? Their faces will light up with joy. They will drop what they're doing to find something to put them in and soon they will be arranging flowers.

Or take a stroll into Bethel Home. An elderly person shakes your hand and starts talking. A person with a little time to listen is all they need to brighten up their day!

As you are standing in the back of the Church before the meeting starts, try calling people by name and say, "Good morning!" Watch a smile dart across their faces as they respond and head on their way to the benches, glad to have been noticed.

Singing is another way we can give. It is very rewarding to walk up the steps of some elderly man's home and get a hearty handshake of welcome from him. He sits in his chair as we are tightly scrunched in his toasty living room. His eyes are closed and tears are near as he listens to our singing. His lonely life without his dear partner has just been touched by the voices God gave us to use.

Giving compliments is a very rewarding act of kindness. When our family was recently in Colorado, we decided it was time to start noticing the good in other people and then let them know what we saw. It made our vacation the most enjoyable we've ever had.

My time in Arizona this summer teaching the Navajo children about God was a giving experience for me and one that I will never regret. Oh, I was having second thoughts when I got off the late train and was riding very quietly home with the papas. Soon I had met all the other girls. The papas became special. We girls gave ourselves to each other, which is the only reason we all got along so well. To hear the dirty faced, brown eyed little children rattle off, without missing a beat, "And be ye kind one to another" (Ephesians 6:1) and to hear the little church ring with the song, "If You're Happy And You Know It" put a smile on my own face. How I wondered if I had done the right thing by calling one little boy down after he had been acting up again. He sulked in the corner and would not say a word. I was feeling like a very mean teacher when I saw a tear streak down his cheek and heard him say, "God is a jerk." But just before the bus came to pick him up to go home, he ran to me and gave me a hug, earlier hatefulness forgotten. The next morning, he made sure that HE was the one to stand closest to me. And it was HIM that wanted me to

come to his house. There are so many children whose lives need to be touched. So many Dads and Moms who do not give their children the simple love they need.

Do not be afraid to be unselfish. It is when you truly forget about yourself that you can happily give to others.

I want to give a little tribute to both of my Grandpas. Somewhere along the way they have realized the true meaning of giving.

Grandpa Becker's motto is "Live for the good of others." Countless have been the times when he has stopped what he was doing to help someone in need, whether it was someone that needed a little financial boost, or one of his grandchildren that needed a sled built to enjoy the snow, or someone needing assistance when a rope was caught in the mower, or the mower wedged into a tight spot and couldn't be maneuvered out by the current driver. He had time to teach me to drive the combine. Another of his mottos is "Pick up three pieces of trash a day." "Whoa!" you say. "Three pieces? What good is that going to do?" He would probably reply, "Three pieces in the dumpster is better than three pieces on the ground!" Thanks, Grandpa for showing me the rewards of giving.

Grandpa Smith always had time to give. He taught me so much by just being himself. He had time to give Grandma a hug and a reassuring word; time to play Hide and Seek after a tiring day in the shop; time to give his grandchildren a ride in Ol' Brownie; time to give us all hugs; time to let me stop and pick a sunflower on the side of the road; time to get us ice cream at Clark's Pharmacy. He had time to give all he had whenever, however, and whatever. Even though he is gone, his memories live on and I have a strong desire to be like him.

In closing, I believe there are a thousand ways to give. Giving of our time, talents, money, a listening ear, a helping hand, and a song are just a few ways. May we all be encouraged to give more to others and to think less about ourselves.

Shanna Smith

Bless Someone Today

I was asked to come to Bethel Home recently and share with the Social Services/Activity Department what I do as a volunteer. I was concerned what I should tell them, as I did not want it to sound like, "I did this, and I do that." I prayed to God to help me as I would be talking to a group of ladies who serve Southwest Kansas in rest homes as social service activities directors.

I arrived at the Home at the appointed time and met our activity director. She told me I would be speaking to sixteen ladies, and I panicked. Speaking engagements are not something I do. I asked her if we could just do a hands-on walk-around, so that is what we did.

I was out in the court yard garden, weeding and dead-heading flowers when the director came out and introduced

me to the women. We talked about flowers and gardening with the elderly. We discussed what worked for us and what they liked to do at their facilities. Soon we went indoors to the coffee shop and that is where I feel the Lord stepped into the picture. Earlier I had asked God to guide and direct my words. On the morning of the meeting I had opened my devotional book and read with interest, “Bless Someone Today.” “I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35).

The devotional continued with the thought of having a healthy love walk. It encouraged me to spend time this morning thinking about what I could do for somebody else. We should ask God what we can do to be a blessing on His behalf today.

The best days we live are the ones we spend loving other people. I knew this was my answer to the question, “What do you do when you volunteer at Bethel Home?” I didn’t need to come up with a lot of ideas on my own. If I go to Bethel Home with love in my heart for my fellowmen, who in this case are the elderly, I can practice my “love walk.” You can choose a particular person and think about ways to bless him or her. If you don’t know what to do, just listen to what he or she says, and before long you will hear what the need might be.

I like to sit close to a person and let his or her feelings come through to me. I write letters for one lady who no longer is able to talk much. I can “feel” her thoughts by being close to her and try to convey her feelings on paper to her family. Often we sing as she has not lost her song. I come away from these moments totally blessed. Once in a while my husband has to encourage me to go to Bethel Home as he can tell I need my “fix.” It is awesome to know you have your mate’s permission and blessing to be a volunteer.

So in sharing these ideas with the group, I could sense that God was present, as some of them were wiping tears and nodding their heads. I thank God for answering my prayer.

Soon the question was asked how Bethel Home recruited volunteers. The answer came quickly from the activity director, “Oh, it’s because of their Church!” No more questions were asked. I believe the group understood how blessed our Home is by the participation of the Church.

Written by a volunteer, submitted by Merle Koehn

Dear Readers,

Hi! I am a nurse at the Moundridge Manor, and I love my job. Every day is different, with new challenges and many blessings. Let me tell you about one special challenge and blessing all wrapped up in one little lady named Rosie*.

Rosie was special. She was a short, white-haired lady with a wide smile and an infectious laugh. Rosie really loved life, with its many joys, sorrows, loneliness, and

blessings. Rosie loved and trusted in her Heavenly Father. One of her special joys was singing, and many times a staff member was privileged to walk down the hall with her, singing together, “Oh come to the church in the wildwood, come to the church in the vale” (by William S. Pitts, *Greatest Hymns*, song no. 172). This love of shared singing brought happiness and smiles to Rosie and everyone who heard her.

Rosie was a challenge. She suffered from dementia, and her “forgetter” worked very well. Some days Rosie was happy and singing, and other days her countenance was downcast. Some days she loved life, and other days she felt as though everyone was against her. Rosie’s moods were mercurial—she would be frowning, and then, with loving interaction with staff or family, show would soon be smiling again. We loved to make Rosie smile and laugh.

Rosie was a blessing. She accepted hugs almost any time. She walked down the hallway with anyone. She loved her husband and family. She blessed us with her faith through song. As Rosie’s health declined, we cared for her with love, and became close to her family. In Rosie’s last moments, her family granted the nursing staff the privilege of sharing her last breaths. What a precious experience this was!

Rosie was beloved. Rosie was unique, and yet, Rosie was not unique because in our long-term care facilities we have many “Rosies.” These elders are all special people, alike in their age and unique in their differences. They need staff who love life, with its blessings and challenges, to care for them. They need people to bond with, sing with, reminisce with, and walk the hallways with. If you are a person who loves the elderly and wants to enrich your life, come work with us in long-term care. You will never regret the experience, and you will never forget the “Rosies” you meet.

Cassandra Nightingale

*Name changed in interest of privacy. Family permission for publication obtained.

Getting Rich

Today I’m at my post in front of a med cart at the Manor. I finish setting up a lady’s medications, lock the cart, and carry her pills to her room. “Good morning,” I announce. “I’m here with your pills.”

The resident slowly lifts her head to meet my gaze, studies my face for a few moments, and then asks, “Do you get paid to work here?”

“Yes,” I say, “I do.”

She thinks for a minute and then questions, “But not so much that you’ll get rich?”

“No,” I assure her, “not so much that I’ll get rich.” I leave the room thinking...not so much that I’ll get rich.

How do you count riches? Have you ever known the joy of helping the frail and elderly with the simple tasks of everyday living and felt their gratitude and friendship in

return? Have you experienced the satisfaction of working together with a team toward a common goal? How would you calculate the worth of the fellowship shared around an employee dining room table?

The pay check is a small part of the reward of working at the Manor. Please consider letting God light your passion for service and join our team where getting rich is easy.

An employee at Moundridge Manor

Dear Readers,

It is a beautiful morning. The sunshine streams into the window announcing the arrival of another day! I'm working at the bedside of an elderly resident. Some of my fellow nurses have just finished singing the beautiful familiar hymn, "Must I go and empty handed? Must I meet my Saviour so? Not one soul with which to greet Him; must I empty handed go?" (by Charles C. Luther, *Christian Hymnal*, song no. 345). The girls have returned to their duties but the words echo in my mind. In a rocking chair another grandma sits singing the chorus of this same hymn. As I work, I wonder, will I really meet my Saviour empty handed? When I come to my end, what will I bring Him?

As I go on about my work, I feel so blessed and so privileged that this challenge of caring for our elderly is mine! Why do I feel this way? I have sometimes been approached with the statement, "I don't see how you can do it!"

OK, come and follow me down the hall and I'll take you to a scene that is sweet and ever so priceless. The picture you see is a face of wrinkles and a head of gray hair. The voice is weak, as are also the knees, the hands, the feet. You might just turn around and go back telling me she's just another elderly person.

Now I'll give you my impressions. What I see is a saint almost ready to step over Heaven's threshold. She has worked hard, seen many difficult days, raised her family, fought life's battles, perhaps with all the strength she had. She is one of God's oldest. At 107 years she lives on, perhaps so yet another prayer can be prayed. It is a beautiful picture of very rare price. She will soon be young again. Her voice will be sweet and her legs strong as she strolls the beautiful streets of Heaven. Who am I that I should be worthy enough to give this dear lady a drink of water?

Another blessing came to me the day I softly opened a door to put some laundry into a gentleman's room. The scene before me made me close the door again. This brother was on his knees at his bedside. Thankfulness filled my heart for someone so faithfully having his morning devotions. I go on with my work, noticing his sweet spirit, his easy going attitude, and I think, it's no wonder that he's happy.

I do not want to minimize a work load that is large. The hours of hard work can make the job at times unpleasant. It is then that I notice the wrinkled face smile. It is then I hear the sweet "thank you" over and over again.

Again I ask, "Why am I here?" I love the accomplishment of having dressed someone in their beautiful garments. They can't button their buttons, push their wheelchairs down the hall, or lift their forks to their mouths.

The day is done, my hours are over. These dear elderly are clothed and fed and it is a blessing knowing that I could help. Sometimes I find myself asking the question, "What if I couldn't blow my nose, wash my hands, feed myself, or reach for my glass of water?" Wouldn't I want someone to come sit beside me and say, "I'll help you."

At the end of my life, will I come to Jesus empty handed? Or will I come with my hands full of blessings that I have received because I served Him?

An employee at Moundridge Manor

His hands are weak, his fingers bent,
To help him he hopes one has been sent.
He would be so glad if they would come
And help him get his shoe undone.

His hair needs combing, his bed's not made,
He would like to pull his window shade.
The morning sun is peeping through,
He'd love to see the sky so blue.

If only he could walk his feet
And go and get a bite to eat,
And take his letter to the mail,
He'd do it all, but his heart would fail.

Then it was I who heard the call,
We need a worker down this hall.
Would you be willing to come in
And help us with this pinch we're in?

The hour was late, my list was long.
I was far too busy to sing a song.
Then it was she, the oldest one,
Who looked at me with eyes so blue
And said, "Thank you, thank you, I pray for you."

The hour seemed sweeter, my list less long.
In my heart now there arose a song,
A thanks of praise to God above
For surrounding us with all His love.

An employee at Moundridge Manor

Conference Care Facilities Newsletter is published when possible by the Conference Care Facilities Committee to share concerns, inspirations, and ideas among the care facilities of the Church of God in Christ, Mennonite. Send changes of quantity or address to Lowell Koehn, Burns, KS 66840; Fax 620-726-5222; e-mail: leeprinting@eaglecom.net.

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