



## STAFF:

### TREATING RESIDENTS AS THEY'D LIKE TO BE TREATED

*“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12)*

You are part of our Edison Christian Life Services (ECLS) community continuum of care. Maybe you've experienced the sense of Christian care and trust among residents, families, and staff here. Much of that is because we hire employees committed to following what you may know as Jesus' Golden Rule.

Because we've been renovating Edison Christian Assisted Living (ECAL), we invite you to meet three assisted living employees who care about “doing right” by residents and families. Some have even sought extra training so they can deepen how they serve residents.

When **Jason Dykhouse** was earning his LPN degree, he says he pictured himself working in a big hospital and learning about and using all the latest medical technology. “One of my classmates was working at Edison Christian Health Center (ECHC) and loved it. She strongly encouraged me to check it out,” he recalls.

After graduating in 2016, he decided to work at ECHC where he gained experience in dementia care, rehab care, and administration. Next, he earned his RN degree. Sometimes he helped out at the assisted living building, and, in September 2022, he became director of assisted living.

Jason typically works Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., unless he's needed to fill in a staffing gap. “My job includes hiring, training, and managing

employees so that they stay informed on policies, and it includes lots of resident contact. Deciding to leave their home or independent living situation can be hard for residents and families. I feel like I become part of the residents' families because I get to connect with them in multiple ways, such as on the phone to provide initial information, on the facility tour and resident assessment, as we prepare for the admission, and at admission. These connections can help make the resident and family feel a little more comfortable as they adjust to ECAL.

“My staff is really good at keeping me up-to-date, so I can connect with the doctor who visits weekly. I've noticed that our medical assistants seem to notice

a lot of things that nurses would. I always phone families if a resident's health status changes, explaining what kinds of health appointments their loved one needs. I can set up lab draws, EKGs, and difficult appointments, such as with an interventional radiologist,” he says.

While he enjoys all parts of his job, Jason says, “The nurse in me will never stop wanting to talk with residents and help with care. I do head-to-toe assessments as residents' conditions change. I learn cool stuff from residents all the time. Just because someone is 90 doesn't mean that they don't still have interests.

“We have residents from many different backgrounds with interesting life stories. One woman still draws and paints and is really good at it. Sometimes, I ride a motorcycle to work, so I enjoyed talking about motorcycles with a former resident. One woman who died recently taught botany to her kids at home, and another who died recently was accepted into The Juilliard School of music in New York City, sang opera, and has a son that toured with a country western group.”

When an assisted living resident experiences physical or cognitive decline, Jason says that families sometimes worry that their loved one will need more care. But Jason works to help them find other options, if possible. “This is their home. Often, they will be happier if we can get hospice on board so they can stay in their familiar setting, but sometimes a move to

*(continued on page 4)*



**Jason Dykhouse, Director of Assisted Living**



# FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



Our spring newsletter features staff members who work at Edison Christian Assisted Living, which meets residents' needs at the midpoint of our continuum of care. Residents in assisted living typically receive assistance with medications, bathing, and dressing. We commend these staff members for providing quality care to our assisted living residents.

Through service awards and an annual banquet, our board members honor staff members who have reached milestones of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and more years of service. You can see recent award recipients pictured in this newsletter. We are thankful for the stability that long-term staff members provide for our facilities, and we value each member's unique contribution to our ministry.

At our website, [edisonchristian.org](http://edisonchristian.org), you can read about our three facilities—Edison Christian Health Center, Edison Christian Assisted Living, and Edison Christian Independent Living. You will see details on job opportunities and different ways to give to Edison Christian Life Services. You can also link directly to LeadingAge Michigan, our state association, which supports programs and policies to benefit older adults in Michigan.

Edison Christian Life Services, along with most businesses, has been increasingly challenged by the current labor market. We are looking to hire licensed nurses, CNAs, med techs, and staff for dining services and housekeeping. A complete up-to-date list of job openings can be found on the website listed above under the careers tab. Applications can be submitted online. We hope that you or someone you know will consider joining us in our ministry to our residents!

We continue to express our gratitude to God for guiding us through the pandemic. We have gone to great lengths to protect our residents from the COVID virus that particularly threatens the older adults among us and have carefully implemented infection control protocols. We continue to advocate to policy-makers for a reasonable approach to protect our residents' health and facilitate their emotional well-being. We thank the Lord for his direction and blessing on our efforts.

Thank you for your continuing support through prayers, gifts, and volunteer time. Please consider contributing again to help us meet residents' needs. We praise God for his amazing grace shown to us in our ministry.

—Todd Nyeholt

## YOUR NEXT JOB?

*“Helpful staff and friendly residents...  
a calling from the Lord...  
like working with family...  
upbeat and positive...  
better than my last job.”*

That's how new and long-term employees describe working at Edison Christian Life Services.

We'd love for you to join our caring team and are currently hiring staff in all three buildings.

Within our assisted living facility, we're looking for medical assistants and medical technicians for second shift, either full or part time.

## Try This Free Way to Help Edison Christian Health Center

Many Christians who faithfully tithe from their income want to know how to use their will to tithe from their estate. Making a will bequest is one of the simplest things that prudent people can do to make a big impact on our ability to serve Edison Christian Health Center (ECHC) residents.

“Contacting me about how to make a will bequest or other planned gift is fine,” says Todd Nyeholt, the Edison Christian Life Services administrator. “To leave a bequest in your will, you simply designate a dollar amount or estate percentage to one or more organizations. Most people make planned gifts without ever talking to the organization.”

We are always grateful when we learn that someone has left a bequest for Edison Christian Health Center (ECHC) or Edison Christian Foundation. Recently, we received a \$1,400 estate gift to ECHC and a \$40,000 gift to Edison Christian Foundation.

We use gifts to ECHC for capital improvements, equipment, and programming. Gifts to the Foundation help us grow

the endowment. Each year, the Foundation transfers earnings to ECHC to help pay for many of our residents who have outlived their financial resources. This boost from the Foundation is crucial because the daily gap between Medicaid reimbursement and actual care costs continues to escalate due to operational cost increases.

Here are the top reasons people give for making bequests to us:

- Express appreciation for care provided to a loved one.
- Support work they've witnessed while volunteering here.
- Help older adults because they're aware of the need here.

It's also possible that another type of planned gift, such as a life insurance policy or charitable gift annuity, is a better choice for your estate. For answers to questions on estate planning, phone Todd Nyeholt at (616) 453-2475. You can also learn more and give online at <https://www.edisonchristian.org/give/>.

# MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

November 2022 - February 2023

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\* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

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**Leonna White, Medical Assistant**

nursing care is necessary,” he says.

Jason acknowledges that he had zero role in the renovation at assisted living but notices what prospective residents and families say when he shows them the new paint, flooring, and spruced up furniture in the hair salon, exercise room, dining rooms and activity areas. “People comment, ‘Oh, it looks really nice in here!’

“We really do what’s right for the residents each day. We take the time to get to know each resident, including who they were before they moved here,” he adds.

Even though she lives nearby, **Leonna White** had no familiarity with ECLS when she began working as a full-time, second-shift medical assistant at assisted living in September 2022. “These ladies and gentlemen have quickly grown to be a significant part of my heart. Even on my days off, I think about residents and wonder how they are doing,” she says.

Leonna appreciates the opportunity to use all her medical assistant skills. To become a certified medical assistant, she had one year of full-time training in administrative skills, clinical skills, and pharmaceutical knowledge, including which medications shouldn’t be taken together.

“Here, we get treated with the respect

that LPNs get. Many older people show pain through their faces, not their words. When I noticed a resident who looked sad when she’s normally happy, I told Jason. It turned out the lady was septic,” she explains. According to Jason Dykhouse, not even the hospital could figure out where the infection originated, but since the problem was caught early, she recovered and is now doing well in rehab.

“I’m very task-oriented. In some of my medical assistant jobs, I worked for agencies, often dealing with clients, pharmacists, and doctors by phone. At assisted living, I pass meds, of course, do some treatments, apply skin cream, help residents get snacks or settled into bed. We’re that bridge between family and facility. Often, we’re with the family when a resident passes away.

“At Edison Christian, they give you everything you need to do your job well. They keep extra supplies on hand for residents, like toothpaste, deodorant, soap, and briefs. I’ve worked in facilities where they don’t even have enough towels for residents,” she says.

Leonna also loves getting to know the people she works with and for. “My colleagues are phenomenal! We work as a team, whatever the need. If we’re short on meal servers, then it’s all hands on deck.

“And here, I can be myself. I’m the residents’ entertainment. I bring in laughter and playfulness. We joke, sing together, and two ladies even dance with me. One lady who likes sitting near the front lobby thinks she is at a train station or on a train—so we just go with it. She asks, ‘Now do I have to pay for my meals on the train?’ and I say, ‘No, meals are all included here.’

“We have so many interesting residents. Some come from families that own businesses, such as a hardware store or meat market. I enjoy hearing about the residents’ experiences throughout their lives.”

Leonna says that she spends so much time “bragging on” assisted living’s staff, residents, and renovation. Her daughter,



**Allie Green, Med Tech**

Fre’Dazha, recently was hired in the ECLS dining services department.

Like many ECLS employees, **Allie Green** liked working here so well that she accepted encouragement to improve her knowledge and skills. She started in dining services in 2015. “I found out about the job because my mother and sister already worked at Edison Christian. I really enjoyed interacting with the elderly and helping them as much as I could,” she says.

She moved out of Grand Rapids in 2016, became a stay-at-home mom, and then decided, in 2019, to become a resident aide at assisted living. Next, Allie trained to become a medical technician (a.k.a. med tech), completing her training in October 2021. Allie works full time as a med tech administering medications and charting details for each resident on medication dosage, receipt time, and any side effects.

“I soon found out that I highly enjoy working as a med tech. Everyone in assisted living works as a team to make sure every resident is taken care of properly—not just physically but also emotionally. I love that everyone is on the same page about what the residents deserve in their last years of life,” Allie says.

She works from 6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. On a typical shift, she wakes up residents for breakfast, gives morning pills, and assists

*(continued on page 6)*

## MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS *(continued from page 3)*

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\* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

*(continued on page 6)*

## TREATING RESIDENTS AS THEY'D LIKE TO BE TREATED *(continued from page 4)*

where needed with tasks of daily living, such as dressing and bed making. After breakfast she helps residents shower, assists with 10:30 a.m. activities, and helps with lunch. After lunch she finishes up giving medications, charting, and other tasks.

"It's easy to interact with residents, whether we're playing cards or bingo or doing something else. If our morning activity is coffee with donuts or another snack, then we all get together and chat. We talk about our days and anything new that's happening. I love hearing about their lives before they moved to assisted living and all their stories about

past jobs, vacations, and fun stories about kids and spouses," Allie says.

She says that watching the assisted living building get remodeled has been a joy. "The building updates create a more bright and positive feeling, like a five-star hotel. It was exciting for the residents to watch the building change. Seeing them surprised by all the new carpet, furniture, and paint was awesome.

"Overall, working as a med tech at Edison Christian Assisted Living is one of the best jobs I've ever had. I don't see myself leaving anytime soon," she concludes.

## YOUR NEXT HOME?

*We'd love for you to make your next home with us. We have assisted living and independent living apartments available for individuals and couples.*

## MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS *(continued from page 5)*

### Ed & Anne VanDriel

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### Jasper & Anne VanDyke

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### Phyllis VanHeest

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### LaVerne Woldyk

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**Total Memorial Gifts ... \$44,277**

*\* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation*

## IN LOVING MEMORY

November 2022 – February 2023

Lois Thome	November 4	age 87	Joseph Thielen	January 12	age 87
Arlene Lawrence	November 12	age 70	Phyllis Scott	January 27	age 93
Louise Boersma	November 18	age 96	Norma Solle	February 2	age 91
Darla Baker	November 20	age 78	Dorothy Baker	February 11	age 96
Carrie Lyzenga	November 22	age 98	Julie Lemieux	February 14	age 61
Donald Kalkofen	December 7	age 92	Martha LeBaron	February 17	age 87
Constance Lamb	December 9	age 74	Phyllis DeSmit	February 18	age 93
Marjorie Robach	December 18	age 87	Carol Goodrich	February 25	age 73
Maryelna Dauchy	December 23	age 76	E. Joann McCarty	February 28	age 93
Susan Monton	January 12	age 69			

# 2022 SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS



## 5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Linda McMorrow, Stacy Irwin, Shanon Bieszka, Mary Carlson, Logan Gale. **Not pictured:** Amber DeMaat, Jason Dykhouse, Mindy Giaimo, Olivia Gingrich, Megan Thomas.



## 10 & 15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Jennifer Hurst (10), Jessica Molyneux (15), Elizabeth Ekema (10). **Not pictured:** Stephanie Gomez (10), Nicole Jackson (15).



## 20 & 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Marcia VanKuiken (25), Jan VanStrien (board member), Vonnie Engelsma (board member), Karen VanZweden (board member). **Not pictured:** Michele Crawford (20), Luanne Woodruff (20), Jennifer Matthews (25).

## RECENT ECLS RETIREE

*In honor of your service from the  
Board of Directors:*

**Patty Tryc.....8 years**  
With our appreciation for your commitment to our residents!

## CONTRIBUTING CHURCHES

November 2022 – February 2023

Bethany URC  
Bethel URC  
Blythefield CRC  
First Netherlands Ref.  
First PRC

Free Ref.  
Grace Protestant Ref.  
Seventh Ref.  
Walker URC  
West Leonard CRC

## EDISON CHRISTIAN INDEPENDENT LIVING

Edison Christian Independent Living provides senior citizen independent living and offers meals, activities, and housekeeping services. Our residents enjoy secure, homelike comfort and Christian companionship. Independent living apartments are currently available.

**For more information and a tour, call:  
(616) 453-0993 [edisonchristian.org](http://edisonchristian.org)**

## EDISON CHRISTIAN ASSISTED LIVING

Edison Christian Assisted Living encourages residents to maintain independence while acknowledging that assistance may be needed in the activities of daily living. Assistance is available to help residents with bathing, dressing, taking medications, and other daily activities. Our support and services help our residents to live life fully. Assisted living apartments are currently available.

**For more information and a tour, call:  
(616) 453-0581 [edisonchristian.org](http://edisonchristian.org)**



Edison Christian Life Services  
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Grand Rapids, MI 49504

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EDISON CHRISTIAN  
LIFE SERVICES

# NEWSLETTER

Spring 2023



*LeadingAge*<sup>TM</sup>  
Edison Christian Life Services  
is a member of  
LeadingAge Michigan  
*Michigan*

Check out our website at:  
[edisonchristian.org](http://edisonchristian.org)

Michigan Charitable Contributions Solicitation License Numbers:  
Edison Christian Life Services – MICS 6594  
Edison Christian Foundation – MICS 8956