

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2023

RESIDENTS:

TRUSTING IN THE LORD

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)

You've likely heard it said—or said yourself—that old age is not for sissies. Sometimes health challenges come even before we think of ourselves as "old." At Edison Christian Life Services, our residents range from relatively younger people with conditions that prevent them from living independently to older people with a range of abilities and challenges.

But no matter what our residents can or can't do, God loves them uniquely and so do we. We've noticed that the happiest residents are often those who trust in God's care and timing, even when they don't understand why they've lost abilities, independence, or loved ones. In fact, over the decades, the most commonly cited verse among our residents is Proverbs 3:5-6 (in italics above).

Meet three residents who trust in the Lord and take joy in God's good gifts.

Trudy Slagter Block was born in 1930 in Churchill, Montana. She was the third of four children in a family that learned to adapt to change. "My father was a Christian school principal but left teaching because the school had no ability to pay during the Depression. He tried farming in Platte, South Dakota, but then came the Dust Bowl and the locusts. I remember the women being disturbed by how dust

continually blew into the houses," Trudy says.

The Slagters moved to Prinsburg, Minnesota, and Trudy's dad joined his brothers in crop farming. Trudy attended a one-room country school, then a new Christian school for grades six through eight, and finished at a public school, because there was no alternative.

As an adult, Trudy remained open to new things till she could find her niche. "I went to Calvin College for a two-year course in teaching, after which I taught two years at a two-room Christian school in East Friesland, Wisconsin. I had 40 children in four grades and was such a rookie. I studied another year at Calvin and taught



Trudy Block

third grade at Pella Christian School [Iowa]—but teaching was not my forte," she explains.

Back in Grand Rapids again, she looked up friends from her Calvin Coop (women's dormitory homes) days and found contract office jobs. Mutual friends introduced her to John Block at a bowling alley. After graduating from Calvin College, John had served in the military in Alaska, where he helped build a CRC chapel while serving in the Air Force.

"We got married a year later at Park Congregational Church, which we chose for its wedding planning services. But I joined John's church, Broadway Christian Reformed Church, which later became Westview CRC. He was an only child, so the church was truly family for him. It became my home too," Trudy says.

They welcomed four children between 1958 and 1967—boy, girl, boy, girl. "When Karla, our last child, was born, the nurse said, 'What a well-planned family you have!' John replied, 'Of course! I am in production control." He worked in business administration for companies including DeKorne Furniture, owned by his fellow church friend Jack DeKorne.

The Blocks built a home on Seventh Street. Their children attended West Side Christian and Calvin Christian

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FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



Our summer newsletter features life stories of residents within our continuum of care. Their testimonies of faith encourage us in our daily walk with God. We are thankful to be part of their lives.

The Women's Service Board thanks those who collectively gave over \$5,300 during their recent "Bakeless Bake Sale." The service board's recent

gifts to the home include the iN2L resident engagement technology subscription, a resident weight chair scale, and slings for resident lifts. The board also covers ongoing expenses for our bird aviary. We thank the service board members for providing so many items to improve our residents' quality of life.

Thank you for your gifts in response to our May appeal toward resident Medicaid shortfalls. Over the past year, Medicaid reimbursements have increased marginally, but our costs have increased substantially due to inflationary increases in wages, benefits, medical and operating supplies, and food. New infection control measures required by regulations have also increased operating costs. Many of our residents are requiring increasing levels of care from our staff. Your ongoing support makes a difference in helping care for our residents just as you would hope to be taken care of.

Edison Christian Life Services is looking to hire CNAs, dining and environmental services staff, and licensed nurses, both RNs and LPNs. A complete up-to-date list of job

openings can be found on our website *edisonchristian.org* 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 give God the glory as we serve our residents. Please keep praying for God's leading in our ministry. We appreciate your faithful support!

—Todd Nyeholt

ABOUT OUR RESIDENTS

- Edison Christian Health Center can serve 106 nursing care residents.
- Edison Christian Assisted Living can serve 30 assisted care residents.
- Edison Christian Independent Living can serve 40 independent residents.
- 67% of our residents are women.
- Our youngest resident is 60. Our oldest residents are two residents aged 101.
- The average resident age is 86.
- Our residents come from nearly 50 churches.
- 80% of our nursing care residents receive Medicaid assistance.

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 Life Services (ECLS) residents. 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 Life Services (ECLS) or Edison Christian Foundation. For example, over the past six months we received two estate gifts to ECLS totaling \$30,896.

We use gifts to ECLS for capital improvements, equipment, and programming. Gifts to the foundation help us grow the endowment. Each year, the foundation transfers earnings to the home to help with the shortfall for our residents who have outlived their financial resources. This boost from the

foundation is crucial because of the soaring gap between Medicaid reimbursement and actual care costs. Over the past year, our costs have increased substantially by 6 to 20% due to inflationary increases in wages, benefits, food, medical supplies, and operating supplies.

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. If you have a question on making a will bequest or planned gift to Edison Christian Life Services or Edison Christian Foundation, call Todd Nyeholt at (616) 453-2475. You can also learn more and give online at https://www.edisonchristian.org/give/.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

March 2023 - June 2023

Neal Baas

Marylin DeGroot* Audrey Gezon*

Jane Baker

Mr. Donald Baker*

Ken Bishop

Del Seitz

Bertha Bolthouse

Barry Stevens

Virginia Boonstra

David & Pam Visser*

Barbara Boyce

Robert Boyce

Mary Bruggema

Anne Green

Harry & Eleanor Brummel

Michael & Beth Reynolds Michael & Beth Reynolds*

Mary E. Carlson

Richard D. Carlson Richard D. Carlson*

Marty DeBruine

David & Mary Bazen

Edith Bazen

Martha Dalton

Mathijs & Marion Remijn

Doris & Ed Rose

Leo Boot & Char Stegink

Mr. & Mrs. Glen Williams

James & Kathryn DeMeester

Marilyn DeMeester

Marilyn DeMeester*

Phyllis DeSmit

Kathy Adema*

Tom & Patty DeSmit

Merle DeWeerd

Audrey Gezon

Dan & Amy Koetsier

Dave & Sue Koetsier

Iames & Geraldine Koetsier

John & Debra Koetsier

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Dan & Jan Petroelje

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Grace DeVries

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Kathy Adema

Bob & Carol Dice

Don Grotenrath & Debra Foster

Verlee Haisma

Dave & Gina Mast

Barbara VanderMolen

Jim & Henrietta Dornbos

Jerry & Kathy Bos

Irene Eldridge

Dennis Eldridge Dennis Eldridge*

Theresa Ellens

Marylin DeGroot*

Andrew & Mary Flipse

Helen VanNeuren

Roger Fritsma

Mary Fritsma

David Fuhrmann Sr.

Nancy Fuhrmann

Donna Galer

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Mr. & Mrs. Victor Gillis*

Jeanne Grooters

Mr. & Mrs. Donald Prince*

Menno Haan

Marylin DeGroot*

Iane & Thomas Foster

Iean Haan

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John & Sandra Kerstetter

Bruce & Gerene Kropscott

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John Prewozniak

Dr. Clinton Harris

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Don & Hilda Hoek

Michael & Joyce Markaity*

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Arlene Nesselroad

Arlene Nesselroad*

David Hoekzema

Arlene Nesselroad

Arlene Nesselroad*

Harvey Hoekzema

Arlene Nesselroad

Arlene Nesselroad*

Jenny Hoekzema

Mr. & Mrs. Albert Hoekzema*

Martin Horjus

Nella Daves

Mrs. Ella Horjus

Tom Huizenga

David & Susan Huizenga

Sharon Hulsing

Mr. John Hulsing

Judy Ilbrink

Mr. Harold J. Ilbrink*

John Johnson

Anonymous

Dort Bishop

Mrs. Marilyn Boukma

Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Coon

Marylin DeGroot

Alyce Ellens

Virginia Engelman

Karen Haisma

Verlee Haisma

Jack & Barbara Heeres

Vinetta Hosford

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Jeltema

Mrs. Marlyn Katsma

Robert Kelley

Michael & Joanne Walberer

Carolee Zoerhoff*

Warren Jolman

Mary Jolman-Davis

Barbara Kober

Joanne Hoebeke*

Dorothy Koll

Jon & Joyce VanderBee*

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^{*} Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

TRUSTING IN THE LORD (continued from page 1)

High and enjoyed summer family trips. "John was the leader, and I was the follower. He served as an elder, deacon—everything. I did Bible Study and the nursery.

"When Karla was nine, I finally found my niche. I worked part time at Cadence, an East Grand Rapids newspaper founded by women. I'm not real artistic but I loved doing typesetting and graphics there. My co-workers, all younger than me, were so much fun," Trudy says.

When Trudy and John retired in 1996, they enjoyed traveling and owned a sailboat for three years. "I have a few harrowing memories of sudden storms on volatile Lake Michigan. In spite of growing up in Minnesota, I never learned to swim and boasted of being a 'land lubber,'" she says.

They lived for a time in a Leonard Street condo close to their church, but moved to Edison Christian Independent Living in July 2013 because John could no longer handle stairs. "He lived with me 14 months and then moved into Edison Christian Health Center, where he died one month later of numerous afflictions."

Trudy remains open to new experiences. Unlike many people her age, she enjoys more contemporary music such as Jeremy Camp's "Is He Worthy?" and "Give Me Jesus." She loves her iPad, whether to "attempt to write poetry," attend Zoom worship, play Words with Friends, or stay in touch with family.

Trudy's children now live in Grand Rapids, metro Chicago, metro Atlanta, and Lansing. She stays in close touch with them and her 10 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

"In my decade here, I've seen many residents pass on to glory. I now use a walker and have some heart issues—but we try not to emphasize our afflictions here," she explains.

"I'm blessed by the Christian influence and enjoy attending the excellent weekly Bible study here led by Ben Bessett, associate pastor at Seventh Reformed. Recently we had four fun 'Getting to Know You' opportunities with West Side Christian fourth graders. Their energetic vibrant fun was just what we needed."

Trudy says that the independent living residents are "a family of sorts" who share the challenges of aging with compassionate staff members. "I have especially been blessed by Martha Horjus' leadership. She takes the time to master all the details of running our building and has a real servant heart. She is so kind and giving.

Asked to share wisdom for younger Christians, she replies, "Keep God as your main focus, trusting him in all things, and he will give you the desires of your heart. As I tell my adult children now approaching retirement years: 'Don't try to do old age without God at the helm. Live by Proverbs 3:5-6."

Family, faith, purpose, and the arts have always been important for **Catherine Gianakura Rogg**. Born in 1961, she is the oldest of three daughters and grew up in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Her dad ran The American Café, begun by his father and uncle.

"We all worked at the café, were active in the local Greek Orthodox Church,



Catherine Rogg

and loved sharing stories," she recalls. "There was a crazy lot of snow in Sault Ste. Marie. Sometimes we went to Mackinac Island. My dad remembers taking the ferry between peninsulas before the Mackinac Bridge was built. He would take notes during the day and always came home with stories from customers."

Cathie majored in journalism and fashion design at Central Michigan University, where she met Jeffrey Rogg. She graduated in 1983, they married in 1984, and both focused on their careers—Jeffrey in law and Cathie in development and fundraising. "We moved often for job opportunities. I was raised to stay positive and open to new things. And our faith in God was always a constant," she says. Their daughter, Blythe, was born in Alpena and their son, Pierce, was born when they lived in metro Detroit.

Cathie's job titles included executive director of Alpena Community College Foundation and development director and assistant head of school at University Liggett School in Grosse Pointe Woods. "Liggett is Michigan's oldest independent private day school. Working there was an interesting change. I planned lots of fun fundraisers and auctions," she says.

She has good memories of family bike rides, exploring Michigan together, watching their children play many kinds of sports, and attending church. They moved to Grand Rapids in 2010 when Cathie became director of alumni relations at Davenport University. The family joined St. Mark's Episcopal Church, where Cathie got involved in social justice ministry, sang in the choir, and served on the search committee.

She's grateful for her education and opportunities. "My dad wanted to be a photojournalist. My mom wanted to be a math teacher. But family obligations kept them from pursuing their dreams." She set up scholarships in their honor at Lake Superior State

(continued on page 6)

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS (continued from page 3)

Janice Kosak

Frank Kosak Frank Kosak*

Eugene & Jeanette Kragt

Mrs. Margene Stoutjesdyk*

Jo Kragt

Mr. & Mrs. Roger Hans

Larry Kragt

Mrs. Lois Kragt*

Bevra Kremer

Janice Palczewski

Janice Palczewski*

Allen & Agnes Kuieck

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Kuieck*

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Toni Conner

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Elizabeth Joann McCarty

Anonymous

Anonymous

Joy Balasko

Darlene & Keith Best

Darlene & Keith Best*

Amy McCarty

Tony Miller & family

Sally Rynberg

Iune Schutter

Kay Schwartz

Joyce Modderman

Stacy Cross

Tim, Jeanne & Andrea Jerry

Susan Monton

Family of Susan Monton

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Robert J. Mulder

Dolores Mulder

Robert J. Mulder

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Robert J. Mulder

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Everett & Judy Hamernik

Karen & Curtis Johnson

Andrew Palczewski

Janice Palczewski

Janice Palczewski*

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Mr. Fred Rosendall*

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Mrs. June Shaw

Mrs. June Shaw*

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Margaret Lunger

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Mary Ellell Magyar

Ms. Marilynn Slade

Janene Timm

Gary & Sandra Wegenke

Cecil & Elizabeth Williams

Violet Smalt

Carolee Zoerhoff*

Howard & Anita Snodgrass

Marti Duryea

Marti Duryea*

Norma Solle

Jerry & Joyce Yntema

Jean Stevens

Barry Stevens

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Helen VanNeuren

John & Henrietta VanNeuren

Helen VanNeuren

Dorothy VanSolkema

Robert & Cheryl VandenBerg*

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Ms. Gretchen Bush

Ms. Gretchen Bush*

Dale Verburg

Jerald Weersma

Merlin Vis

Mrs. Virginia Bernt*

Donald Visser

David & Pam Visser

Karl Waivio

Mary Waivio

Margaret Winkel

Richard Winkel

LaVerne Woldyk

James & Arlynn Kuiper

Charles Yff

Gloria Yff

Total Memorial Gifts ... \$22,849

^{*} Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

TRUSTING IN THE LORD (continued from page 4)

University in Sault Ste. Marie and surprised her father by gathering his stories into a locally popular book, An American Café: Reflections from the Grill (2009).

The last eight years have been full of change for Cathie. Her parents moved to Grand Rapids, but her mom developed Alzheimer's, so Cathie and her sister Joy, who lives in Allendale, chose Edison Christian Life Services for their dear mom. "We chose it because the staff was very friendly and kind. She got really good care here."

"In January 2018, while I was development director for Paws with a Cause, I was diagnosed with Parkinson's. I tried to work for 18 more months but could not. My dad and I lived together and helped each other at Lincoln Square Senior Living. By 2020, I developed hand writing and balance issues. Parkinson's began affecting my speech in 2021. In summer 2022, my mom died, and my dad started losing his memory, so we moved to separate rooms at Edison Christian Assisted Living."

More recently, she started falling with her walker so she switched to a wheelchair. Cathie is honest about the difficulties of knowing she'll never get better or live independently again. "I now speak softly and rapidly, which makes being heard and understood by people with hearing impairments virtually impossible. I do have an iPad with special software that allows me to type what I want to say. The letters can be enlarged to be easily read or I can make it speak. I need to use it more often than I do," she says.

Yet, she affirms, "I'm grateful that God provides for me. This is a good place. They are very good to me. It's a blessing that Parkinson's doesn't make my hands shake, so I can type on my phone and iPad. I've started to paint acrylics with another resident, my friend Carla Walker."

Cathie enjoys reading, newscasts, and sitting outside in nice weather. She

tries to do at least one group activity a day. Each Sunday, she attends St. Mark's Church and friends take her on outings. Asked which verses give her strength, she replies, "Trust in the Lord... and lean not on your own understanding..."

Richard DeBoer was born in northwest Grand Rapids in 1959, the third of four children. "I was born with the gift of good cheer. I have cerebral palsy and have been using a wheelchair practically since birth," he explains.

He attended Pine Rest Children's Retreat as a day student. "My parents figured I would be happy there, and, eventually, I was. I remember basketball games, Christmas parties, and feeding the ducks at the duck pond. My last two school years were at Ottawa Hills Orthopedics, and they tried to teach me to be independent. Cerebral palsy has never affected my ability to learn or make friends. I can use my hands, although I couldn't coordinate them enough to be able to type," he says.

Richard used to have his own one-bedroom apartment and enjoyed receiving Meals on Wheels. Richard likes routine, and working as a Celebration Cinemas ticket taker is an important part of his life. He worked twice a week at Studio 28 till it closed and



Richard DeBoer

then switched to Celebration Cinema Rivertown. "I take people's tickets and tell them where to go. The food and drink I choose at work is water with no ice and plain hot dogs," he explains.

While living independently, he loststrength and balance and had to become more vigilant about his diet. "My body changed so it was harder for me to transfer out of my wheelchair into bed. I had too many falls. I moved to The Oaks at Byron Center when my mom entered assisted living there."

Richard made friends at The Oaks but couldn't work at Rivertown, because the GoBus only operates in Byron Center till 6:10 p.m. "After my mom, Arlene DeBoer, passed away in March 2022, I moved to Edison Christian Health Center so I could resume my job. I now work every Wednesday from 5 to 9 p.m. The GoBus takes me, and, if it is late, I call in and my manager understands."

He's grateful for family ties. "My parents always loved me. My dad, Anthony DeBoer, died of lung cancer in 1996. My two sisters live in Grand Rapids and Byron Center. My brother, Steve, lives in Wayland and brings me back and forth to Orchard Hill Reformed Church. I've got seven nieces, three nephews, and several grandnieces and nephews."

As a friendly person with a good memory for names, Richard says he makes friends at Edison Christian Health Center by "cruising the halls in my wheelchair. I like hearing residents sing in the hallway. I like the food and having alternate menu choices. The staff is wonderful! They did the best they could to get me through different illnesses. They cut up my food, but I can feed myself. I need help showering and getting in and out of bed but, other than that, I'm fine.

"I'm happy with my life how it is. I feel like God knows who I am," Richard concludes.

IN LOVING MEMORY

March 2023 - June 2023

	000 = 0=0	
Lucille Laur	March 4	age 99
Janet Abid	March 6	age 84
Cornelius "Neal" Baas	March 15	age 96
Mary Karpinski	March 20	age 86
Walter Longcore	March 20	age 96
Gisela Jungblut	March 21	age 83
Ester Remelts	March 23	age 77
Valerie Wheeler-Smith	March 24	age 68
Ruthe Richardson	March 29	age 82
Althea DeVos	April 4	age 87
Louis Larson, Jr.	April 6	age 82
Barbara Helmick	April 7	age 89
Donald Engelsma	April 11	age 99
Ronna Shirley	April 13	age 86
Joyce Modderman	April 18	age 87
Shirley McLarty	May 3	age 90
John Johnson	May 3	age 87
Margaret Winkel	May 8	age 72
Ann Slade	May 9	age 82
Marjorie Palczewski	May 20	age 92
Geraldine Lauzon	May 21	age 73
Hattie Cornell	May 30	age 95
Theresa Ellens	May 31	age 96
Menno Haan	June 2	age 89
Merlin Vis	June 3	age 99
Martines DeBruine	June 6	age 72
Kenneth Bishop	June 10	age 94
Beverly Spranger	June 15	age 92
Bevra Kramer	June 16	age 86
Daniel Reed	June 18	age 85
Edward Bowe	June 26	age 91

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 staff.

GIFTS RECEIVED IN HONOR OF

March 2023 - June 2023

In honor of... Wilbert Kloostra..... from Marc Bohland

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.

For more information and a tour, call: (616) 453-0993 edisonchristian.org

CONTRIBUTING CHURCHES

March 2023 - June 2023

First Netherlands Ref. Cong. Hope Protestant Ref.
Free Ref. Walker URC
Grace Protestant Ref. West Leonard St. CRC

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

For more information and a tour, call: (616) 453-0581 edisonchristian.org

are currently available.

RECENT ECLS RETIREE

In honor of your service from the Board of Directors:

Kathy Levandoski	23 years
Connie Vainavicz	
Nancy Zerfas	21 years

With our appreciation for your commitment to our residents!



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NEWSLETTER

Summer 2023





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