

Called to Serve... in Haiti & at Home

Together with partners from Perry Lutheran Homes, Ministry in Mission and Iowa District West, LFS leaders brought the first frail elderly into the Jacmel Lutheran Home in January. Funded by a grant from the national LWML, the home was completed just in time to receive its first residents: one man and four women who had been abandoned and near death, living alone in unsafe conditions with no one to bring them food or water. Vanina (pictured below) was thankful to God for her “rescue”. Like each of the others who came one by one over two days, she was gathered up into the arms of Vlad, our capable interpreter, carried to a mattress on the back of a pickup to ride across bumpy roads in the hot sun to her new home. Once there, she was given food, a bath, hair and nail care, new clothes, a blessing and prayer from one of the team’s pastors, a prayer cross (made by the residents of Perry Lutheran Home) a new clean bed, and finally a much needed nap.

The dedicated Haitian staff at the Jacmel Lutheran Home have provided updates on the progress of the first five residents, which has been nothing short of remarkable. They are attending church services and thanking God for a new lease on life. Four of them are even walking now! Widline, the nurse manager of the home, recently shared this update: “They are well, they tell me they are not old anymore they feel they are young like me. Only the man sometimes he is not well, but he made a lot of progress. Some of them have friends or family come to see them, and some don’t have anybody come, those who don’t have, say they don’t have any problem for that because they have a new family now.”

LFS is working with partners to bring awareness of the needs of “invisible” elderly, not just in Haiti but in Iowa - a critical mission-field just outside our door. To learn more about this work, like and follow the LFS Facebook page and visit our web site to sign up for periodic e-News updates. Team members are available to bring a presentation to your group.



<--Inside the new Jacmel Lutheran Home.

Team members: Deb Koelln, Max Phillips, Mick Wolfram, Jim Lamb, Melissa Gannon, Mollie Clark, Holly Eldridge, Kelly Moore, Steve Turner, Kim Laube, Wanda Pritzel and Jackie Rychel. -->



Gifts Given with Love in *Memory* of those we Love

Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” John 14:1-3

Al Foth
Myrna Nichols

Albert Lesley
Ronald & Carolyn Rubsam

Aleda Nissen
Lonnie Kirchhoff

Audrey Lamaak
Peace Lutheran Ladies Aide, Wall Lake

Bill Hinrichs
Rodney & Marilyn Meyer

Cale Dietrich
Alan & Marilyn Young

Cindy Boger
Lonnie Kirchhoff

Connie Wabeke
Kerry & Keri Burmeister

Curt Stoltenberg
Delbert & Donna Licht

Dale Stetzel
Larry & Tracy Stetzel

David Fritz
Dale & Ruth Bruhn

David J Musfeld
Larry Mahnke

Dean Telford
Arnold & Mildred Torkelson

Betty Heidt
Joan Arnold

Delbert Johnson
Lloyd & Nora Boettcher

Delilah Ann Tennant
Suzanne Salcido

Delores Ellis
Roger & Marlene Glasnapp

Dolores Wabeke
Kerry & Keri Burmeister

Donald Gerdis
Joel & Cindy Jaeger

Donna Graber
Fred & Marilyn Obmann

Peace Lutheran Ladies Aid, Wall Lake

Duane Muller
Lorenne Muller

Dwight Wengert
Mike & Carol Christensen

Edgar Turner
Rebecca Turner

Eldon Curtis
Mark & Ruth Gerken

Carole Mandernach

EuClaire Meyer
Joel & Cindy Jaeger

Eugene Meyer
Joel & Cindy Jaeger

Unice Meyer

Eugene ‘Gene’ Ruby
Kerry & Keri Burmeister

Unice Wulkow
Roger & Marlene Glasnapp

Everett Thies
Patricia Thies

Wesley & Norma Daberkow

Everett Tolstrup
Frieda Wenck

Geraldine Peterson
Gerald & Janelle Peterson

Gloria Milbrath
Lorraine Pogge

Harlan Geerdes
Ronald & Carolyn Rubsam

Irene Haerther
Duane & Marguerite Haerther

Jason Friedrichsen
Peace Lutheran Ladies Aid, Wall Lake

Jeanette Christianson
Jerry & Rosemary Diedrick

Jerry Elm
Alan & Marilyn Young

Jim Black
Dorcas Society, Redeemer, Ventura

Joan Mueller
Joel & Cindy Jaeger

Joel Ross
Ruth Kruckenberg

John Jacobs
Dale & Ruth Bruhn

Judy Herrig
Allen & Kay Olson

Peace Lutheran Ladies Aid, Wall Lake

Roger & Marlene Glasnapp

Judy Tanner
Joe & Mary Holmberg

Karen and Kids
Larry Moody

Kay Kollmorgan
Arnold & Mildred Torkelson

Lance & Paula Olson

Kerry & Keri Burmeister

Keith Miller
Dale & Ruth Bruhn

Lee Schultz
Roger & Marlene Glasnapp

Les Brooke
Ardella Butler

Loraine Martin
Jeanne Stump

Jo Catron

Marjorie Brueggeman
Ronald & Carolyn Rubsam

Marlo Ebel
Larry & Darlene Mortenson

Mel Schirm
Alan & Marilyn Young

Annetta Schirm

Nadine Boell
Frieda Wenck

Patricia Johnson
Joe & Mary Holmberg

Doris Gillespie

Rick & Lori Stein

Roger & Marlys Johnson

Ruth Harpstead
Lloyd & Nora Boettcher

Scott Schwaller
Bob & Carol Auen

Shirley Mae Adams
Charles & Nancy Rees

Sylvia Yoder
Daniel & Jolene Blanchard

Trent Godbersen
Bob & Carol Auen

Wayne Kruse
Lloyd & Nora Boettcher

Wes Stuedemann
Delbert & Donna Licht

Willie Freeman
Allen & Kay Olson

Gifts Given in *Honor*

Ron & Mary Winterboer’s 50th Wedding Anniversary
Terry & Joleen Allers

Holly Eldridge 25th LFS Anniversary at Lutheran Family Service
Dale & Holly Eldridge

David & Linda Kramer

Unice Meyer

Max & Sherrill Phillips

Gerry Bruhn’s retirement
Phillip & Toni Larson

Wanda Pritzel
Lona Younge

Deb & Steve Anderson
Janice Iwen

Arnold & Mildred Torkelson’s 65th Wedding Anniversary
Dewey & Jan Torkelson

Darrell & Adeline Gutz
Dale & Nancy Bruns

Lutheran Family Service

For Nothing is Impossible with God

the *GoodNews* {letter}

March, 2019

Together we are...*the Branches!*

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

For more than a century, you and many Lutheran Christian families who have gone before you have been healthy branches producing much fruit. Though much has changed over the years, the work of Lutheran Family Service continues to grow, firmly connected to the Vine that never changes. Together, we are people who

love the Lord and in turn love and serve our neighbors in need.

As you read through this edition of the GoodNews Letter, join with us in a prayer of thanksgiving to God for all that is being accomplished through His great mercy and through your partnership.

Adoption Services Have Expanded into Illinois!

And as a result...meet Ruthie, on page 4

Lutheran Family Service | Administrative Office 409 Kenyon Road, Suite C | Fort Dodge, IA 50501 | 515-573-3138 | LutheranFamilyService.org

We continue to...*grow!*



Rev. Max Phillips
LFS Executive Director

The first 100 years in our history was focused on growth. Oh, not the usual way you think of growth. We were small but mighty, leveraging resources to grow others. The infant needing a family. The expecting mother facing difficult decisions. The individual struggling with depression or anxiety or the married couple working through conflict. In all of these situations and countless versions of them, we were working to help people grow by turning problems into opportunities, always with the grace of God and His help at our center. We are already well into our second 100 years and we are still growing, but in new ways.

One of newest ministries is finding our voice so we can speak for those who have no voice - serving people both at the beginning and end of life. By championing embryo adoption, we are helping some of the over one million tiny few-celled boys and girls find families. By partnering with Perry Lutheran Homes we are speaking loudly about preserving life until natural death, and

leaving it exactly where it belongs, in God’s capable hands. Working in Haiti with orphans and elders, we are speaking the language of Christ by teaching and training Haitian brothers and sisters who are learning to be nurses, care givers, and pastors. Our advocacy for life at every turn is also growing in government as we work to energize the church to speak boldly for God’s plan for life, neither as Republican or Democrat, simply yet forcefully as God’s own people.

Those are some areas of growth that you might be surprised to see, but we have yet another kind of growth straight ahead. God is challenging us to expand our caring service to other Districts of our LCMS. We are already growing into Nebraska with a counseling presence now available at Our Savior Lutheran church in Norfolk. Another new counselor has just been added to the team who will serve the entire Omaha-Council Bluffs area.

Counseling services continue to be provided to people in Iowa and Illinois through our Quad Cities office, and we are now licensed by the state of Illinois to provide pregnancy counseling and adoption services there.

In South Dakota we have begun to work in support of those suffering the crisis of suicide. In Kansas, we will soon be working with all LCMS educators there exploring ways to bring God’s love and help to church workers suffering from the unique stresses of their calls and the damage it can do to mental health and healthy marriage. Soon we will be meeting with the

leaders of the Minnesota North District to visit about how we might serve there.

The first 100 years of our LFS ministry was about growing quietly and serving the needs of individuals. The next 100 years will be about growing that historic individual care into unique partnerships in new places, an expanding staff of professionals, and new opportunities to serve the church loudly in many venues: nationally, internationally, congregationally, and still quietly, one person at a time.

Please pray that God would give us the wisdom and help we need to answer these new calls the Holy Spirit is providing to serve the greater church and new communities.

Thank you for your partnership in this Christ-centered work, which brings healing and hope to so many every day. Your help through financial support and prayers is needed today. Together, we are the branches, and abiding in Him who is the source of all that we do, we will continue to bear much fruit, as we remain firmly connected to the vine.



Meet Your New *LFS Workers*



Rachel Street

Rachel serves on the LFS pregnancy counseling and adoption services team. Her office is in Des Moines, but she keeps busy traveling to meet with birth mothers, partner organizations and adopting families throughout the state.



Sue Shields

Sue is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor providing mental health and marriage counseling in the Council Bluffs area. She specializes in helping individuals who struggle with anxiety, depression, anger management, bipolar disorder, marriage problems and more.



Adam Hughes

Adam, a master’s trained, licensed and experienced therapist serves on our mental health and marriage counseling team in Des Moines. He specializes in helping those who struggle with addiction, depression, anxiety, trauma, grief, abuse, marriage challenges and more.



Bethany Kulhmann

Bethany serves on the Congregational Services team impacting the lives of youth, congregations and communities. She is a certified Director of Christian Education (DCE) with an emphasis in family and also holds a bachelor’s degree in Psychology.



Brittany Skinner

Brittany assists with fund raising and written materials for LFS. She helps organize gifts received and writes thank you letters, newsletters, and other materials to show our gratitude to our supporters.



Mike Moreno

Mike brings a rich history of work as a military chaplain serving those who serve our country. Both a Lutheran pastor and a mental health therapist, Mike is now serving in LFS’ newest office in Norfolk, Nebraska. He will be seeing clients in the Sioux City office in the near future.

Growing *Families...*meet *Ruthie*

The book of Ruth in the Bible tells a powerful story of faith and family. Overcoming obstacles, Ruth chose to follow Naomi. She could have chosen to go back home to the familiar. However, she chose to honor her mother-in-law and make her family her own. All along, God had a plan for Ruth’s life. Although the path was unclear at first, He made a way for Ruth to begin a life with Naomi’s family.

Just as God had a plan for Ruth’s life way back then, He also has a plan for Ruthie’s life today! Born on October 25, 2018, Ruthie joined Travis and Katie’s family through adoption. Ruthie is named after Ruth in the Bible as well as Katie’s paternal Grandmother.

The couple was first directed to LFS by their Pastor, Rev. Keith Piotter of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Bettendorf. Pastor Piotter also provided prayers and words of encouragement to them through the many months leading up to Ruthie’s birth and adoption. When looking into the services provided by LFS, Travis and Katie appreciated the love and care the LFS workers demonstrated when working with birth mothers through pregnancy counseling. They also found that LFS was

empathetic to their own concerns, questions, and insecurities as they went through the process. Since making Ruthie their daughter, God has shown

Travis and Katie with blessings, including the love and prayers of many family and friends. They have been astonished by the “ripple effect” that Ruthie’s birth has had with many family members, friends, and even strangers who have been excited to hear the story of Ruthie! Even though we don’t yet know exactly what they are, we know that God has great plans for Ruthie’s life!



Travis, Katie, and Ruthie pose for one of their first family pictures.

“Adoption has brought us a beautiful daughter who has shifted our focus, prayers, love, and time. God is good!”

Travis & Katie - new parents through adoption

Please join the many who are already praying for this little one and her new parents, as the story of her life under God’s care – which started over a year ago at her conception – continues to unfold.

Thanks to you and your partnership in this work, Lutheran Family Service’s historic adoption ministry is expanding. Ruthie is the first baby adopted through LFS’ work in Illinois. We received our Illinois adoption license in the fall of 2018 and look forward to

the new ways in which God will use us to serve and advocate for life in this and other neighboring states.

Through men and women like you who care about life, pregnant women and babies, Lutheran Family Service pregnancy counseling is available at no cost to any young woman in need of support. Call Kim Laube at 515-251-4900 or visit LutheranFamilyService.org to learn more, refer a friend or make an appointment. To find out how to join with others who support this important, life-affirming work, contact Wanda Pritzel at 515-570-2310 or wpritzel@LutheranFamilyService.org.

“For where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God.”



Ruth 1:16b