

DONWOOD MANOR
PERSONAL CARE HOME
171 DONWOOD DRIVE

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FOUNDATION UPDATE

The Donwood Manor Foundation Newsletter

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Words to Fill the Soul

BY BRIAN LOEWEN, FOUNDATION BOARD CHAIR

This year the choir I sing in added a new song to our repertoire called, "Grant us Peace", or in Latin, "Dona Nobis Pacem". The lyrics are very simple, repeating the name of the song in English and in Latin, again and again. It is simple but it feels right to pray for peace when so much of the world is at war. It also feels important to do what we can to 'make' peace.

Small acts of service are one thing we can do. That is why we are excited to share some of the things that are happening at Donwood with you.

If you read on you will hear how volunteers are involved again, church services are being held, hymns are being sung and staff, residents, volunteers, family members and supporting churches are graciously working together to manage COVID outbreaks and navigate the new normal.

Mother Teresa encouraged us, "Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies." Thank-you for your participation in our shared ministry.

Merry Christmas!





Thankful Hearts



Some of our wonderful volunteers hard at work making perogies!



Thank you!

Thankfully, we have recently been able to welcome volunteers back to serve at Donwood. Many of our former volunteers stepped away due to changes in their lives during COVID, but we are on the road to rebuilding our volunteer team. It is so wonderful to have them back and working alongside staff to offer additional services. We have an accordion player and pianist play for our residents, students help clean up the yard and plant the garden. A few volunteers from a local nail salon have been offering manicures on each unit. Sherryl Koop, our Chaplain, is exciting that a number of volunteers are supporting our "No One Dies Alone" program, so that residents who have no loved ones or loved ones far away, can have someone journey with them in the last days of their life.

The perogy fundraiser that ran in November was a great success and exceeded our expectations. It kept our staff and volunteers busy taking orders and preparing and packaging the perogies by hand. Our staff and volunteers prepared, packaged, and distributed 3948 perogies!



A group of wonderful students from MBCI came out to help clean up the yard

Spiritual Care

by Sherryl Koop, Chaplain

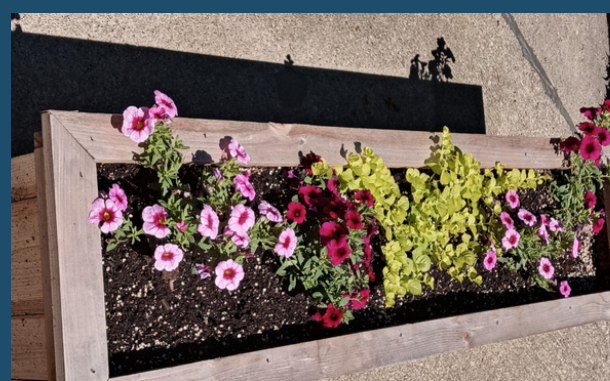
It is a great privilege to serve the residents of Donwood Manor as Chaplain, and how I am invited into the lives of those I serve in a variety of ways.

Recently, there were a number of significant times spent with residents and I would like to reflect on two of them. The first significant time was with a 93-year-old resident who has grown up in a strong, yet conservative faith tradition and identifies themselves as being a Christian. However, since entering Donwood Manor and realizing that they are now in their last season of life, began experiencing doubts and fears with regards to their faith.

Upon entering their room, they were reading their Bible and expressed to me that they felt they were not 'good enough' or hadn't done enough 'good things' to enter heaven when they died. This was quite distressing for them and so we had a conversation and unpacked what had led to these fears and doubts. It was an insightful conversation and when I asked if I could read 2 Corinthians 4 and Ephesians 2:1-10 to them ... they replied they would appreciate that. Once I was done, they looked at me in amazement and said "Is that in the Bible?" When I replied that it was, they thanked me for reading such reassuring passages to them and that knowing this brought them much relief and joy.

I am convinced this will not be the end of their fears and doubts, but am grateful to be invited into these very vulnerable places with the residents of Donwood Manor. My other significant event with a resident involved my stopping by their room to help them open some packages that were a part of their lunch. When I asked if they wanted a visit, they said they would love one. We had a great conversation about many things and at the end of it, I asked if I could pray for them, even though they claimed they were not religious. They said they would love that, reached out to hold my hand and then I prayed for them.

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Sheryl also took on the role of gardener this summer. She enjoyed the help of residents planting, tasting the fruits and vegetables, and sharing spiritual analogies found in the garden with them.





Spiritual Care continued

by Sherryl Koop, Chaplain

Now they are at 'end of life' and in spending time with them and their family, they all thanked me for coming to visit, my prayers, and showing love to them.

Sometimes something as small as opening lunch packages and sitting with someone leads to moments that becomes significant for both the resident and their family. This is one of the many reasons I love the opportunity to serve here as the Chaplain at Donwood Manor.

Church services were able to take place while Sherryl Koop was absent for four weeks due to the gracious involvement of Gerhard Friesen. He leads church services in her absence

Recently, Sherryl Koop and some residents started having Hymn Sing time after church services on 2 of the units as the residents love to sing hymns. It has been very well received. They typically sing for about 30 to 45 minutes after the church service.



Navigating Our Way Through Covid

by Jacqueline Fontaine, RN, BN, Chief Nursing Officer

Since March 2020, we have encountered many COVID outbreaks in Donwood Manor. As health care providers, we have adapted to wearing masks, eye protection, and when needed gowns and gloves. Additionally, we have learned to screen ourselves and anyone who enters the home. Our health care world as we knew it had drastically changed; what we didn't know was it has changed forever. Fear, anger, isolation, loneliness, and loss have become all too predominate in our daily work with residents and families. Infection control restrictions seemed endless and varied from week to week.

Even though our team members had different viewpoints regarding infection control directives, we all stood firm that, "we would do everything we could to keep those entrusted to our care safe!" This commitment carried us forward, especially in April of this year when we faced our largest outbreak. Residents and staff were becoming ill at faster rates than before. Many of us were at home fighting COVID ourselves, while those who were able, worked tirelessly caring for sick residents.

Our faith, together with the prayers and support of our community, got us over the hurdle of COVID. Since, last April we have encountered four additional COVID outbreaks; the outbreaks have decreased in magnitude and have been isolated to a small number of residents and staff. We are more confident in our abilities to fight COVID in what some are calling the "next normal."

As we begin to navigate our way through this, "next normal" we gradually return residents to the dining rooms for meals and cautiously hold small group chapels and congregate activities. Although I am uncertain what this next normal will bring us, I do know that the staff at Donwood are resilient and deeply committed to the safety of those entrusted to our care. It is this commitment, coupled with our resilience and faithfulness that we continue to journey forward with our residents and families.

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