



Linking Local Churches and Skilled Nursing Facilities

LifeCare Memos® Messages of Compassion

Traditionally, the only link between local churches and long-term care facilities has been “carolers” at Christmas or a Sunday Service shared together once or twice a year.

A New Strategy

Perhaps it's time to think outside traditional boxes when ministering to the elderly in long-term care facilities. By creating an ongoing link between the local church families and the Residents, both sides benefit.

From the Resident's perspective, many times their families live some distance away and can't visit very often, or there may be other challenges that keep the Resident's family from sharing in their lives. The result is loneliness, boredom and helplessness on the part of the Resident.

On the other side of the equation are individuals and families who would love to have an older member of their family close by. Again, because extended families are often spread apart, children may rarely see their grandparents, and adults miss the wisdom of an older friend.

The objective of programs like “Adopt-a-Grandparent,” is to provide a fun and significant way for individuals or families to creatively minister to a senior adult in the “spirit of Christ's love.”

Ways to Link

Explore some ways to link up with your adopted grandparent:

- Visit the Resident once or twice a month as a family.
- Children can draw pictures or make craft items for the Resident.
- Celebrate birthdays or other holidays in special ways.
- Send them notes of encouragement.
- Do a memory book together to give to the Resident's family.

The Adopt-a-Grandparent ministry allows everyone to win as they serve and learn together, while providing a vital link between the facilities and local churches.

For more information on creative ways of linking local churches and long-term care facilities, including the Adopt-a-Grandparent program, contact me by calling the SonShine Society at 425-353-4732 and ask for Chaplain Highland Goodman. You can also ask about an Adopt-a-Grandparent handbook that includes some basic information:

- Understanding the elderly
- Ideas to promote communication
- Activities to do together

Personal Stories

Here are some personal stories from those who have been involved in this ministry:

“When we joined the Adopt-a-Grandparent program we never realized how wonderful it would be. When we first met our “Grandpa” we knew he was special. He has given us many cherished moments and has shown us just how much a person can truly love the Lord. This has been a very positive experience for our family. Our children ask to go see their “Grandpa” often. And they always want to make that one extra picture just for him.”

“The Adopt-a-Grandparent” program has been very good for our family. By going into the nursing home on a regular basis we are all learning about vulnerability and how important it is to reach out to others. Our children, in particular, are learning about respecting the elderly; patience; and about how easy it is to brighten another person’s day, even if it’s just with a smile. Already at their young ages, they sense they are needed and that they are able to help others.”

“Our experience in the Adopt-a-Grandparent program has been very humbling and challenging, but fun! When we met our “grandmother”, she wanted us in her life but was very cautious. As our relationship grew and we got to pray with her after each visit each week, we got to be involved in her move out of her sold home and in the dispersing of precious possessions. This was a very intimate time with her at a very hard time for her. Trust grew both ways. Watching her grow spiritually has been the most exciting! Recently she had us get her a Bible to learn more about Jesus!”

What Scripture Says

Let's be reminded of the words of our LORD:

*“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered in His presence, and He will separate the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep at His right hand and the goats at His left. Then the King will say to those on the right, ‘Come you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was thirsty and you gave Me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited Me into your home. I was naked, and you gave Me clothing. **I was sick, and you cared for Me.** I was in prison, and you visited Me.’*

*Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘**LORD**, when we ever seek You hungry and feed You? Or thirsty and give You something to drink? Or a stranger and show You hospitality? Or naked and give You clothing? **When did we ever see You sick or in prison and visit You?**’ And the King will tell them, ‘I assure you, when you did it to one of the least of these My brothers and sisters, you were doing it to Me!’” (Matthew 25:31-40 NLT).*

Highland Goodman, 071001

LifeCare Memos®

When experiencing the stresses of life, people need support. The Psalmist needed that support and found it when he turned to God. He said, *“Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one **cares for my life.** I cry to you, O LORD; I say, ‘You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living’” (Psalm 142:4-5).*

LifeCare Memos are designed as messages of compassion that integrate biblical guidelines for emotional and spiritual well-being. Topics focus on various life-care issues and address them from the perspective of Scripture.