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# Fall/Winter Newsletter 2021

"It takes private, public and personal partnerships to support quality elder care."



## To Emerald Crest and Open Circle: A Heartfelt Letter of Gratitude

By Mark S. Hanson

I grew up in the Twin Cities and when I was fifteen, my dad was diagnosed with Parkinson's. His illness had a profound impact on our family. I still draw upon the example of my mom's caring for him.

When my wife Ione and I were married, we promised to be there for each other no matter what unfolded. Those vows may seem easy to make, but such mutual caring, compassion and commitment is what marriage is about.

Ione and I met in college in 1964, starting a six-year journey that could be a movie! It involved being good friends, dating, breaking our engagement with others and uncertainties about our feelings for each other.

Finally, we went out for pizza and talked about the six-year bond between us. By evening's end, we were planning our wedding!

We both graduated from Augsburg. Ione, with a Masters in Social Work (MSW) from Hunter, served as a pediatric social worker. She was Director of Social Work for Children's Hospital.

After attending Union Seminary, I became a pastor serving three parishes, then Bishop of the Saint Paul Area Synod and Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. I also served as President of the Lutheran World Federation. Ione traveled with me throughout the world.

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In 2014 we returned to Minneapolis to be with family, whose loving support remains steadfast.

Ione was diagnosed with early-onset dementia. A friend recommended Cassia's Open Circle adult day services. At first Ione was anxious when I left her there. The director said, "Please stay with Ione for as long as it takes for her to feel comfortable." That's just one example of Open Circle respecting each member's dignity.

Ione now resides in Cassia's Emerald Crest memory care community. I find that same respect for her dignity and dedication to her well-being. I feel a partnership with the staff as we care for Ione.

Our experiences with Open Circle and Emerald Crest make me feel good about being a donor. It takes private, public and personal partnerships to support quality elder care. We need to step up and do this together for people like Ione and those who love them.



Lois Morgan (in center wearing red) is shown here enjoying a visit from family. Granddaughter Heather Morgan sits next to Lois. Other family members from left to right include daughter-in-law Joby and her husband, Lois's son Jon; grandson Kyle Morgan, Lois's daughter Debbie Reece and older son Dave Morgan.

## Donor Spotlight: Missionary's Son Recalls his Mother's Extraordinary Life

Lois Morgan's extraordinary life included being a missionary for 38 years in Portugal and Africa, yet it wasn't what she had expected when growing up in Summit, Illinois. Lois met her husband Richard early in life, as they attended neighboring churches.



Lois and her husband Richard worked as missionaries across southern Africa, which strengthened Lois's love for Jesus, she says.

After they married, Richard, who was in the intelligence field, decided to become a missionary, and Lois joined Richard on this adventure.

Richard and Lois were first sent to Portugal, then South Africa, Zululand, and later Mozambique, one of the poorest countries on earth. They had three children who all grew up in Africa. "I didn't like the snakes and spiders," Lois said. "Yet, I loved the people more and more and my love for Jesus grew stronger."

In 2000, Dick and Lois retired to Summit. He passed away in 2006 and Lois lived on her own until her care needs exceeded her

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# Life-changing Gifts

What's the best way to leave a legacy conveying your values while helping others for generations to come? Gifts by bequest enable us to improve the quality of life for the inspiring residents we serve. Donations may be made using cash, securities, IRA and other retirement accounts, real estate or tangible personal property.

Gifts are deductible to the full extent of the law; consult an attorney to be sure. You'll also want your attorney to verify that the provision states our legal names: Augustana Care, Cassia or Elim Care Ministries.

Please inform us of your bequest so you may be acknowledged and we may better plan for the future. **For more information about planned gifts and other donations, please contact [Matthew.Crawford@CassiaLife.org](mailto:Matthew.Crawford@CassiaLife.org) or call 952-855-5181.**

## Mission and Partners

Cassia's mission is to foster fullness of life for older adults in the spirit of Christ's love. Cassia works with Centrex Rehab, Grace Hospice, Guardian Angels + Elim Care Home Care and Hospice, and Pro Rehab to provide home health, hospice and rehabilitation throughout our communities.

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# The Power of Partnership



*Valley View Village Chaplain Mike Evans believes the churches that partner with the care community enrich our ability to serve residents and their families spiritually.*

How do Cassia's Valley View Village partnerships with churches help residents? "Church partnerships are essential to the spiritual vibrancy of Valley View, and I believe Valley View brings the same to them," says resident Deloris Terrell. Church partners include the following:

### **Staves Memorial United Methodist**

The "spiritual and theological mindset as well as mutual trust and help" are the foundation of our partnership, says Pastor Tim Walker.

### **Well Covenant**

Pastor Marc Peterson describes residents/parishioners as "senior saints," adding, "Residents, their children and grandchildren are all part of this family and community. And we theirs."

### **Indianola Heights**

"God's work is being done," says Pastor Tom Fry about the partnership between Valley View Village and his church. Valley View chaplains and Pastor Tom often work together to meet church members' spiritual needs.

### **Sunshine Open Bible Church**

The deep commitment between Valley View and Sunshine Open Bible has a long, rich history. Our goals and missions are deeply connected.

### **Grace Fellowship**

Grace Fellowship has brought many blessings and much joy to Valley View. We are grateful to Pastor Shawn Barr for being a valued partner.

# IDEAL Committee Created to Address Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Awareness



*The IDEAL committee was created to be more intentional about living Cassia's values. Our values are discussed and celebrated at meetings and gatherings throughout our campuses and communities.*

There's no denying the past year was tumultuous. George Floyd's death and the world's response prompted reflection throughout Cassia. Our goal is to be more intentional about living Cassia's values. Does each employee, regardless of race, gender, age and background see Cassia modeling inclusion and equity in policy, and practice?

The IDEAL committee was created to pursue continual improvement. IDEAL stands for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Awareness in Love. The committee's three subgroups represent awareness, action and the steering committee, which provides oversight to the program.

Since August, the awareness committee has invited employees to view episodes of the series

“Uncomfortable Conversations with a Black Man.” Host Emmanuel Acho offers the series to create space for conversations about race.

A new workforce mentoring group launched by the action committee will help staff members advance their careers. Abdoul Ba, who began working years ago as a nursing assistant, is now program manager at Heritage Commons and Feeney Manor. He believes his career was launched through mentoring. “My mentors said, ‘You can do this,’” Abdoul says. “They believed in me.”

Cassia looks forward to continually improving relationships and opportunities with the help of the IDEAL committee.

# Creative Hiring Approaches

## Bring More Staff to Our Communities

As workforce shortages continue in health care and other fields nationwide, Cassia is taking a creative approach to recruiting. Our goal is to welcome new team members and help them grow their careers.

We offer free certified nursing assistant training and our CARE fund helps employees dealing with financial emergencies. The CARE Fund is entirely supported by generous donors—thank you!

Select sites also provide scholarships at several colleges where employees can get tuition discounts. Many scholarships are supported by donors and grantors, who again deserve much gratitude.

In addition, Cassia's **Live, Work, Play Program** offers lively events where people can learn about Cassia. At a recent event at Valley View Village in Iowa, visitors enjoyed ice cream and visited a nearby farmer's market while learning about work opportunities.

Eight people were hired that day. Two were hired at another Live, Work, Play event at Newton Village in Iowa.

"Our goal," says Human Resources Director Jeri Rosenberg, "is to show people that working here is not just about a job. It's about being part of a community."

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### *...Continued from Donor Spotlight: Missionary's Son Recalls his Mother's Extraordinary Life*

...independence. In 2016, she moved closer to family in Minnesota, and found a home at Cassia's Elim Wellspring in Princeton. Lois later moved to skilled nursing at Elim Wellspring and then to Milaca Elim Meadows, where she passed away in 2020. In all three care communities, "caregivers lived out their mission to glorify God in how they cared for Mom and others," says her son Jon Morgan.

Jon donated funds in memory of Lois to help upgrade the technology that keeps families connected—a lifeline for Lois and her family. Thank you, Jon, for sharing Lois's extraordinary story and continuing her legacy by enhancing the quality of life for those we serve.

## Haven Homes Receives NAIOP Award of Excellence



Each year, the NAIOP Minnesota Awards of Excellence recognizes exceptional commercial buildings after an evaluation of their project development, sustainability, architecture, design and other factors. This year, Cassia's Haven Homes campus in Maple Plain received the Award for Distinctive Properties in Minnesota's Senior Living category. Cassia wants to thank our many collaborators including: Pope Architects, Anderson Companies, Banko Design, Sandman Structural Engineers, R. L. Mather Design, J-Berd Mechanical Contractors, Berd Electric, Water in Motion, Collins Electrical Construction and Otto Associates. Congratulations to all!