



## RESIDENTS:

### ALWAYS SOMETHING TO BE THANKFUL FOR

*“He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation.”  
(Psalm 91:15-16).*

You cannot read the Psalms without seeing that trouble, pain, and sickness touch every life. But God sticks with us, even understanding when we complain. Meet three residents who have learned that God is faithful—in all circumstances.

Relationships matter most of all to **Marilyn Hoeksema Stellema**. Born in 1928, she and her younger sister grew up in southeast Grand Rapids and attended Oakdale Christian School.

“My mother grew up on the West Side at Broadway Avenue Christian Reformed Church [now Westview CRC]. She was the only one of her siblings to migrate to the South End. Even though most people back then went to the neighborhood church, our family kept going to Broadway till gas rationing began during World War II. Then we switched to Fuller Avenue CRC,” Marilyn says.

The war also affected the family business, Ed Hoeksema Wallpaper and Painting. The war effort required all the linseed oil that home decorators needed to finish wood trim or make paint glide smoothly and dry quickly. Marilyn’s dad became a sales rep instead.

“My mom never learned to drive, and my dad was very busy. After she forced herself to attend Ladies Aid at Fuller, my mom said that it was the

hardest and best thing she’d ever done,” Marilyn recalls.

“My sister and I played till dark all over the neighborhood and at Franklin Park [now Martin Luther King Jr. Park]. I chose to attend Ottawa Hills High School with my neighborhood friends,” she recalls.

She met Robert “Bob” Stellema at City Hall, where she worked for the waterworks and he was a civil engineer. “Bob was so smart, such a nice man, always smiling,” she says. They married in 1950, and moved to Kelloggsville when their first of four children, Rob, was ready for school. Because Marilyn grew up with little overlap between neighborhood, school, and church friends, she wanted more consistency for her children.



**Marilyn Hoeksema Stellema**

Their son and three daughters went to Kelloggsville Christian and on to high school with their friends. They attended Kelloggsville CRC, where Marilyn and a friend started a 4-H sewing club. “I still have 70-year-old ladies coming up to me to recall how I taught them to sew,” she says. Marilyn and Bob visited and interviewed shut-ins for their church newsletter. “Visiting so many nursing homes helped me know where not to move,” she comments.

Meanwhile, Bob worked in an asphalt business till age 69. Their kids married, settled nearby, and started their own families. There are now 15 grandchildren and 32 great-grandchildren, with two more on the way.

Marilyn babysat a lot, especially for her youngest child, Karen Malestein, whose four children include a special needs son. Marilyn started a housecleaning business, despite living with fibromyalgia. “The key is to keep moving and use Biofreeze,” she says.

Loving relationships and Christian faith developed over a lifetime have sustained her through sorrow. Bob was diagnosed with dementia in 2006. Karen died of brain cancer in 2009. Bob loved being outdoors but liked to wander, so they moved to Edison Christian Life Services in August

*(continued on page 4)*



# 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 nearly \$4,000 during their recent "Bakeless Bake Sale." The service board's recent

gifts to the home include activity supplies, a digital chair scale, a power lift chair, therapy equipment, and cable television programming. 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.

The Women's Service Board is again planning to host a concert with the Voices of Victory Quartet and the Covenant Christian Chamber Choir. The concert is scheduled for October 6, 2019, at 7:15 p.m. at Westend Christian Reformed Church. Please save this date to show your support for our residents.

Thank you for your gifts in response to our June appeal for \$57,680 to replace the roof on the enclosed porch and south

wing of Edison Christian Health Center. Your support of this project will make sure our residents stay comfortable no matter what the weather brings. If you have not given yet, would you consider helping us with this improvement project?

Did you know that Edison Christian Health Center has a secure unit that provides care and activity programming to residents who are living with Alzheimer's disease and other types of dementia? Over 5.8 million Americans are directly affected by Alzheimer's, which is characterized by memory loss and confusion. Alzheimer's is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States, and it is the only one of the top ten causes of death that lacks an effective treatment or prevention. The care and treatment of people with dementia is critically important to the health and well-being of our society, as well as to each individual and their loved ones. Our goal at Edison Christian Health Center is to honor each person and his or her God-given gifts and to focus on preserving their abilities and quality of life to the fullest extent possible.

Please keep praying for God's blessing upon our ministry. We appreciate your faithful support!

—Todd Nycholt

## ARE YOU MAKING THIS MISTAKE WITH YOUR LIFE?

We know of a couple in their early 90s who had not changed their will since their sons were teenagers. If you have not taken care of your estate plan, you can probably relate to that couple. After all, talking about wills means facing the fact that you will not live here forever.

The idea of putting together—or changing—a will sounds complicated, doesn't it? In fact, some people find thinking about wills so scary that they put it off.

Fortunately, Barnabas Foundation offers **free, no-obligation help** for making a will and doing estate and tax planning. Because Edison Christian Foundation (formerly Christian Rest Home Foundation) is a member of Barnabas Foundation, you are entitled to this confidential help and information.

More than 7,000 people have already accepted the Barnabas Foundation offer to help work out a plan to provide for loved ones and give to Christian causes they love. You can read more about their experiences at [www.barnabasfoundation.com](http://www.barnabasfoundation.com).

Attorneys Steve Baker and Amy Bakker Baty, the local Barnabas Foundation representatives, have practiced law in business and estate planning. Typically, they need to meet with you just once, for only 60 to 90 minutes, to develop a free written analysis for you to bring to

an attorney. They can even recommend attorneys who know how to include charity in wills and estate plans.

One of the easiest ways to remember us in your will is to make a bequest to Edison Christian Life Services or Edison Christian Foundation. All you do is include our name and address and specify the bequest—a dollar amount or percentage of your estate—in your will. There is no need to tell us. We do not find out about a bequest till after a death, when an executor or lawyer contacts us. Bequests generally escape inheritance taxes.

The number and total of bequests vary greatly from year to year. In 2018, we had four estate gifts totaling \$152,995. Three of these were to Edison Christian Life Services (\$83,162) and one to Edison Christian Foundation (\$69,833). Whatever size of planned gift you can give will make an important difference.

Simply call (888) 448-3040 and ask to speak with Steve Baker or Amy Bakker Baty. Their email addresses are [sbake@barnabasfoundation.com](mailto:sbake@barnabasfoundation.com) and [abaty@barnabasfoundation.com](mailto:abaty@barnabasfoundation.com). Their office is at 601 3 Mile Road NW, Suite 200, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. For free, confidential advice on estate planning, you may also call Todd Nycholt at (616) 453-2475.

# MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

March 2019 - June 2019

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Edward & Mary Ripmaster

\* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

(continued on page 5)

2015. Bob lived in Ritzema Hall, our memory loss unit, until he died in October 2015. In July 2018, Marilyn transferred from independent living to assisted living.

“My days are numbered. I have back problems, failing kidneys, and swollen legs. But my hands are steady enough to knit hats, prayer shawls, and slippers for Crowns of Blessing, which helps cancer patients. Because of my experiences with Bob, I’ve been able to help other residents whose spouses have dementia.

“The 2 p.m. Sunday service at Edison Christian Health Center [formerly Christian Rest Home] is broadcast on channel 2, and one of my daughters brings me disks from her church. By the end of an average Sunday, I’ve probably heard four sermons. I go to sleep listening to a CD of hymns.

“My faith is what keeps me going. I can’t imagine what it would have been like if I didn’t have that assurance all along in my life,” she says. Marilyn’s favorite Bible verse is Psalm 46:10, “Be still, and know that I am God.”

**Norman Noordeloos** fills his conversations with words such as “enjoy,” “fun,” and “like.” He was born in 1936 in Chicago’s Englewood neighborhood. His father got transferred to a job in Grand Rapids, Michigan, when Norm was in his early teens. Norm and his two younger brothers and younger sister graduated from Seymour Christian and Grand Rapids Christian High School.

“I started at Calvin College but left early to go into the U.S. Army. I signed up for cook school, because cooks stay behind the front lines. I learned on the job and was assigned to Fort Gordon, Georgia, as a cook for women studying for the signal corps. I liked cooking, and they liked my food,” he recalls.

After his army stint, Norm married a West Sider, Adeline Andree, who had been a couple of years ahead of him in high school. They raised their son and two daughters in a home on

Eighth Street NW. The kids attended West Side Christian and Grand Rapids Christian High, and the family went to Westview CRC.

Norm says he really enjoyed working as a meat cutter for five years but wanted to get outdoors more, so he found a job as a route driver for Oven Fresh Bakery. “I moved into management; however, at age 50, I missed being outdoors, so I became a semi-truck driver. I drove all over Michigan but was home every night. I had the time of my life doing that!”

Meanwhile, he and Adeline stayed busy with church, school activities and sports. “Adeline and I did almost everything together. We were youth directors and led senior activities at church. As a high school senior, I made the All-City Baseball team. As an adult, I played fast pitch softball at the CRC Rec Center and played on another team at Lamar Park.”

Their children went into college and careers, married, and started families. Norm and Adeline continued the family tradition of cheering on each other at games and concerts. “I remember being surprised in high school that some kids’ parents didn’t come to their games. Mine did, and so did Adeline’s. We went to every grandchild’s activity, if possible,” he says.

The Noordeloos family has grown to include 15 grandchildren and



**Norman Noordeloos**

## 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](http://edisonchristian.org)

eight great-grandchildren, but has suffered several losses. Adeline died of congestive heart failure in 2013. After a blind date set up by friends, Norm married Judie Duthler Mulder in 2016. “I moved into her condo in Holland, Michigan, and joined Christ Memorial RCA. Judie had six kids, so I got to watch more grandkids play sports. She and I loved driving to Florida each year. Driving is my comfort. But the Lord saw fit to take her home in April 2018.”

Two months later, Norm moved to Edison Christian Independent Living. “My room has a beautiful view of the woods. How can you not love it here? You don’t have to worry about a thing. They clean your place and you get three square meals a day. The people that work here are super. There are lots of activities, and our building has two libraries. Everyone’s friendly, but no one’s nosy or pushy,” he says.

Norm still drives to Westview CRC and health appointments. He is grateful for friends with sound minds but acknowledges that the group is getting smaller. “My daughter, Tammy Jonker, lives nearby and my daughter, Dawn Geldermans, is in Ann Arbor. I

*(continued on page 6)*

## MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS *(continued from page 3)*

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**Total Memorial Gifts ... \$17,665**

*\* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation*

have a neat rapport with most of my grandchildren. One of my stepsons, Johnny Mulder, has special needs. I get a call from him every day. He wants to know what I ate, and he reminds me of my doctor appointments.”

Norm has had two knee replacements and recently healed from blood clot complications. He uses a walker for balance and is grateful for compression socks that can be strapped on rather than pulled on. He only needs glasses to read.

In 2018, he lost his son, Norman Jr., to an unexpected stroke, and his brother-in-law, Brigadier General (Dr.) Rob Poel, died. “My grandson, Jake, one of my son’s boys, asked me, ‘Grandpa, how come you stay so strong?’ The reason is that I receive strength through Jesus Christ. It’s so sad when our loved ones pass on, but it’s also joyous, because we know they’re in a better place.”

If you visit **Jonette Cavanaugh** at Edison Christian Health Center, you will probably find her coloring an intricate pattern in an adult coloring book. Jonette, born in 1942, was named for her father, John Reitman. Her younger brother, Robert, was named for their mom, Roberta. The Reitmans lived on the West Side, and Jonette went to Stocking, Harrison, and Union High School. She remembers being baptized at age 12 at Scribner Avenue Baptist Church, where she went to youth group. “It was full immersion, and my girlfriend got baptized at the same time,” she says.

Jonette describes her family as very close. “My dad was a punch press operator at Knape & Vogt, right behind Harrison School. We’d meet at lunchtime to talk through the fence. My mom was a homemaker and later went to cosmetology school. I did a lot of babysitting for others. And my parents were always doing things for neighbors,” she says.

After high school, Jonette got a job at St. Mary’s Hospital. “I took chest X-rays, filled cartridges in the X-ray machine, transported patients, and

## ABOUT OUR RESIDENTS

- 120 residents receive nursing care in Edison Christian Health Center.
- 30 residents receive assisted care in Edison Christian Assisted Living.
- 40 residents live independently in Edison Christian Independent Living.
- 73% of our residents are women.
- Our youngest resident is 54. Our oldest residents are four women and one man aged 100 or older.
- The average resident age is 86.
- Our residents come from 64 churches.
- 77% of our nursing residents receive Medicaid assistance.

made sure no one got underdosed or overdosed. I loved the job, because it was helping people.”

Her uncle worked at the General Motors factory and introduced her to his co-worker, Patrick Cavanaugh. They married in 1963 and welcomed daughter Kelly in 1965 and daughter Shannon in 1969. “Patrick was a very hard worker. Besides his other jobs, he also worked at the family wheat and dairy farm in Alto. We had our house right on the Thornapple River, so we could go rowing, swimming, or fishing.

“Patrick didn’t go to church, but the girls and I ended up at Cascade Christian (Disciples of Christ) Church. It is a very good church, so warm and helping. I taught Sunday school and wrapped Christmas gifts. My parents, brother, and the church helped us through hard times after my divorce in

1981,” she says.

Jonette eventually had full custody of her daughters, both still at home and going to Forest Hills Schools, but her stay-at-home days ended. “I knew my best chance to get back into the workforce was to volunteer, so I volunteered at the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. I helped run the office, type, answer phones, raise money, and design bingo events.”

Next, she got a job at the Cascade McDonald’s, working behind the counter. “I got real good at making Big Macs. Working with the young people there was fun. They’d tell me their problems, and I was like a second mom to many. A year or so later, we moved to Comstock Park. We lived upstairs from my mom. My dad had passed by then.”

Jonette worked at the Meijer warehouse, answering the hotline when stores called with rush orders or other problems. Later she ripped labels for boxes and made sure each box had the right label and went into the right stack. She did well at those jobs, because, she says, “I’ve always been a detailed and calm person. I got that from my mom.”

She stayed at Meijer until she went on disability for multiple back problems and essential tremors. Jonette lived in Standale with Shannon’s family—which includes two biological and six



**Jonette Cavanaugh**

*(continued on page 7)*

adopted daughters—for several years. In November 2015, after flipping out of a faulty wheelchair and breaking her arm, Jonette moved to Edison Christian Health Center for rehab.

“My arm healed, but I stayed. I’d had several surgeries and had rehabbed in many places. The care here really lives up to what Jesus says in John 17: ‘Love one another as I have loved you.’ My back and knees are riddled with arthritis, and I have other conditions. I’m more or less immobilized. Seeing as how I can’t be at home with my family anymore, this is the best place I could possibly be. And I truly mean that.

“Everyone here is really nice. The CNAs stay so patient, even when we call them often. I like the variety of food and chance to choose an alternate. I ate fish for lunch and dinner for months. Now I go with the daily special. On my windowsill, I have plants from garden club. There’s a bird feeder right outside my window. I’m good friends with my roommate, Ruth Hastings.

“I was president of the residents’ council and enjoy bingo. I’ve gotten to know staff well enough to pray for each other and for residents. I’ve heard very good sermons at the 2 p.m. Sunday service here. It’s about 50/50 whether I go to the service or watch it on channel 2. I used to be in church choir, but my voice has changed, so I just sing or hum quietly,” Jonette says.

She now has 10 grandchildren, ages 10 to 23. Most live near Grand Rapids. Of all the things she enjoys, Jonette devotes the most hours to coloring, which she started doing in a Create and Color class here. “My hands shake when I eat. My writing looks like chicken scratching. But give me the smallest space to color within lines, and I can do it. I feel like coloring is a gift God gave me so I can show how much I love my family. I date each piece with a heart so that, in years ahead, my loved ones can say, ‘Oh, this is when Nana made that.’”

## EDISON CHRISTIAN HEALTH CENTER

provides rehabilitation, long term and dementia care within the nursing facility.  
**For more information and a tour, call Linda Elders, Director of Admissions, at (616) 453-2475**  
 or e-mail [lelders@edisonchristian.org](mailto:lelders@edisonchristian.org)

## ECHC REHAB SERVICES

Edison Christian Health Center provides excellent sub-acute rehabilitation services after surgery, injury or an illness. Our team of nurses and therapists will help you recover and return home as quickly as possible.

## RECENT ECLS RETIREE

*In honor of your service from the Board of Directors:*

**Christine Morsink** ..... **20 years**  
 With our appreciation for your commitment to our residents!

## GIFTS RECEIVED IN HONOR OF

March 2019 – June 2019

In honor of... **Dorothy Koll**..... from Jon & Joyce VanderBee  
 In honor of... **Bernice Muilenburg**..... from Jan Hermanson  
 In honor of... **Rose Kanoza**..... from Tony & Lorraine Anton

# IN LOVING MEMORY

March 2019 – June 2019

Janet Gazella	March 6	age 82	Sandra Kosheba	April 29	age 84
Helen Young	March 8	age 97	Barbara Haettich	May 4	age 78
Allen Bultman	March 8	age 89	Dale Gritter	May 14	age 67
Phyllis Seekman	March 15	age 84	K. Joyce Mencarelli	May 23	age 88
Claude Chapman	March 21	age 89	Thelma Jackson	May 26	age 79
Lorna Phillips	April 4	age 98	Pearl Vander-Molen	June 4	age 103
Minnie Alberts	April 8	age 92	Robert Pannill	June 4	age 88
Loretta VandenBerg	April 12	age 90	Leon Stadt	June 22	age 96
Norma Boonstra	April 23	age 92	Bertha Vis	June 24	age 89
Virginia Richardson	April 23	age 92			



**Edison Christian Life Services**  
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**EDISON CHRISTIAN**  
 LIFE SERVICES

# NEWSLETTER

Summer 2019

## CONTRIBUTING CHURCHES

March 2019 – June 2019

Beckwith Hills CRC	Free Ref.
Blythefield CRC	Remembrance Ref.
First Netherlands Ref. Cong.	Walker URC
	Westview CRC

*LeadingAge*<sup>TM</sup>  
 Edison Christian Life Services  
 is a member of  
 LeadingAge Michigan  
*Michigan*

Check out our website at:  
[edisonchristian.org](http://edisonchristian.org)

Michigan Charitable Contributions Solicitation License Numbers:  
 Edison Christian Life Services – MICS 6594  
 Edison Christian Foundation – MICS 8956