



VOLUNTEERS: GIVING ALSO BLESSES GIVERS

*“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”
(Acts 20:35).*

You’ve probably heard a certain phrase or its variation. Long-time volunteers, caregivers, and people on mission trips say it all the time. You ask about their choice to serve, and they say, “Yes, it took time... or money... or patience... or hard work, but I got back more than I gave.”

Maybe you wonder whether that’s something people think they’re supposed to say. If volunteering blesses the giver as well as the recipient, how does that work? Is it even true? The Apostle Paul thought so. According to Acts 20, Paul told the elders of Ephesians that it’s more blessed to give than receive, and he was quoting Jesus Christ.

Many Edison Christian Life Services (ECLS) volunteers stick with it for years. Their choices show **Jodi Twardize-Walker**, our activity director, that volunteering is worth doing. She and her staff of eight—some of them part time—depend on volunteers to help carry out activities in Edison Christian Health Center, Edison Christian Assisted Living, and Edison Christian Independent Living. “We are truly blessed to have faithful, dedicated volunteers who share

their gifts with our residents. Some have volunteered here a long time. Some are new here. All are special people working to serve God’s people,” Jodi says.

Meet three volunteers who experience the blessings of sharing their time and talents.

In his long life—he is 86 now—**Gary Kwekel** has founded and retired from Kentwood Interiors, a construction company; raised six children; and put countless miles on his car while volunteering.



Gary Kwekel

Throughout it all, he’s remained passionate about the Bible. “Sharing the Word—that’s where my heart is,” he says. He shared that passion while serving two terms on the ECLS board.

Gary began leading Bible studies at ECLS in 2002 and now leads a Bible study at Edison Christian Health Center (ECHC) one Tuesday afternoon a month for about 30 minutes. He also leads Sunday afternoon worship there about once a month.

“In my younger years, I served as an elder, taught catechism, and led youth groups at Providence Reformed Church. I used to help with Friday services at a mission in Baldwin, Michigan, and led services at the local jail. I’ve always enjoyed my time in the Word.

“In later years, I fit more with people my age. My wife, Geraldine, took ill for 13 years. She passed away in April 2015. So, I understand why older people need to be encouraged in the Word,” Gary says.

About 12 to 14 people attend his Tuesday afternoon Bible study at ECHC. One comes with a family

(continued on page 4)



FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR



Our year-end newsletter highlights the significant contribution volunteers make toward improving our residents' quality of life. The volunteers featured in this issue touch our residents and staff in many ways. They're using their talents to lead Bible studies, conduct chapel services, call bingo, and assist in the facility library.

We're grateful for nearly 140 volunteers who, as a group, consistently provide more than 4,500 hours of service per year. Their service to our residents includes serving on boards, providing musical programs, and helping with various activities and socials. Their assistance blesses many lives and glorifies our heavenly Father.

The Women's Service Board thanks all who attended their October 6th concert with the Voices of Victory Quartet and the Covenant Christian Chamber Choir at West Christian Reformed Church. The concert was inspiring, God honoring, and a blessed time of fellowship. The offering provided over \$4,100 for items to benefit our residents. Recent purchases include cable programming, oxygen concentrators, resident diagnostic equipment, mechanical lift slings, and ongoing expenses for our bird aviary.

Edison Christian Health Center is spending \$56,123 to upgrade our west elevator. We need to replace the elevator controller, which is original from when we installed the elevator in 1977. The new controller will be a solid state microprocessor-based controller with a solid state motor starter. Solid state starters are quieter, do not have parts that need replacing, and use less electricity. The elevator will be brought up to current code with wiring, cables, and controls, as well as replacing the doors and ceiling panels. A required telephone and fire alarm control panel will be added to the elevator. The upgrade is significantly less than the cost to replace the elevator. Your contribution toward this project would be much appreciated.

Edison Christian Health Center cares for 95 residents whose resources are depleted, so they depend on Medicaid funding. Their care costs more than Medicaid pays despite our efforts to diligently control expenses. We're currently opposing a Michigan Medicaid proposal for the next fiscal year that would reduce Medicaid payments to our facility by over \$410,000. We hope that this devastating proposal will be eliminated from the State budget. We continue to depend on the covenant community to keep the promise of mutual caring and to support our residents who are Medicaid eligible.

May God bless you this Christmas and in the New Year.

—Todd Nycholt

CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES AND IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER

As much as we value receiving checks to Edison Christian Foundation, we realize that other ways to give may offer more advantages to you. That's why we want to tell you about three sure things—charitable gift annuities, deferred gift annuities, and the IRA Charitable Rollover.

The people who've chosen a charitable gift annuity (CGA) say it's an excellent choice if you want to significantly help Edison Christian Foundation but still need a fixed income. In exchange for your gift to us, we offer you a CGA, with guaranteed lifelong income. The older you are when you begin a CGA, the higher your annual or quarterly returns will be—and rates rose in July 2018. For example, the rate is now 5.9% for a single person age 73 and 6.2% for a single person age 75.

Although a portion of your guaranteed income is taxable, you get an immediate tax deduction for a portion of your original gift amount. The capital gain is spread out, and money placed in your CGA is usually exempt from estate and inheritance taxes. When you pass away, Edison Christian Foundation receives the balance of your annuity.

A deferred gift annuity (DGA) is a popular choice for younger donors who want to plan for retirement. Say you have a stock that's soared in value. Instead of selling it and increasing your tax burden, you could

create a DGA by giving the stock to Edison Christian Foundation. You'd get an immediate charitable tax deduction and tax savings. Later you would begin receiving annuity income, some of it tax free. DGA donors choose a date, which must be more than one year after their contribution, to begin receiving payments.

If you own an IRA and are at least 70½, you might appreciate a tax break called the IRA Charitable Rollover. The rollover lets owners of traditional and Roth IRAs instruct their IRA custodians to distribute up to \$100,000 to a public charity. That distribution is not included in federal taxable income but does qualify for all or part of an IRA owner's required minimum distribution. Each year Edison Christian Life Services receives about ten IRA rollover gifts from \$500 to \$5,000. Might you be one of those ten donors this year?

It's also possible that another type of planned gift, such as a will bequest or life insurance policy, is a better choice for your estate. For free, confidential advice on estate planning, call Todd Nycholt at (616) 453-2475. You can get the same free, confidential advice from Barnabas Foundation attorneys. Simply call Amy Bakker Baty or Steve Baker at (616) 956-1232. You can also reach them toll-free at (888) 448-3040. Their email addresses are abaty@barnabasfoundation.com and sbake@barnabasfoundation.com.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

July 2019 - October 2019

Minnie Alberts

Bryce & Carol Swiler

Ed Bergsma

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bergsma

Alice Blackport-Bolt

Mr. Arthur Blackport

Josephine Conley

Casino Club Ladies Auxiliary
Doris Rhines
Mr. & Mrs. Clifford Tryon

Harold Cooper

Elizabeth Cooper *

Ellen Davis

Ms. Mildred Weller *

Mary Decker

Coral Hoogewind

Bob DeGroot

Marylin DeGroot *

James & Kathryn DeMeester

Marilyn DeMeester

Charles DenBoer

Marilyn DenBoer *
Marilyn DenBoer

Melvin DeStigter

Mrs. Elaine DeStigter *

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James & Arlynn Kuiper

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Harriet Longberg

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Ben & Joy Mol

Pearl Mallekoote

Mr. & Mrs. Casey Mallekoote *

Joy Mol

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Audrey Gezon
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Mr. Ralph Koll *
Jeff & Caroline Shatto *

Roger Morrison

Fred & Audrey Nietering

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Norma Schrickel *

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Wilma Schrier

Vineta Elliott
Grenelefe Condominium Assoc.
Jordo Properties, LLC
Northern Estates North LLC
Summit Landscape Management,
Inc.

Leon Stadt

Dr. & Mrs. Stephen Doezema
Mike & Sue Joyce *

* Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation

(continued on page 5)

member. Some can no longer find Bible passages on their own, have memory loss, or even doze off a bit, but they keep coming. Gary always starts and ends with prayer and includes prayer requests.

“I try to pick something scriptural that’s encouraging and relevant for people of older age,” he says. Recently, he focused on the Luke 19 parable where a nobleman called together ten servants before he “went into a far country.” The nobleman gave each servant the equivalent of two-and-a-half years’ wages and said, “Occupy till I come (Luke 19:13, KJV).”

Gary explained that although ECHC residents might long to go home to God, occupying till Christ returns means staying busy with what’s beneficial in life. “Some residents don’t have family in town, but we can talk with and encourage each other to look up and plod on. There’s a lot of interest in Bible study, and people really respond,” he recalls.

When he leads Sunday afternoon worship at ECHC, he chooses the music and preaches the sermon. He recalls that when ECLS began broadcasting the service to residents’ rooms in all three buildings, staff wondered whether attendance would dwindle. “But people still come. They value being together, singing together, being in the Word together. Over the years, I’ve noticed that not all residents know sung psalms as well as hymns, so I try to choose music they know.”

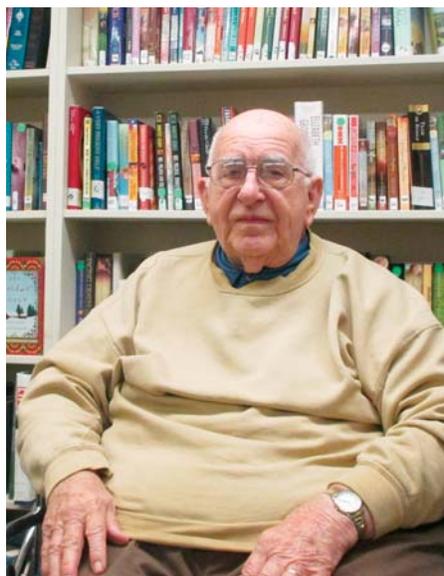
Gary visits many acquaintances who now live at ECHC. He attends Providence Reformed Church in northeast Grand Rapids and lives in Dutton. “Providence is fairly unusual in the RCA (Reformed

Churches of America), in that we just sing out of psalters and still have an evening service.” He’s grateful that five of his children play the organ in their churches. He enjoys staying in touch with his 27 grandchildren and 34 great-grandchildren.

Edward T. Glynn admits that it was very difficult moving with his beloved wife, Gloria, to Edison Christian Health Center in October 2015. Gloria died a month later. Ed, a retired Grand Rapids Police Department captain, was partially blind, needed a wheelchair, and was not happy about no longer being in charge.

“Our daughter and two sons are really conscientious and religious and visit a lot, but it was hard for me to accept the changes in my life. After my wife died, I was depressed a little bit. But my religion and finding opportunities to volunteer here gave me a purpose,” Ed says.

Now he runs the ECHC library, helps in the front dining room, sets candy prize trays for Friday bingo at Edison Christian Independent



Edward T. Glynn

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

Living, and assists with bingo two days a week at ECHC.

“My room has become like a substation for donations of books, magazines, and puzzles. I have macular degeneration, so, for myself, I use audiobooks from Michigan’s visually impaired services office in Lansing. But to volunteer in the library, I use a magnifying glass that my wife gave me, and I take my time. The library is in the lower level of the Health Center, and I go down there every day to put plastic envelopes and cards in each new item. People sign their name on the card when they check something out. They can keep it as long as they want. A staff member takes a library cart upstairs a few times a week.

“We have about 2,000 books and two shelves of puzzles, anywhere from 30 to 500 pieces. Mostly people in independent living check out puzzles. Sometimes I get back a note that a puzzle has a missing piece. I put the most recent

(continued on page 5)

GIVING ALSO BLESSES GIVERS *(continued from page 4)*

magazines by the front desk. Birds and Blooms and Reminisce are the most popular magazines. I put older issues by the front door for anyone who wants to take them,” Ed says.

He’s asked staff to wake him early so he can help set up the dining room for breakfast.

Thanks to his police career, love for research, and post-career experience in arranging international group travel, Ed is hard to beat at ECHC trivia events. One resident recently commented, “You hang around books all the time, so you know all the answers.”

Ed mostly rides in a wheelchair but can walk a bit. When he takes the Rapid GO!Bus or Rapid On Demand, he uses a walker. Ed loves meeting retired police buddies at Swan Inn, going to Sunday mass, and seeing all the new construction on Leonard Street and downtown.

He’s on hospice now because of weakness and fluid build-up in

his heart. “I feel good. Hospice guaranteed that they wouldn’t take away my GO!Bus option. Hospice provides an aide to help me bathe or shower, a social worker, and a Catholic nun who comes to pray and read with me. Recently she read a good poem to me about how life is like a train.”



Joe Vandenberg

“I didn’t grow up in the church. I became a Christian in my late 20s,” says **Joe Vandenberg**. This experience makes him keenly aware of the difference that faith and God’s Word can make throughout a lifetime.

Joe was born in West Michigan, but he raised his family in the Upper Peninsula (U.P.), near the Wisconsin border. “I have phenomenal kids—twin sons, two daughters, and two young grandsons. My kids are my best friends, but they are diehard Yoopers,” he says. Joe was a chaplain at a hospital and nursing home in the U.P., and he also led a Bible Study at a nursing home there.

So, when he and his wife, Cathi, moved to northeast Grand Rapids a few years ago, he had room in his heart to invest in other people. At first, Joe led jail ministries at the Kent County Jail for 1-1/2 years, which he says was “very rewarding.”

(continued on page 6)

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS *(continued from page 3)*

Leon Stadt (continued)

Ann Phillips *
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Ralph & Diane Taylor *

Mike Stolk

Mrs. Peggy Stolk *

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Bertha Vis

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Mr. Ralph Koll *
Lydia Tacoma *
John & Dee VanderPloeg *
John Vis *

Karl Waivio

Mary Waivio

Total Memorial Gifts ... \$9,952

** Gifts designated for Edison Christian Foundation*

Then, “I decided to call around to senior living facilities to see whether anyone would like me to lead a Bible study. Edison Christian Assisted Living had an opening. I’ve been leading Bible study there every Tuesday morning since,” he says.

The activity staff asked him to plan on 45 minutes, but participants soon asked whether Joe could meet for an hour. Sometimes everyone stays even longer.

Attendance varies, depending on people’s health and appointments, but often 12 to 15 gather to pray, read, study, and share. “We generally go straight through a book of the Bible for as many weeks as it takes. We decide together which book to do next, which could be Ecclesiastes, an epistle, or

Revelation. I prepare by reading books and commentaries.

“We always start off with prayer. We pray for our world and the people who couldn’t come to Bible study that day. Our group is about half men, half women. Some volunteer to read the verses out loud. Many would rather listen than talk. At first, it was hard to get anyone to discuss, yet people would keep coming and thank me for coming,” he says.

Joe began emphasizing how much he wanted their insights. Every meeting he says something like, “You’re all Christians. Many of you grew up in Christian homes. You guys probably know more than I do. I can keep going verse by verse, but please, please jump in.” As

members opened up, he learned that one is a former professor, and another is a former pastor.

He chuckles. “One day I realized that the pastor was asking me certain questions just to see what I know.”

Joe describes himself as “a very passionate person” and has been thrilled to see Bible study participants “come alive. When you’re reading these truths about God and Christ, it reminds you of the hope we have. None of us is ever too old to continue to change, stretch our minds, and present Christ in different ways.”

Like Joe, many Bible study participants don’t have family living nearby. They’ve built strong bonds

(continued on page 7)

THERE’S STILL ROOM FOR YOU TO GET IN ON THE SATISFACTION OF VOLUNTEERING

Even with all the people already volunteering here, there’s still room for you to share your talents and build relationships. In fact, you’ll find more than 40 hours a week of volunteer options in Edison Christian Health Center alone. We can use volunteers every day from morning through evening.

“Whether you want to volunteer on a weekly basis or do a monthly program, we can schedule you. We have a variety of opportunities! We provide each volunteer with an orientation to our facility and necessary training. New volunteers are paired with activity staff as they become familiar with the residents and facility,” Jodi promises.

We need volunteers for Edison Christian Health Center, Edison Christian Assisted Living, and Edison Christian Independent Living. We welcome male and female volunteers, and we all—staff, family members, and residents—greatly appreciate each volunteer! Please call activity director Jodi Twardize-Walker at 453-2475 x212 if you can:

- Lead Bible study on Tuesday afternoons at Edison Christian Health Center.
- Lead an exercise group at Edison Christian Independent Living or Edison Christian Assisted Living.
- Lead a prayer group at Edison Christian Assisted Living.
- Help with manicures at Edison Christian Health Center or Edison Christian Independent Living.
- Perform a musical program (individual or group).
- Play the piano for a hymn sing.
- Call bingo or assist residents with playing on Saturday mornings at Edison Christian Health Centers.
- Assist with balloon volleyball at Edison Christian Health Center.
- Help staff with activities on our Memory Loss unit.

Would you like to volunteer in a way that’s not listed above? Then, call Jodi at **453-2475 x212** or **complete a volunteer application online at edisonchristian.org/give**. (Scroll down to find the volunteer application.)

Jodi says, “If you are questioning how you can help or what opportunities are available...please, just call. There are many opportunities no matter what your talent.”

through faithful attendance and sharing their stories. “This Bible study group has become like family. I think about them and pray for them. When I miss a Tuesday because I’m on vacation or have to work an extra shift, I miss them and they miss me.”

When he lived in the U.P., Joe was a truck driver for a grocery wholesaler. Down here he drives a shuttle truck for Columbian Logistics. Until recently, he had to work weekends, which made his time preparing for and

leading Bible study especially precious.

“Just recently I got on a different schedule, so Cathi and I are looking for a church. We really like the little country Bible churches,” he says.

GIFTS RECEIVED IN HONOR OF

July 2019 – October 2019

In honor of... **Rose Kanoza**... from Lorraine Anton

ECHC REHAB SERVICES

Edison Christian Health Center provides excellent short-term 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.

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 lolders@edisonchristian.org

ARE YOU MISSING OUT ON WHAT THESE PEOPLE HAVE DISCOVERED?

Literally hundreds of people have already discovered the joy of volunteering at Edison Christian Health Center, Edison Christian Assisted Living, and Edison Christian Independent Living. Our 140 current volunteers are mostly women and range in age from their 40s to 90-plus. High school and college students earn class or service learning credits while volunteering here.

Other groups present evening programs. About 20 ministers volunteer each year to lead Sunday afternoon services. Volunteers help with weekly activities, such as leading Bible study, calling bingo, bringing in animals for pet therapy, playing games and visiting with residents, serving cookies during Friendship Hour, and playing the piano for sing-alongs or Sunday church services. Volunteers work behind the scenes to fold the Edison Events monthly newsletter and serve on the boards.

Some individuals or groups volunteer daily, weekly, or monthly, while others are on less- scheduled rotations. “We are very fortunate to have those consistent volunteers, but we are always in need of others who can share their time and talents,” says Jodi Twardize-Walker, our activity director.

IN LOVING MEMORY

July 2019 – October 2019

Bernice Muilenburg	July 7	age 101	Joseph Krzeminski	September 18	age 100
Coralea Spooner	July 9	age 86	Josephine Conley	October 4	age 95
Grant Shattuck	July 27	age 89	Jean Prose	October 15	age 81
Mary Decker	August 24	age 90	Wilma Schrier	October 16	age 90
Jerry Palma	August 30	age 89	Eleanor Brummel	October 26	age 91
Dick Spaans Jr.	September 6	age 85	Elaine “Parky” Shaw	October 30	age 92
Roger Morrison	September 9	age 95	Joseph Jost	October 30	age 89
Joy Mol	September 14	age 93			



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EDISON CHRISTIAN
 LIFE SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

Fall/Winter 2019

CONTRIBUTING CHURCHES

July 2019 – October 2019

Beckwith Hills CRC	Netherlands Ref. -
Free Ref.	Covell
Heritage Ref.	Oakview Community
Congregation	Walker URC

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Check out our website at:
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