

DECEMBER 2024 • GRAND FORKS ND

# VALLEY *Times*



100  
— YEARS —

*A Century of Our Family Caring For Yours*



As we look ahead to the next century of caring for our community, Valley Senior Living is committed to thoughtful planning and intentional growth. Through strategic reflection and consideration of the future, we have updated our mission statement to better reflect our dedication to those we serve.

*Our new mission released in November is:*

**Valley Senior Living provides compassionate Christian care for those we serve.**

VALLEY SENIOR LIVING BOARD OF DIRECTORS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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PRESIDENT/DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

## Valley welcomes new board members

University Lutheran Church Pastor Tom Colenso and Alerus regional president and commercial banking executive Chris Wolf have joined the Valley Senior Living Executive Board of Directors and the Valley Senior Living Foundation Board of Directors.



**Pastor Tom** was ordained in 1989 and has served as a pastor at University Lutheran Church since 1993 and we welcome him to the Valley Senior Living Executive Board of Directors.



**Chris Wolf** has 30 years of experience in the financial industry and has been with Alerus since 2010. Chris is a Grand Forks native and we welcome him to the Valley Senior Living Foundation Board of Directors.

If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please contact us.

2900 14th Avenue South | Grand Forks, ND 58201 | 701.787.7900 | [www.valleyseniorliving.org](http://www.valleyseniorliving.org)



**Killashandra Diekman**  
CHAPLAIN  
Valley Senior Living

*Valley Senior Living extends our heartfelt gratitude to the 24 local Lutheran churches that faithfully support our mission and ministry. Your partnership and commitment to our shared values of compassionate care and service are a blessing to the individuals and families we serve. Thank you for your continued dedication, prayers, and active involvement as we work together to provide for care rooted in faith into the next century.*

*“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”*

- MATTHEW 25:40

As we close Valley Senior Living’s milestone 100th year, we reflect with gratitude on the journey of care and faith that has guided us since our founding in October 1924. For a century, Valley Senior Living has provided a compassionate home rooted in Christian values, offering a place of comfort, dignity, and connection for countless residents, families, and staff. Throughout these years, our chaplaincy program has remained at the heart of our mission, dedicated to nurturing the spiritual well-being of those we serve.

Our chaplaincy program offers support that brings peace, reassurance, and hope, especially during life’s most challenging moments. Through prayer, worship services, Bible studies, and personal conversations, our chaplains are a constant source of encouragement, helping residents and families feel valued, seen, and connected. For staff, too, the chaplains provide a space of support and renewal, reminding each member of our community that they are part of something greater, grounded in a legacy of faith and compassion.

This ministry would not be possible without the generous support of donors who share in our commitment to holistic care. Your gifts make it possible for us to continue this century-old mission of providing spiritual care, ensuring that future generations of residents and families can find comfort and strength in the chaplaincy program. We are deeply grateful for your partnership in this ministry, which enriches the lives of all who call Valley Senior Living home.

Thank you for helping us honor the past 100 years of faith-driven service and for joining us as we look forward to a future filled with hope, care, and God’s grace. Together, we continue the legacy of Valley Senior Living, built on the unwavering foundation of Christian compassion.

*Chaplain Killashandra Diekman*

## MEMBER CONGREGATIONS

Augustana Lutheran Church  
Bethany Lutheran Church  
Bethel Lutheran Church  
Bygland Lutheran Church  
Calvary Lutheran Church  
East Walle Lutheran Church  
Evanger Lutheran Church  
Family of God

Fisher Lutheran Church  
Middle Grove Lutheran Church  
Ness Lutheran Church  
Our Savior’s Lutheran Church  
Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Reynolds Lutheran Church  
St. Mark’s Lutheran Church  
St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church  
Sharon Lutheran Church  
Trinity Free Lutheran Church  
Trinity Lutheran Church Manvel  
United Lutheran Church  
University Lutheran Church  
Walle Lutheran Church  
Zion Lutheran Church



**Garth Rydland**  
PRESIDENT/CEO  
Valley Senior Living

# A Century of Faith and Community

We have enjoyed celebrating our 100 years of compassionate care and service to the community. It has been fun reminiscing throughout the year with pictures and stories from our past. In October we celebrated the actual 100th anniversary date of opening at Tuft Manor, Valley on Columbia, and Valley on 42nd, and we had the opportunity to share time and memories with current and past staff, residents, and families.

My biggest takeaway in studying the beginning of our organization is the central role that pastors of local Lutheran churches played in society. Reverend O.T. Ness was the leader of the organization when our first building was built without a single dollar of state or federal money. People throughout the state came to Grand Forks because there were no such places to care for them in their community. A 1925 letter in our records from O.L. Jensen, the pastor of a Lisbon Lutheran church, indicated he was searching throughout the state for someone to care for Mrs. Anderson, one of his parishioners. The pastors were the social services leaders of their communities.



*Reverend O.T. Ness*

Our community's clergy and their congregations continue to be involved with their members at Valley Senior Living today, but many rely on our chaplaincy program as an extension for their ministry. Chaplains Bud Johnson and Killashandra Diekman are full-time chaplains with us and we are fortunate to have part-time Chaplains John Rieth and Kerwin Sletto to assist with visits and coverage. They all do a wonderful job providing spiritual care and support through services, bible studies, and visitation.

Our Foundation continues to have the goal of endowing the chaplaincy positions at Valley. This year the Foundation is able to fund about 20 percent of the chaplaincy program through a distribution from our endowed and restricted funds. If you are passionate about spiritual care for our residents, please consider volunteering or contributing to this program so that we can continue to provide this vital support for residents, families, and staff.

*Photos from our 100 year celebrations*

SCAN TO WATCH:  
*A Century of Our Family Caring For Yours: Sharing our History with You*



# Our Chaplaincy Team

At Valley Senior Living, we have two full-time and two part-time Chaplains on staff, ensuring that residents, their families, and our staff receive the spiritual and emotional support essential for their well-being. This team is dedicated to providing compassionate care tailored to the needs of each individual in our care communities.



*Killashandra Diekman, BCC*



*Bud Johnson*



*John Reith*



*Kerwin Sletto*

**2400+**

One-on-One Visits  
with Residents  
and Families

**244**

Bible Study Sessions

**208**

Worship Services

**12**

Holiday Worship  
Services

**4**

Quarterly  
In-Person and

**12**

Virtual  
Memorial Services

**12**

Eden Alternative  
Training  
Presentations

**12**

Certified Nurse  
Assistant Training  
Class Presentations

*Chaplaincy*

**BY THE NUMBERS**

STATISTICS ARE ANNUALLY

# Compassion, Comfort,

*"Do not cast me away when I am old;  
do not forsake me when my strength is gone."*

- PSALM 71:9



*The Chaplaincy Ministry Program at Valley Senior Living care communities provides essential spiritual and emotional support to residents, their families, and our employee care partners. The Chaplain team contributes to the holistic well-being of residents through comfort, companionship, and a listening ear, all while fostering a sense of peace and dignity.*

**JUDY SMART, A RESIDENT OF WHEATLAND TERRACE**, expresses deep gratitude for the Chaplaincy Program, which she believes has been a true blessing in her life. "I am a member of Sharon Lutheran Church, and one of the benefits of having the Chaplaincy Program at Valley is that I have church right here and I do not have to go out to attend church service," she said, reflecting on the convenience and comfort it brings her. Judy's connection to Chaplain Bud Johnson runs deep; she's known him for years, as he had been the pastor for her parents' funerals. "I was so surprised to hear that Valley had this program, and I am so happy we do," she added, also praising the Bible study sessions. "The Bible study is great, and we learn so much, even about different religions," she concluded, smiling at the peace it provides.

# and Dignity

“As a resident at Country Estates and with my husband Bob at Woodside Village, Valley has always been a part of our lives, and being involved in the ministry at Valley has been a way of life for our family. For those of us who call Valley Senior Living our home, we are truly blessed to have inspiring worship services and Bible studies provided in addition to the compassionate caring ministry of the chaplains. The chaplaincy program is foundational to the mission of the home in providing care for all residents.”

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**OLIVE WEBER, RESIDENT AT COUNTRY ESTATES**

“The Chaplaincy Program at Valley has been vital to Mom living at Woodside Village. As family who can't be there every day, it gives us peace of mind to know that Mom is cared for spiritually, whether it be from one-on-one visits with a chaplain whenever she needs extra support, to the weekly worship services that she so enjoys, to the Bible studies that she continues to learn and grow from. The Chaplaincy Program is such a blessing, not only to the residents at Valley, but to the family members as well!”

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**BECKY VAKOC, DAUGHTER OF A WOODSIDE VILLAGE RESIDENT**

Faithfully Caring: Scan This Code to See How  
Chaplaincy Supports Our Care Communities



## DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT UPDATE



**Shaun Havis**  
DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT  
Valley Senior Living

### Celebrating 100 Years and Beyond: *A Call to Action for the Future*

For a century, Valley Senior Living has been a trusted sanctuary, caring for loved ones during their times of greatest need. As we step into our second century, we are steadfast in our mission to provide the highest quality, compassionate Christian care. Together, with your support, we can ensure a brighter future for those we serve.

#### Three Ways You Can Help:

##### 1. Program Pillars

Support our pillars — Chaplaincy Ministry, Music Therapy, Intergenerational Programs, and Community Connections — help bring joy, purpose, and love to our residents. These programs enrich lives and nurture the spirit in meaningful ways.

##### 2. Properties

Tufts Manor is a vital Basic Care community that is in need of approximately \$500,000 in essential interior updates. Your gifts will provide a safer, more comfortable, and welcoming home for residents through updates to shared spaces, improved accessibility, and upgraded safety features.

##### 3. Possibilities

In addition to your gifts now please think of Valley Senior Living for your future support. You will allow Valley to embrace new challenges and opportunities. Unrestricted gifts through wills and estate plans help sustain our mission for future generations and ensure we remain resilient amidst evolving needs.

#### Partner with Us for the Next Century

Your generosity ensures that Valley Senior Living continues to be a beacon of care and hope in our community. Together, we can walk hand in hand into a future filled with purpose, compassion, and faith.

### Turn Your IRA Distribution into a Gift to Support Residents at Valley through the Valley Senior Living Foundation!

As you plan your minimum required distribution this year, IRA Charitable Rollover provides you with an excellent opportunity to make gifts during your lifetime from an asset that might be subject to multiple levels of taxation if it remained in your taxable estate.

#### TO QUALIFY:

- You must be age 70½ or older at the time of the gift.
- Gifts can be up to \$105,000.
- Gifts must be made to a qualified 501 (c) (3) public charity.

#### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS:

- Taking a Required Minimum Distribution is a taxable event. A Qualified Charitable Distribution is NOT taxable.
- You can make these gifts at any time of the year, and do not have to wait until year-end to take your IRA required minimum distribution.
- You get tax benefits whether you use the standard deduction or itemized deductions on your taxes.
- You will experience the joy of sharing to charities that are most important to you.

#### HOW TO PROCEED:

- Check with your tax advisor to see if a gift from your IRA is appropriate in your situation.

# Memorials

*We gratefully acknowledge the following gifts received in memory or in honor from August 16, 2024 to November 15, 2024.*

**In Memory of Myron “Mike” Breiland**

Chap. Bud & Claudia Johnson

**In Memory of Tom Carson**

Duane & Audrey Anderson  
Dufner Organics  
Kendra and Michael Fink  
Sally Grosgebauer  
Peter & Melanie Hoistad  
Scott & Stacy Jensen  
Chap. Bud & Claudia Johnson  
Hilman Knudsvig  
Karen Knudsvig  
Randy Knudsvig  
Daniel & Elaine Kratochvil  
Paul and Pernell Marchell  
Jeannen McMillan  
Joe & Missy Miedema  
Lindsey & Danny Moffitt  
Jonathan & Linda Olson  
Elaine Ramstad  
Garth & Christine Rydland  
David Rye  
Andy Swanson  
Anonymous Gifts

**In Memory of Bill Cummings**

Chap. Bud & Claudia Johnson

**In Memory of Vivianne Dahlen**

Chap. Bud & Claudia Johnson

**In Memory of Darlene Dyrud**

John & Patricia Rieth

**In Memory of Louie Egstad**

Elsie Egstad

**In Memory of John & Helen**

**Galegher**

John & Pamelyn Galegher, Jr.

**In Memory of Helen Halle**

Brenda & Scott Halle

**In Memory of Donna Haug**

Andrew & Susan W. Corthell  
Fisher WELCA  
James & Marsha Ketring  
Ginni Kroocmo  
Elaine Ramstad

**In Memory of Jean Haus**

Steven Haus

**In Memory of Larry Heuchert**

Andy Swanson

**In Memory of Joe Hootman**

Rachel Goebel

**In Memory of Barbara Janzen**

Chap. Bud & Claudia Johnson

**In Memory of Leland Jelinek**

ICS, Inc.

**In Memory of Rita A. Johnson**

John & Jackie Knudson

**In Memory of Laverna Knuth**

Rachel Goebel

**In Memory of Frances Kobe**

Mark Kobe

**In Memory of Bill Lamb**

Betty Jane Lamb

**In Memory of Karin Lealos**

Helen Jacoby & Peter Cannavo

**In Memory of Jack Miller**

Mark Kobe

**In Memory of Lorretta Miller**

Mark Kobe

**In Memory of Marilyn Morstad**

Andrew & Jean Schmidt

Gary & Lona Spicer

**In Memory of Linda Mutcher**

Cheri L. Erickson

**In Memory of Lila Jane Nelson**

R. Duane Nelson

**In Memory of Lyle O. Nelson**

Yvonne Nelson

**In Memory of Vernon Nelson**

Sue & Mark Bjornstad

Ella Coffing

**In Memory of Earl Olson**

Bryan & Melisa Duncan

**In Memory of Lila Pedersen**

Melvin Pedersen

**In Memory of Dorothy E. Pickard**

Dennis & Nancy Pickard

**In Memory of Amos Pladson**

Chap. Bud & Claudia Johnson

Lloyd & Adelaide Kasprick

**In Memory of Kenneth Poolman**

Verona Poolman

**In Memory of Dona Rae Rutherford**

Chap. Bud & Claudia Johnson

**In Memory of Donna Sherwood**

ICS, Inc.

**In Memory of Judy Sondrol**

Carol Moe

**In Memory of Fran Stewart**

Dr. & Mrs. Patrick & RoxAnne Moore

**In Memory of Evangeline Tiegen**

James & Rita Havis

**In Memory of Dagny Tweten**

Maxine Walton

**In Memory of James Vigen**

Barb Vigen

**In Memory of Robert G. York**

Elizabeth York

Thank  
You

to the following businesses and local groups and organizations who have graciously purchased gifts for residents who live at Woodside Village, Tufte Manor, and Valley Senior Living on Columbia this holiday season.

- Bank Forward
- EAPC
- Choice Bank
- KodaBank
- Gate City Bank
- Valley Petroleum
- ICON Architectural Group
- Ecolab Alumni
- College of Nursing and Professional Development
- Calvary Lutheran Church
- Family of God ELCA & UCC
- Vaaler Insurance, A Marsh & McLennan Agency LLC Company
- Grand Forks Housing Authority
- Ideal Aerosmith

# Tree of Life

*Cumulative gifts of \$500 or greater to the Valley Senior Living Foundation are recognized on our Tree of Life donor recognition walls located at each care community. The awards noted were recognized at the recent Tree of Life Banquet on November 7, 2024.*

## Heritage Award

**(\$10,000 to \$24,999)**

Jerry Ryan  
Concordance Healthcare Solutions  
Bethany Lutheran Church

## Builders Award

**(\$5,000 to \$9,999)**

In Memory of Millie Bjelverud -  
Brooky Anderson  
Cole Papers  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota  
In Memory of Pam Greenwood -  
Troy & Angie Goulet  
Tim Tuma  
East Walle Church  
In Memory of Lee Piepkorn -  
Clark & Kathy Piepkorn  
Jill & Alex Swingen  
Dwight & Ruth Thompson  
Brian & Rhonda Sand  
Kari Gerszewski  
Woodside Industries Inc.  
In Memory of Erick "Doc" Reeber

## Golden Circle

**(\$2,500 to \$4,999)**

In Memory of Gene Niemeyer -  
Elaine Niemeyer  
Happy Harry's Bottle Shops  
Reed & Sheryl Tinkham  
In Memory of Louie Egstad -  
Elsie Egstad  
Nancy & Robert Useldinger  
Monica & Mark Musich  
In Memory of Eugene Kramer -  
Don & Carla Kramer  
In Memory of Marian Hirsch -  
Susan Davidson family  
Sally & Andy Grosgebauer  
Megan & Brandon Anderson  
Therez Sevigny  
Randy & Leah Larson  
Honoring Marjorie Dorsher Johnson  
- Sam, Margie, Peter, Kari, Robert  
Jay LaDue family

## Grand Giver

**(\$1,000 to \$2,499)**

Nicholas & Megan Flom  
In Memory of Margaret Swanson -  
Brian & Kari Perreault  
In Memory of Gail Swanson -  
Andy Swanson  
In Memory of Danny A. Wallace  
Joe Bailey  
John & Jackie Knudson  
In Memory of Dorothy Arvidson -  
Vanessa Gonzalez  
Delories Deitz Family - Cynthia Driscoll  
Victoria Cole  
Donna L. Larson  
In Memory of Betty Anderson -  
Joan & Greg McMahon  
In Memory of Astrid Gates -  
Sharon Gates family  
In Memory of Leonard & Marlys Berdal -  
Leonard & Marlys Berdal Estate  
Jacklyn Brumwell  
Truman & Judy Bratteli  
Deb Smedsrud  
First State Bank  
Jim & Randy Swingen  
In Memory of Karin Lealos -  
Helen Jacoby & Peter Cannavo

## Bronze Circle

**(\$500 to \$999)**

In Loving Memory of Glenna Marie  
Johnson  
In Memory of Gary K. Malm  
James & Melanie Popejoy  
Nancy King  
Sacred Heart Catholic Church  
In Honor of Adrianna Janssen -  
Josh Janssen  
EGF VFW Post 3817  
Stacy Sailer  
The Lighting Gallery, Inc.  
In Loving Memory of Marvin Burris  
In Memory of Harold & Toby - Louise  
Greff  
In Memory of our sons John & Michael -  
Gerry & Mary Joyce

Nannette Hoeger

In Memory of Arthur Tinkham -  
Anna & Chad Larson  
Vada Smith  
In Memory of Rick Gessler  
Scott & Colleen Dennison  
In Memory of Audrey Burfening -  
Mark & Nancy Knox  
Sharon & Roger Gustafson  
Jerome & Marilyn Bakke Family  
In Loving Memory of Leon Fjestad -  
Becky Vakoc  
Dr. Mark & Mary Koponen  
In Memory of Stan & Joann Moreland -  
The Brueckners  
Alexandra Kirlin  
Tanna Knudson Family  
Tom & Jackie Saddler  
Ken & Mary Jo Schill  
In Memory of Dean Brown -  
JoAnn Brown & family  
In Memory of Harold Zola -  
from his family  
Steve & Kathy Flaatt  
To honor the memory of George &  
Anna Chaput - Brenda Taylor  
Mark & Sandy Rios  
Juanita Garcia  
Capstone Financial Group  
In Memory of Myrlin Troftgruben -  
Troftgruben family





# Giving Hearts Day

## Intergenerational stories made by your giving heart.

Valley Senior Living's intergenerational programs create beautiful connections between seniors and youth, fostering meaningful interactions through activities like pen pal exchanges, art projects, music sessions, and gardening. These shared experiences bring joy, reduce isolation, and promote emotional and cognitive growth for both generations.

With a Head Start classroom on-site and strong community partnerships, Valley Senior Living creates an environment where age becomes a bridge, not a barrier, bringing people together across generations.



## Early Giving begins January 13

Visit [GivingHeartsDay.org](http://GivingHeartsDay.org), or mail or drop off your gift to help create intergenerational stories that will be cherished for years to come.





*Our Family Caring for Yours*

2900 14th Avenue South  
Grand Forks, ND 58201

Non-Profit Org.  
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## Are you a Thrivent member?

The Valley Senior Living Foundation is now eligible to receive donations of Thrivent Choice dollars designated by Thrivent members.

**thrivent**<sup>®</sup>

**To give your Choice Dollars, follow these directions:**

### **HERE'S HOW TO DO IT BY PHONE:**

1. Call 1-800-THRIVENT (1-800-847-4836) and state "Thrivent Choice."
2. State Choice Dollars when prompted.
3. Press 1 to direct Choice Dollars.
4. Enter or speak your social security number or Thrivent ID number.
5. Your call will then be transferred to an operator for completion.
6. Our Organization Name is listed as: "Valley Senior Living Foundation", 1400 29th Ave. S., Grand Forks, ND 58201

### **HERE'S HOW TO DO IT ONLINE:**

1. Log on to [www.thrivent.com](http://www.thrivent.com)
2. Sign in with your username and password or register for an account.
3. Once you have registered and signed in, select the "Direct Choice Dollars" button for Thrivent Choice in the right-hand side.
4. In the middle of the next page, type in "Valley Senior Living Foundation" in the "Organization Name" box, leave "City" blank, and click search.
5. Next to our name (listed as Valley Senior Living Foundation), click the "Direct Now" button. You will be able to assign all or part of your choice dollars to Valley. Recurring Thrivent Dollar designation is no longer an option. In order for Valley to receive your Thrivent Choice Dollars, you'll need to make the designation each and every year. We'll help you remember to do so! We promise! Thanks!
6. Click the "submit" button and your Thrivent Choice Dollars will be sent to the Valley Senior Living Foundation.

***Thank You!***