



**God Cares
Ministry.com**

33399 Walker Rd, Suite A
Avon Lake, OH 44012
Info@GodCaresMinistry.com
www.GodCaresMinistry.com

*If you lose heart about your work,
remember that none of it is lost, that
the good of every good deed remains
and breeds and works on forever.*

Charles Kingsley

Nonprofit
Organization
U. S.
Postage Paid
Elyria, Ohio
Permit No. 548

July / August

2011

Volume 17 • Issue 4

God Cares News



Recruiting, training and supporting Christian volunteers for nursing home ministry

Return Service
Requested

GOD CARES NEWS is the official newsletter of God Cares Ministry; edited by Founder and President, Bill Goodrich. It is published bimonthly to encourage, instruct and inform Christians who are interested in nursing home ministry. You may contact our office for a free subscription (email or US Mail) or permission to copy.

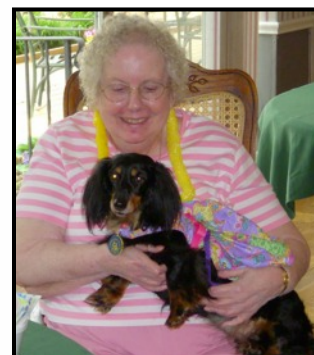
God Cares Ministry Board of Directors

Bill Goodrich, President/Director
Doug Feller, Vice President/Treasurer
Fran Palfy, Secretary
Rhonda Christian
Mary Courtney
Dan'l Markham
Richard Walters

Brad Fisk, Advisor to the Board
Brian Hassett, Advisor to the Board
Mike Laurito, Advisor to the Board
Pam Eck, Executive Assistant

Amazing Gracie

My dear friends, Pastor Don and Betty Jo Mathis, have been serving faithfully in nursing homes for over 40 years. Recently they sent me this picture of their newest team member. Gracie is a 2 ½ year old Welsh Corgi mix. She loves the residents and the feeling is mutual!



Sonny used to be a favorite volunteer at another home. She has retired due to health issues. Friendly pets are one of the best things I know of to begin a friendship with residents. (The others are little children and the old-time hymns.) ☺



Training Schedule

There are several training events taking place over the next few months. For more details and registration visit our web site: www.GodCaresMinistry.com or call our office at: 440-930-2173

Sept. 15-17, Bioethics Conference & Disability Summit Presented by Joni & Friends and Cedarville Univ. Cedarville, OH

Sept. 19, Developing Caring Friendships with Residents and their families 6:30pm-8:30. Presented by Elaine Edkin, Bay Presbyterian Church, Bay Village, OH

October 1, Full-day Ministry Foundations Workshop, 8:30am - 3:30pm Presented by Chaplain Bill, HIS Ministry, Aurora, OH

Oct. 22, Nursing Home Ministry Orientation & Visitation 8:45 - 11:30am Presented by Jane Taylor, Crossroads Community, Madison, OH

October 29, PowerNight Plus, Ministering to people who have Dementia, 12:30pm - 5:00, Then **Ministry workers appreciation Banquet**, 5:30 - 7:45, Bay Presbyterian Church, Bay Village, OH



Faith In Action

As a fellow ambassador for Christ, I feel urged to remind you that our work in this mission field is very important. God so desires to reign in the lives of the 25 million people who will be living in care homes between now and 2030. His method is the same today as it was when Jesus walked this earth; "Go and make disciples". Jesus explained how we are to do this, "Baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded". We are, therefore, not called to merely get people to confess Jesus as LORD, but to teach them to live under the Lordship of Jesus. Of course their open confession of faith in Jesus is one of the first steps to becoming a disciple; but from there, our friends need to learn to apply Christ's commands and principles to their lives.

It is essential for us to pray and seek for creative ways to share Scriptures that will apply to the needs of your friends. There is life in the Word of God, and when our friends are respectfully challenged and helped to embrace Jesus' words, they will grow closer to Him and experience His many blessings.

As His Word is presented in the care homes, I have watched God move many hearts, to not only turn from sins, but to also become active in their faith.

My friend Rachel was very disappointed with her family and could not figure out why God would make her live in "this place". After a few visits, I convinced her to read a Bible that I brought in for her. When I would visit her, she would ask me questions that she had written out while reading the Bible during the week. She was a real blessing! Several months before she died, she organized a small chapel time so that other residents could ask me about the Bible and religious questions. There were at least two people whose lives were significantly transformed as a result of Rachel being active in her faith.

Another friend, Pat, was very distraught when she was placed in the nursing home at the age of 56. She would hardly even talk to me for two months after she arrived. Eventually she started attending our Bible Fellowship, and soon became a vital part of the ministry at that home. God used her for several years to bring new residents to church, and for those who could not come she would share the large print Scripture papers. She helped many fellow residents find strength in the Lord.

We can learn to encourage our friends to ask questions about God and then help them find answers in Scripture. I pray for them but also pray with them for the grace to understand God's will and the ability to apply it to their personal circumstances. God's Word is powerful enough to move them from being consumed by all their losses and troubles, to being a light in a dark valley.

In closing, I realize that many of our friends have dementia and are not able to understand or become active servants of Christ. For them, I believe a confession of Christ is sufficient. But let us encourage and challenge those who can, to express their faith through acts of charity. In this kind of discipling, God's Light will shine ever brighter on your mission field, and the rewards for all of us will be great.

I love you and pray for you often. God Cares Ministry considers it an honor to serve you as you serve our dear neighbors. B.G.

Jesus said to His disciples, "All authority on heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

Joni and Friends and the Center for Bioethics at Cedarville University will be presenting the **Bioethics Conference 2011 – Equipping for End of Life Ministry**. This is an important event that will provide biblical perspectives on the critical issues shaping our nation's moral compass as it relates to end-of-life and disability ministry. It is for pastors, healthcare providers, and all who deal with end of life decisions.

I am particularly interested in this conference because of my concern for our senior neighbors in nursing homes. Why so? As world governments seek cost-effective alternatives to reduce end-of-life care expenses, assisted suicide (which is already legal in three US states) and euthanasia (legal in some countries) are gaining acceptance.

I am concerned that our frail neighbors may face the same genocide as our babies have faced through abortion. The term that continually comes to mind is "Senior Abortion". It is not too far fetched to imagine such a possibility in the midst of our economic challenges. Ministries like Joni & Friends and Cedarville University are being used by God to (continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

...teach Biblical principles pertaining to the difficult decisions we will all face.

This conference will run concurrently with the *Through the Roof Ministries* Summit, which will feature topics on ministering to people dealing with disabilities.

I encourage you to attend as Joni Eareckson Tada will be the featured speaker. She is truly one of my favorite authors, because of her wealth of experience and understanding, as well as a relentless focus on Jesus. I am honored to be sharing in a number of their breakout sessions and to provide a display of nursing home ministry resources. You can find all the details at, www.cedarville.edu/Event/Healthcare-Ethics-Conference/
We also have a link for these events on our website, www.GodCaresMinistry.com B.G.



Losses & Gains

When Mike first entered the nursing home, he was very disappointed about the loss of his home life, and very discontented about living in a nursing home. One day I knocked at Mike's door to remind him of the Bible study we were having that afternoon. When he saw me, he stopped what he was saying to his niece, greeted me, and introduced me. He then said to her, "Never mind, I decided. I'm staying here." She was a bit surprised and asked, "What do you mean?" Mike said, "What this man and his wife brings to this home, I cannot afford to live without. If I moved to another nursing home, and they did not have a Bible study, I could not survive."

From that day on, Mike was a continued encouragement, as he expressed gratitude for our weekly Bible study. His life at the home proved Matthew 4:4, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God."

Even though Mike lost pretty much everything he owned, there was one thing he never lost. He expressed it every time we asked people for song requests - #79 in the SonShine hymnal, "Oh, How I Love Jesus."

Indeed, growing old is a series of continued losses. I will never forget or fail to appreciate Mike's gain in the midst of his losses. Today, 3 years later, he is with Jesus and lacking nothing. He has gained the greatest treasure, and when I see him again, we will rejoice and sing together, "Oh, How I Love Jesus, because He first loved me!" B.G.

Available for Jesus

At the request of the social worker at a care home, I went to be with Mary, a dying resident who was mainly unresponsive. I stayed at her bedside, praying for her and assuring her that Jesus loved her and had His arms wide open to receive her. As I held her hand, it grew cold and I knew that the Lord had taken her. I had the privilege of being used by God to point her to Jesus in the valley of the shadow of death, but because she was unable to communicate with me, I was unsure of her faith. I remembered seeing her in our Tuesday Bible studies once or twice, but I really did not know her. I looked around her room for signs of faith and saw two crosses, which encouraged me, but I still had a bit of uncertainty.

As I left her room, a resident across the hall recognized me and called my name. It was Carol, a faithful Christian woman, whom God has used to encourage me and pray for me. I went in, knelt by her side to tell her that her neighbor had passed. Before I could tell her she said to me, "I want you to know Mary is a believer. I've already worked with her. She has expressed her faith in Jesus." We paused to thank God for His goodness and our hope in His grace upon our friend. It was such an encouragement to me that God uses all of us if we are just willing to be available. B.G.

Loving Memory

Raymond Becker

From Dale & Marge Mertz
Marie Fulthorpe

Mrs. Pauline Sibis

From Bob Richenburg

Richard & Rick Gilmour

From Irene Gilmour

Robert Goodrich Sr

From Larry & Barb Pack

Anne Shaw

From Bobbi Keefner

Julia Zakany

From Mitch Chapman

Mae Jereb

From Harry & Debbie Deal

Jack Eschweiler

From Dale & Marge Mertz

Mary Ann Goodrich

From Larry & Kris Looney
Marilyn Godshall

Laverne Dunn

From Barb & Jeff Centanni
The Golden Girls & Laverne Simerale
Ralph & Marylyn Kuivinen
Shari Dean

Gayle Javorek
Della & Harold Riffle

John R. Palffy Jr.

Helen Ingram
Max & Sandy Dreisbach

Mary Tenos

Elaine Edkin

Bischoff Family

Steve & Linda Sides

Lucy Trowbridge

Patricia Burden

Larry & Kris Looney

Jim & JoAnn Rettinger

Jim & Carol Glaser

Dietlind Rothenbusch

Anita Evans

Vickie Frazier

Mike & Barb Peters

Lawrence & Lois Pack

From Larry & Barb Pack
Bill Goodrich

Corea Keener

From Jutta Czachorowski

Linda Florian

From Patty Frieze

Thomas J. Tomuoho

From Jim & Jean Clark

"One of the Best Days of my Life!"

After the song/lesson service - I proceeded to hug a man at a Nursing Home. He pulled me tight and in explosive tears he said, "Please pray for me." I asked, "What specifically do we need to pray for?" He said, "I need to be saved." We took him to his room.

Courtney, my 7 year old niece, was with me, and she watched this man pray, sob, and accept Jesus into his heart. Later, Courtney then had all sorts of questions about Heaven and Hell, forgiveness and so forth. She said, "I want to be saved too. I want to go to Heaven." So we went to the altar at my little church. I took the ABC's of salvation from the Sonshine Society to guide our prayer - and she accepted Jesus into her heart. She is very concerned about her brother and father, and prayed that God would start working in their hearts. I sent the ABC's of Salvation home with her to share with them. Courtney has been helping me in the nursing homes for 2 years, but now this 7-year-old has a **new passion** for people's salvation. She now understands the real job God has given us to do - be available to witness and share the love of Jesus Christ with others! What a blessing! This was one of the best days of my life! God is Good! Thank you Lord! By Lisa Furr, New London, NC, www.ConnectingHeartsMinistry.org

We are so grateful for all of you who serve with us through your prayers, financial support and volunteer hours.

Because of you, there is an amazing expression of love and faith taking place in the care homes of our nation. Several thousand residents are being visited and encouraged by volunteers we have recruited, trained and/or offer support to. These volunteers are missionaries of a growing mission field in our own country; indeed, in our own communities!

THANK YOU for your active love toward our often forgotten neighbors. All you give really makes an eternal difference in their lives. May God Bless you! B.G.



A Helpful Ministry Tool

The following is a letter describing the use of an excellent book, *Remembering the Life of Jesus*, designed for people who have dementia. It has 32 pages of large print, color pictures and several objects to touch and smell. Because of the sensory items in this book, the readers' level of attention is significantly raised.

Available at: www.HighGroundPress.org

I have tears in my eyes as I type this, and am so excited I can hardly contain myself. Today we visited a care home and took your WONDERFUL book, and the response was AMAZING. It is not only great for those with Alzheimer's, but younger folks with traumatic brain injury and other cognitive problems...and ANYONE! Conrad is a young resident who never leaves his bed these days. He cannot speak well, but his eyes sparkled and lit up today when we read the book together. He LOVED feeling everything, smelling the frankincense, and lingered over each page. When we got to the page at the end with the cross, he kept caressing it, and saying "I love this!" It brought tears to my eyes.

My father read the book to another resident, Marta, and it was just as touching (no pun intended!). She also lingered over each page, and enjoyed reading the words out loud herself as well, and spent a long time touching each item, and smelling the scent. This book is an awesome and VERY effective tool, and should be out in every store, church, nursing home, hospital, etc. I only wish I could get more volunteers who could go and read this to more of the lonely folks out there. What a BLESSING, and GREAT tool!

By, Mary Masters, Soquel, CA, www.BridgeofHopeFoundation.org



God Cares Ministry exists to equip Christians to help meet the spiritual needs of people in long term care homes.

Serving the care home mission field since 1994.

Visit our website:
GodCaresMinistry.com
You will find easy access to:

- ◆ Current and past newsletter articles
- ◆ Sign up for God Cares News through Email
- ◆ Order nursing home ministry books and training videos
- ◆ Full details & registration for upcoming training programs
- ◆ Large Print Scripture portions
- ◆ Post your nursing home visit testimony