



Ministry News

19 years of recruiting, training and supporting Christian volunteers for nursing home ministry



Counting on Jesus

A few weeks ago, while I was on my way to the nursing home, a friend of mine texted me a picture of the church service she was attending. There were over a thousand people in that service, many with hands lifted up in worship, and you could almost feel the joy that must have been experienced in that large fellowship of believers.

As usual, our team was diligent that night in inviting all the residents for our service, but for a few reasons, there were only eight in attendance that evening. As I approached the make-shift podium to address my audience, I sensed the devil mock, "All that effort you made to prepare your message and invite these people for this service... it was hardly worth all you invested." I could not help but think of that picture of a thousand worshippers; the amazing service I was missing on that cold wintry night.

As I looked at my small audience, I could sense they too were disappointed by the turnout and wondering if I would cancel the service. I prayed, "O Lord, use me to bless my friends tonight. Tell them that You love them and help me to love them like You do."

I smiled and shared with my small audience about that picture my friend had texted to me. I said, "I realize that this is a small group tonight, but I want you to know that God is no less concerned for the one person who sits in the audience of eight than He is for the one person who sits in the audience of one thousand. You are very important and loved by God."

I could see in their eyes that they were encouraged and eager to hear more of God's Word. We had a wonderful worship service that night; Jesus was lifted up and we were all drawn closer to him. God truly answered our prayers! *B.G*

Though our average nursing home worship service size is undoubtedly less than the average church service size, let us remember what Jesus said:

"For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20)

We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

(1 Thessalonians 1:3)

This year, God Cares Ministry will be celebrating 20 years of service in the nursing home mission field. We thank God for your support and involvement which has allowed us to grow from a few people to over 1,200 volunteers who reach over 7,500 residents on a regular basis.

Countless times in the past two decades we have seen and heard of profound changes in residents as they drink in the living water of God's Word. This could never have happened without you caring and sharing as you have.



Nursing homes are lonely places, despite the best efforts of the busy staff and caring family members. But you bring assurance that the residents are not forgotten, that they still matter, that they still have worth and value, that they are still *loved*.

The significance of your charity cannot be overstated, because unconditional love and unconditional worth are what we need most in order to thrive, in any stage of life and in any circumstance. These are the things that God gives each of us, and when we help others to receive these priceless gifts, their lives are changed forever, to His glory and praise.

We are excited at the way the Lord is enabling God Cares Ministry to expand our reach across the country and to make this mission field more accessible to those whom He is calling. I hope you will continue to co-labor with us, assuring that residents of all care homes receive the Love and Word of God.

As you consider where to give your donations in 2014, you can be certain that your investment into the work of God Cares Ministry will be used to change lives as we recruit, train and support many more missionaries. It cannot happen without you - and the grace of God working through all of us.

May He continually bless you for your work of faith, your labor of love and your endurance inspired by your hope in our Lord Jesus. *B.G*

Drinking it in

She has never attended our Bible study/worship service at the nursing home – at least I never saw her until today. She sat quietly, unmoving in her reclining-chair. I thought she was asleep until we sang “Just a Closer Walk with Thee.” Then, her lips moved as she followed every word. Though tired and frail, this woman was drinking in the life-giving word of God and committing her spirit into His hands through the prayer-song.

We see many residents who seem unresponsive at first, but who become actively receptive to the Scripture messages that they hear. The word of God truly accomplishes what He desires for His beloved people living out their last days in nursing homes.



Loving Memory

John Palfy, Jr.

From Jim & Jo Ann Rettinger
Larry & Kris Looney

Harry & Myrtle Goodrich

From Roberta & Ed Kisiel

Marlene Hayslett

From Larry & Kris Looney

Marian Palfy

From Sandy & Max Dreisbach

Karen Griffith

From Deborah and Harry Deal

Leila Maude Shultz

From Ilona & Bill Mansfield

Emma Looney

From Deborah & Doug Feller

Those who have passed without a friend

From Maggie Gray

Mary Ann Goodrich

From Marilyn Godshall

Barb & Larry Pack

Madelon Curtis

Russ & Marianne Provenza

Larry & Kris Looney

Brian & Rita Hassett

Gene Small

From Myrna Small

Eleanore Varga & Anna Thomay

From Bob & Rosemary Thomay

Verdabelle Spaulding

Glenn Ayers

From Mary Kerner Courtney

Rachel Cook

From John & Susan Exoo

Allene Honeycutt

Mary Ann Morris

Norm Gladish

From Todd Orshoski

Josef Heitz

From Kurt Lawson

David Williamson

From Marie Fulthorpe

Dale and Marge Mertz

Our Parents, James and Ruth Soules & Matthew and Violet Becker

From Rev. Robert & Ruth Becker

~ IN HONOR OF ~

Our wounded warriors and all who have served in the military

From Kris & Larry Looney

Marian K. Orne

From Patricia Funk Orne

20th Anniversary of God Cares Ministry

From Elaine Edkin

4th Anniversary of Ministry

From Todd Orshoski

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. (Isaiah 55:10-11)

Beyond the Basics



In addition to the March 1st training seminar mentioned on page 4, Chaplain Bill Goodrich will be teaching an advanced nursing home ministry training class at [Springs of Life Bible College](#). Topics will include:

- * Healthy aging in America
- * One-to-one visiting
- * Ministering to people who are grieving
- * Preparing and sharing life-giving worship services
- * Ministering beyond the limitations of dementia
- * Recruiting and building a care team
- * End-of-life concerns

Classes will be held:

On Friday evenings from 7 pm -10 pm; March 7, 14, 21, & 28

In room #110 of the Heritage Building, 6500 Pearl Road, Parma Heights, OH 44130.

For more information, contact God Cares Ministry at 440-930-2173 or [SOLBC](#) at 440-842-0900.

Be Happy, Volunteer

Current research consistently indicates that volunteering makes us happier and healthier. People who volunteer have stronger immune systems and longer life spans. The kind of happiness that comes from pursuing a purpose beyond oneself results in improved well-being. Religious people especially benefit from volunteering, because the action of caring for others is consistent with their highest values of love and compassion. *A.S*

I Couldn't Have Said it Better!

When asked why she visits nursing homes, an 8-year-old girl who visits with her family said, "I like going to nursing homes because it makes the people happy and that makes me happy."

The Power of Persevering Love

Dee is a resident on a dementia unit. She was often very agitated – yelling and hitting staff members. When I first met her six years ago, she made it clear that she not only did not want to talk to anyone on our team, but she did not want to be anywhere near us. She did, however, watch everything we did - from setting up sound equipment at the start of our time together, to saying our good-byes as we were preparing to leave. All of this observation was done from at least 20 feet away.

A few years ago Dee started to sit closer and listen, but we still could not speak with her personally. Our team has prayed for her for many years, and last week God opened a door for her. After our service she came up to me and reached out for my hand. I could not understand what she was saying, but it was apparent that she was troubled. I listened and tried to let her know that I understood that she was troubled.

As we left, we noticed that she had kept one of our song books that has large print and beautiful pictures, and she was peacefully sitting at a table going through the book. She seemed to be reading the words of the hymns and was running her hands slowly over the pictures. I had no doubt that God was working in her at that moment, because in all the years I've known her, I had never before seen her at peace.

The following day I visited her unit and she came right up to me crying and holding my hand. The thought briefly crossed my mind, "Keep an arm's length away – she might haul off and hit me," but the love flooding through me kept me standing near to her. She was only a few inches from me and the tears were flowing down her face. I had the privilege of gently wiping the tears from her cheeks and giving her a warm hug. I could understand a few of her words and we were able to communicate on a basic level. How I wish I could adequately describe the moment of seeing Jesus in the face of another and feeling oneness with Him on such a profound level!

I cannot do justice to this powerful encounter with God. While I have had experiences like this many times before, I was so overcome with His presence and His working through me on that day that I really have no way to describe this intimate spiritual experience. It was overwhelming. The marvelous change in Dee could only have happened through the Holy Spirit's great power and love. (2 Tim 1:7) ~Elaine Edkin

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7



Let Us Know...

If you have more than a minute, we would love a praise report/testimonial on what the Lord is doing through your visits. These would be shared in future newsletters or on the website/ Facebook as an encouragement to others.

Thanks in advance!

We look forward to hearing from you!!!

God Cares Staff

THRIVENT MEMBERS!

We are very pleased to tell you that God Cares Ministry is now enrolled as a participating organization in Thrivent Choice. This is a charitable grant program that allows Thrivent members to direct some of Thrivent's outreach funds. If you are a Thrivent member, you can direct your Choice Dollars to God Cares Ministry on their website: www.Thrivent.com, or by calling 1-800-Thrivent (800-847-4836).

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

*Serving over
1,000 volunteers
who are sharing
the Love and
Word of
Jesus
with over 7,000
care home
residents.*

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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.

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Life-Changing Visits with *Those Who Are Shut-In*

A half-day seminar which will enable you to establish friendships with seniors through one-to-one visits; helping them to find hope & peace in Jesus.

Topics Include

- An outreach model for one-to-one visits
- Testimonies from experienced visitors
- Practical and proven tips for visits
- Conversation starters
- Understanding the spiritual needs of our lonely neighbors
- Tips for developing listening skills
- How-to's for leading our friends to Jesus
- Q & A - and more!

This workshop is for any Christian desiring to minister to frail seniors. We will expand on the one-to-one session that we share in our full-day, introductory workshops. We especially encourage you to attend if you are a Stephen Minister, Hospice worker, lay visitor, visitation minister, caregiver, etc. The principles taught are geared toward nursing home ministry, but may be applied anywhere.



You Can Change A Life!

Training Location

Grace CMA Church
 7393 Pearl Road
 Middleburg Heights, OH 44130

Date and Time

Saturday, March 1st
 (Please register by Feb. 24th)
 8:30 a.m. - Registration
 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. - Sessions

Cost

There is a \$10 cost to cover your training materials and snacks.
(Scholarships are available)

For More Information and Registration

Online: www.GodCaresMinistry.com
 Phone: (440) 930-2173
 Email: info@GodCaresMinistry.com