

# The Leading Edge

*A quarterly newsletter of COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES, a strategic alliance of United Methodist Homes & Services and Covenant Retirement Communities.*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*William A. Lowe*

At any time in the last century, if you would have walked past the corner of Foster Avenue and Glenwood, you would have witnessed some incarnation of Covenant Methodist Senior Services (CMSS) quietly going about its work of caring for seniors.

As an employee of the organization for 18 years and at its helm for the last two in my own quiet, determined way, I can tell you that CMSS succeeds because of a key, but not so glamorous fundamental. That fundamental is balance. From the humble beginnings of our parent organizations in the late 1800's to a \$20 million plus budget today, CMSS has had a balance of visionary thinking, financial strength and dedicated people willing to make seniors their life's work. So, when it comes to balance, I'm charged with being the master tinkerer of CMSS.

Now, that might not so sound so awe inspiring or confidence boosting, but let me explain. In my tenure, I have watched the average age of clients we serve increase right along with the cost of quality healthcare. Incomes or pensions that once guaranteed life-long retirement no longer sustain every need indefinitely. The choice of many to move into a senior community has been replaced by a steadfast desire to age at home. All these issues are real. All demand workable solutions. And that is where Covenant Methodist Senior Services has stepped in and shined, offering balance and promising to meet seniors where they are in life. It was this approach that first led CMSS

down the path of offering in-home healthcare. It was this approach that led CMSS to establish two affordable housing options for low-income seniors. It was this approach that enabled CMSS to give over \$1 million in benevolent care to seniors in 2007. And CMSS will continue on, balancing our current commitments while anticipating future needs.

So, as the summer months are fully upon us, and many have opportunity to take pause, I encourage you to consider examining your own endeavors whether professional or personal through a lens of balance. Balance does not presuppose having all solutions to challenges or the elimination of obstacles from a desired path. Yet, balance allows one to move forward while taking all things into consideration.

And that, my friends, is the state of CMSS this summer. We are moving forward. We consistently tinker with the balance of our best talent, our financial fortitude and our vision of what senior healthcare could and should be in this 21st century. The decisions are not always easy. Best approaches are sometimes few. And sometimes concessions have to be made in the name of progress. But balance is what has kept CMSS a dynamic force on the north side of Chicago for over a hundred years, and it is balance that will see CMSS through.

William A. Lowe  
President and C. E. O.  
lowe@cmsschicago.org

## CMSS WELCOMES PASTORAL CARE SUMMER INTERNS



**From left to right, standing:**  
Christopher Birkland, Mark Hakanson  
Bryan Phelan, Steven Hoden

**Seated, left to right:**  
Sarah Hammersborg, Devyn Chambers,  
Jeremy Heyboer

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## REHABILITATION AT THE METHODIST HOME

**F**orty-one steps prevented Susan Armstrong from returning home after undergoing hip replacement surgery in late January of 2007 at Northwestern Hospital. After coping with arthritis for years, she was determined not to let those 41 little steps stand in her way of getting back to her active lifestyle in Lakeview.

After discussing with her surgeon, Dr. David Stulberg, it was determined that Susan would need to go to a rehab center after her surgery to help her gain the strength she would need to climb those forty-one steps leading to her apartment. The doctor recommended The Methodist Home, which is where she chose to go.

“I chose The Methodist Home because I go to an exercise class at the White Crane Center, across the street, so I knew about The Methodist Home, but I didn’t know they had rehabilitation beds at the time. I was at my surgeon’s office and was talking to them about where to go after the surgery and they mentioned The Methodist Home and said it was a reputable place. I went in and talked with the staff and didn’t look any further because it seemed like a great place,” Ms. Armstrong said about her search for the perfect rehabilitation center.

Susan spent a short period of time at The Methodist Home receiving physical and occupational therapy every day. She not

only was assisted is achieving her goal of climbing those steps but was equipped with the tools she needed to meet the challenge of living alone and being less mobile through her recovery period than she was used to.

“Don Cortes, the physical therapist, and Ann Georgopoulos, the occupational therapist, helped me so much. The goal of my physical therapy was to be able to go home and climb those forty-one stairs,” Ms. Armstrong said.

During the physical therapy sessions, which lasted an hour, Ms. Armstrong would participate in a variety of exercises all geared towards improving her strength, range of motion, and stamina.

Through the occupational therapy sessions, Ms. Armstrong was introduced to many tools to assist her during her recovery time since she was restricted from bending over. She learned how to use a reacher properly as well as how to use a sock aid, which allowed her to put her socks on without bending over.

“Ann had all kinds of little tricks to help someone who couldn’t bend over,” Ms. Armstrong said.

In addition to the physical and occupational therapy, The Methodist Home provided Ms. Armstrong with her meals, laundry

service and they even supplied a bedroom for her sister to stay in while helping Ms. Armstrong to recuperate.

During her stay at The Methodist Home, a social worker helped her prepare for everything she may need upon her discharge and once she was home.

“I needed equipment like a walker, cane, and a special toilet seat. The social worker contacted the man from the medical supply company and he came to The Methodist Home and told me what things Medicare covered and what they wouldn’t. It was really helpful because I needed all these things when I got home,” Ms. Armstrong said.

At the end of her stay, Ms. Armstrong was even personally driven back to her apartment.

“I felt like I got great care and great physical therapy at The Methodist Home and those are the most important things after you have surgery. And that is why I chose to go back” concluded Ms. Armstrong. 🍷

## LAUGHTER REALLY IS THE BEST MEDICINE

**M**ore than 30 people took a deep breath and learned with a laugh at an educational session held Tuesday, March 18, at the Methodist Home.

The health benefits of laughter were discussed in the presentation, titled “Best Medicine Laughter Yoga.” The majority of the evening was spent stretching, breathing and learning to laugh for no reason.

“You don’t need a reason to laugh,” said Tim Nelson, certified Laughter Yoga instructor for Advocate Illinois Masonic Medical Center. “Laughing when you’re down or angry can be the best way to feeling better. No one can be sad or upset for too long when you’re forcing a good, hearty laugh out.”

Laughter Yoga, a technique developed by family physician Madan Kataria in India more than 15 years ago, uses what Nelson referred to as a “fake it until you make it” principle.

Studies have shown that forced or fake laughter has the same health benefits as a genuine belly laugh, and often leads to real, uncontrolled laughter.

“Laughter is contagious. Get a group together for half an hour and get them through some laughter exercises and you’ll see the genuine laughter start to flow,” Nelson said.

Laughter Yoga uses controlled breathing, stretching, clapping and, of course, laughing during controlled exercises in a group setting. Sessions can be held anywhere—a home, a public park or a church—as there is no equipment needed other than the ability to laugh and let go.

Nelson said laughter has been proven to have several health benefits, including increasing blood flow, oxygenating the blood, reducing stress, relieving pain and strengthening the immune system. 🍷

## COVENANT HOME OF CHICAGO WELCOMES FULL TIME NURSE

Licensed nurse Audrey Rotberg recently joined Covenant Home of Chicago, providing residents with a friendly face to turn to and count on.



Audrey Rotberg

“My specialty is geriatrics, I’ve always worked in geriatrics. I like working with the elderly particularly in this setting because everyone at Covenant Home is young at heart,” Audrey said.

Covenant Home of Chicago is the 55 unit assisted living component of Covenant Methodist Senior Services located on the north side of Chicago. Three levels of care are provided as well as activities and wellness programs. The Covenant Home has also started a new short-term stay program, which Audrey is working on, designed to provide caregivers with a respite, should they ever need it. Audrey came on board to provide the nursing care needed so residents would be able to stay longer at Covenant Home rather than having to transfer to a nursing home.

“It’s really important for caregivers to be able to take a break, for any reason, whether it’s to go on vacation or just to relax,” Kristina Liskiewicz, Marketing Director, said. “With our short-term stay program, seniors can come with a suitcase and stay in a furnished apartment with meals, housekeeping, activities, and top of the line nursing care.”

Audrey has also created a program designed to educate residents on senior

topics. “I will be giving half-hour talks on insomnia, oral hygiene, low vision, basically anything that is specific to this age group.” Audrey explained. “The talks are mainly for the residents, but family members are always welcome to join.”

Audrey is also consulting with new program coordinator, Holly Soule, to develop an extensive new program that engages seniors in activities that take place outside of Covenant Home. These include chef demonstrations, book and drama clubs and outings to various places around Chicago.

“The residents who are interested in this exciting new program will be able to go to shopping centers and the Botanic Gardens, and many places around the city. It’s nice for them to get out,” Audrey said. The program will be staffed by Covenant Home’s extensive volunteer team and hired staff.

Besides all the new exciting changes Audrey is involved with at Covenant Home, she also is there to do her nursing duties. “I run a blood-pressure clinic that residents can come to once a week, I do an assessment of all new residents and I am always available should someone not be feeling well.”

“The seniors are fabulous,” Audrey said. “I’m glad I’m here.” ☺

Covenant Home of Chicago has served the needs of seniors in its north-side neighborhood since 1886. Rebuilt in 1997, our customized assisted living community offers gracious residences and an abundant array of amenities, services and programs.

For supportive assisted living in our five-story residence, the focus is on your personal preferences and a partnership that helps optimize your lifestyle.

Covenant Home of Chicago  
2720 W. Foster Avenue, Chicago  
(773) 506-6900



## FROM THE CMSS MAILBAG

### Covenant Methodist Home Care

Hi Laura,

Everything went very well. Edith commented about how great it was to have her caregiver there, and she certainly appreciated being able to operate on her own schedule, without feeling tied down to everything we were doing. Your caregiver is a gem. As you described, she made Edith feel instantly comfortable, and really accommodated all of Edith’s needs. The caregiver is certainly a fascinating person with many interests. She is very warm and curious, and we enjoyed having her as part of our family for the weekend.

Thank you so much.

Debbie Siegel

### The Methodist Home

To all RNS and CNAs ...  
too long to list:

A heartfelt THANK YOU  
from Ed and I for all the  
attention and concern  
you showed to my mother  
and us. We are grateful  
for your care, patience  
and understanding.

Best wishes, blessings  
and peace to all of you.

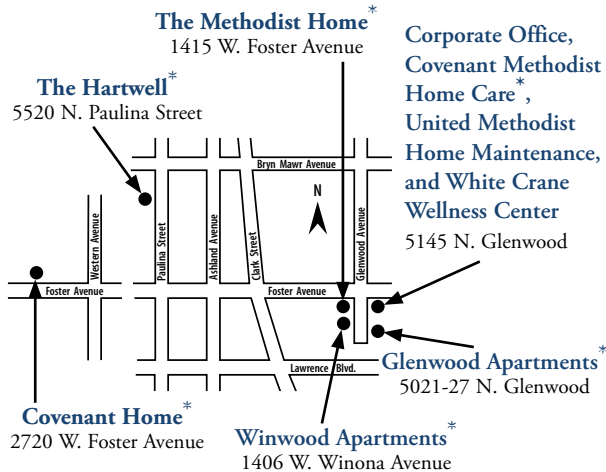
Laurie Shaman  
Ed Hinkley

# COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES

1415 W. Foster Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60640-2288

## COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES

*Uniting Centuries of Service to Seniors*



Corporate Office,  
Covenant Methodist  
Home Care\*,  
United Methodist  
Home Maintenance,  
and White Crane  
Wellness Center  
5145 N. Glenwood

Main Phone: (773) 769-5500

[www.cmsschicago.org](http://www.cmsschicago.org)



\*CARF  
Accredited



COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES is a strategic alliance of United Methodist Homes & Services and Covenant Retirement Communities.

### **The Methodist Home\*** ☎ (773) 769-5500

- ❖ Rehabilitation and Subacute Center
- ❖ Skilled Nursing and Long Term Care
- ❖ Specialized Dementia and Alzheimer's Care

### **The Hartwell\*** ☎ (773) 275-2400

- ❖ Memory Support Assisted Living

### **Covenant Home of Chicago\*** ☎ (773) 506-6900

- ❖ Customized Assisted Living

### **Covenant Methodist Home Care\*** ☎ (773) 769-5270

- ❖ Personalized Home Care Services

### **U. M. Senior Home Maintenance** ☎ (773) 769-9000

- ❖ Home Repairs and Improvement

### **Winwood & Glenwood Apartments\*** ☎ (773) 769-5500

- ❖ Affordable Housing for Seniors with Low Incomes

### *Collaborative Services*

### **White Crane Adult Day Wellness** ☎ (773) 271-9001

- ❖ Adult Day Wellness Program

CRC does not discriminate pursuant to the Fair Housing Act subject to any exemptions that may apply.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS AT COVENANT METHODIST SENIOR SERVICES

### ALZHEIMER'S & DEMENTIA FAMILY SUPPORT GROUP

Date: First Wednesday of Every Month, 5:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Location: The Hartwell, 5520 N. Paulina, Chicago

Alzheimer's Support Group for family members caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's or other dementia. Join us for sharing information, insights and strategies. Refreshments will be served.

For information or to RSVP, please call Janette at (773) 275-2400.

### 1415 CLUB at THE METHODIST HOME

Date: Wednesday, September 17, 2008, 2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Location: The Methodist Home, 1415 W. Foster, Chicago

Enjoy lively entertainment and great food with your neighbors in the community. Cost: \$5.00. Please RSVP to (773) 769-5500.

## TEAM CMSS JOINS THE ALZHEIMER'S MEMORY WALK ON SEPTEMBER 14

Become a champion in the cause to end Alzheimer's by joining our team! Our goal is to raise \$1,500! The Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk® is the nation's largest event to raise awareness and funds to treat and prevent Alzheimer's disease.

To join our team, please click the [Join A Team Link](#) at [www.chicagomemorywalk.kintera.org/2008](http://www.chicagomemorywalk.kintera.org/2008) and look up Team Covenant Methodist Senior Services.