Safe Care for Seniors: Our Calling. Our Commitment. Our Culture.
Caregiving is our calling. I am filled with gratitude each day for the work that our staff provide in treating our residents with respect and dignity, as they provide safe, quality care, and work together as a team as they live our mission to “Serve God by fostering fullness of life for older adults and other people in need through the provision of healthcare, housing and other services in a Christian tradition.”

Our team does all that we can to enhance the lives of those we serve. During annual training in February, our team renewed their commitment to serve by pledging support to a new initiative – Safe Care for Seniors.

What is Safe Care for Seniors?
Safe Care for Seniors is a new way of thinking and doing things to prevent harm in the course of caregiving being developed through our partnership with our association LeadingAge Minnesota. The program provides structure and support for staff, residents and families to keep those we serve safe from harm and to treat everyone who lives and works here with respect and dignity. The plan begins with the staff’s pledge and is followed up by a five-step action plan.

What is the Safe Care for Senior Pledge?
The Safe Care for Senior Pledge is our public commitment to do all that we can as caregivers to address the intentional and unintentional harm that can occur in our settings. It is a commitment we make as individuals and as an organization, and one we share with staff, residents and families. Please see the flyers posted around the building for the actual pledge and more information regarding Safe Care for Seniors.

What is the Safe Care for Senior Action Plan?
The 5-Step Action Plan is focused on opportunities for improvement in safety, quality and communication. We are asking all staff to take the pledge and calling them to action. Harm in any form strikes at the very heart, at the very core, of what we do. We are asking staff to own the responsibility and look upstream to understand the root causes of safety concerns. For example, our falls committee has been meeting weekly for about 8 years now to review every fall and try to determine the root cause of the fall and put interventions in place to prevent future falls. Last August, we joined LeadingAge’s collaboration with about 18 other providers to share information and best practices to prevent falls.

We are assessing our culture to ensure we are supporting our staff and empowering them to respond appropriately in difficult situations. We also consider the perspective of our residents and their families, with a focused effort on improving communication and engaging them in our safety and quality work. The past two months our Mission Advancement Council has been discussing this new initiative for Safe Care for Seniors and we invite any family member that would like to join us, to please do so. Our goal is to work in partnership with residents and families to find solutions to prevent potential harm before it occurs. If you have any questions or would like more information regarding Safe Care for Seniors, please contact me.

Vicki Tobroxen, Housing Director

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www.AugustanaCare.org
Welcome New Residents!

Ray Bonacorsi  Agnes Kulak  Joyce Van Slooten
Deb Franti    Lawrence Liddiard  Hank & Beane Thompson
Carolyn Hjort  Harry & Mary Peake  Shirley Wiseman
Jim & Ginny Johnson  Marilyn Risser

Welcome New Staff!

Laine Ciaramitaro  Lydia Rilley  Weston Walstrm
Olu Evbakhare  Keith Smith  Mary Watland
Joyce Mwangi  Hanifa Walli

In Memoriam

Eileen Freeman  Edna Himrich  Shirley Larson
Gerry Hartmann  Veronica Homo  Ioan Lubinski
Carol Hall  Carolyn Kallstrom  Jeannine Ostlund
Judy Haugh  Verland Kruse  Susan Secora

The month of April is dedicated to honoring all of the volunteers in our communities as well as encouraging volunteerism throughout the month. At the Regent we average about 150 hours per month from our own volunteers. Many of our volunteers come through churches, referrals, neighboring communities and schools.

You DO make a difference. Your time and dedication is extremely appreciated.

We would like to give a special thank-you to our anonymous donor who made it possible for an automatic door at the end of care suites. This is a designated smoking area and it has made it so much easier for our residents.

Cassia Connection

We’re extremely pleased to share that Augustana Regent resident Mary Anna Johnson was recently honored by LeadingAge Minnesota with the District Spirit of Aging Award. Mary Anna moved to Augustana Regent two years ago and was awarded for volunteering time with memory care residents, assisting staff at large group functions, escorting memory care residents to activities and meals and much more. Augustana Regent also received a Stars Among Us Workplace Award from LeadingAge Minnesota for innovative partnership with Apple Valley High School’s E3STEM Program. The program helps address growing workforce challenges in eldercare services. Augustana Regent has been working with Apple Valley High for three years so high school students may receive college credit for working with older adults. The program covers the cost of a six week certified nursing assistant course and exam. LeadingAge Minnesota praised Augustana Regent for recruiting high school students to rewarding, valued careers in aging services.
Bill was born in Britain, South Dakota with an older sister and a younger brother. A year later his family moved to Oakes, North Dakota where he grew up. He attended University of North Dakota and received his degree in Math. He wanted to be a high school Math teacher but he got drafted into the Marine Corp. and served his 2 years as a Radio repair man. After his service he went on to graduate school at the University of Minnesota in Electronic Engineering. He landed his first job at Winzen Research Company on 84th and Lyndale which is now a CUB Foods store, and worked there for 5 years. Winzen flew the high altitude manned balloon flights that preceded Sputnik. He went on to work for Rosemount Engineering in Minneapolis and became a Vice President of the company. After 12 years at Rosemount Engineering he worked as a Certified Management Consultant for Stanton Associates.

Eight years later Bill went on to become an independent Management Consultant until he retired. Amidst all his life changes Bill met his wife through his Marine buddy Duane; they were married for 57 years before she passed away 4 years ago. Together they have a daughter named Deb and a grandson. Bill has always been interested in learning how to play the harmonica but was always too busy.

After retirement he started harmonica lessons and joined led “The Happy Wanderers, which consist of 8-15 people. The harmonica group played at senior centers, different venues and also performed at the State Fair. Bill went on to play with the “Twin Cities Harmonica Society” which he is currently active in. They practice weekly and perform several times a year, including the 2018 Augustana Regent Holiday Tree Festival.

Bill was Beth Woodward’s (our Marketing Director) neighbor for over 20 years. Bill said her marketing tactics worked, because he loves it here. Bill thinks the staff and residents are wonderful and he has made many new friends. Bill is still very independent and enjoys visiting old friends in the community and he is still very active with his church, Hope Presbyterian, and attends on a regular basis.

“But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. Be cause you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you…” Isaiah 43:1-2, 4a

Can you imagine that the great God of the universe tells us that God loves us? Not only that, but God also says “I have called you by name, you are mine!” Wow—such affirming words to hear. After my cousins’ son and daughter-in-law gave birth to their second child, they went home and all seemed to be going well. But within a month or so, their son got very ill. Thankfully the Dr. knew what was happening and told them to get to the hospital ASAP. The little boy, Thomas, had a twisted intestine and could’ve died, in fact, he was very close to death, but he miraculously survived. I thought of this verse and painted a sign for his room in the hospital that read “I have called you by name Thomas”. It’s a reminder of the steadfast love of God and the promises of God and the reminder that no matter what happens, God has called us each by name. God thinks we’re precious and God loves us! What more do we need?

Gracious and loving God, thank you for calling us each by name and knowing us completely. Thank you, God, for thinking we’re precious and for loving us so much always. Remind us that your promises are true, that your love is steadfast and that no matter what happens you love us and will be with us. Thank you. Amen.

Chaplain Rev. Nancy Carlson
VP Spiritual Life,
Cassia
“In the midst of winter, I finally learned that I had in me an invincible summer.”
Albert Camus

After this winter, the words of Camus ring true on so many levels. His words can illustrate a personal journey or, in a more day to day way, they can actually challenge us to believe that winter is behind us.

When I talk with residents and patients who reside at Cassia, I often hear stories like the one John, a Cassia resident, shared with me. Revealed in his story are the significant challenges he faced when he made the decision to transition from his own home to our apartments where he could balance his need for independence with access to needed services. However, John’s story does not end there. He shared recently that “not only am I safe, and not only am I treated with respect. I also have friends, a community, and I feel as though I am part of a family. I receive so much and not only that: I am also provided with opportunities to give back. This gives me hope and it gives me the joy of reciprocity.”

As often happens with the arrival of a new season after a truly challenging one, John feels a joyful anticipation for what is to come.

Like John, we have the capacity to experience what Camus shared with us so long ago. Please consider a gift to Cassia and help those we serve realize that “invincible summer”.

You can contact either the Office of Philanthropy at philanthropy@cassialife.org or Therese Cain therese.cain@cassialife.org 612-238-5211

Thank you so much for all the ways you support Cassia and Augustana Regent. We’d be thrilled to hear from you!

With our siding completed, we have been meeting with a couple landscape companies to assist us in designing our wellness garden in our enclosed courtyard. Our goal is to narrow it down to one company, finalize the plans and begin the work in early June. Please watch for more information as it becomes available.