

## From the Resident Services Director

### *Merry Christmas!*

Wow, where has the year gone?! I remember back in September when Flagstone opened its doors to our first residents; how the building came to life with the sounds of laughter and conversation as more and more people moved into their new homes.

As I reflect on the opening of Flagstone, the word that keeps coming to my mind is **HOPE**. These last few months, for residents and staff, have been one of upheaval, change, adjustment to new routines, excitement, joy, and the list goes on. But through it all, **HOPE** is there. **HOPE** for making new friends. **HOPE** for this community to continue to grow, be vibrant, and life giving to all. **HOPE** and anticipation of what will come.

And my **hope** for you in this Advent Season is to find time to slow down. To savor the stillness of a cold winter night; take in the landscape covered in fresh fallen snow and Christmas lights that fill the darkness. My **HOPE** is that we can all take a moment to see Christmas as more than a date on the calendar and recognize it as a season of celebration with loved ones, reconnecting with family and friends. It is a celebration of the grace and gift given to the world at the birth of Jesus.

No matter who you are or how you celebrate, Christmas can be a magical time of year and I **HOPE** it is for you and yours.

Happy Holidays!

Kassandra Slizewski

Resident Services Director



# FLAGSTONE NEWSLETTER



## PHS Foundation News

### Your Great Gifts

This year has shown – yet again – that **all gifts make a difference**. If a gift is personally meaningful to you, it is every bit as meaningful to your PHS community. **Thank you!**

We continue to pray for your protection and peace of mind. Your friends, neighbors and employees appreciate and care about you. Thank you for keeping your community close to your heart and in your prayers.

#### Some helpful reminders for you:

**Give direct.** Rest assured that if you give directly to PHS, 100% of your donation goes to where you direct it, like to a fund at your community.

**Your friends and neighbors.** Gifts to greatest needs, resident benevolence and spiritual life are needed and used.

**Employees serve.** Many want to show gratitude to employees. You may direct your gift to employee appreciation, employee education assistance or employee hardship.

**Tributes.** This is a wonderful time to make a tribute gift *In Honor or In Memory* of a loved one or friend.

**A note about timing:** Some gifts take more time to complete. If your year-end giving plans include gifting stock or a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA, please know that these gifts take time for brokers or advisors to process. If you need assistance, please call the Presbyterian Homes Foundation at 651-631-6408 or 651-631-6418.

Thank you for all you do to make your PHS community great. May your Christmas season be filled with much love! **YOU are special to your PHS community!**

### December Birthdays

Dec 2	Jerry Parson #2000
Dec 6	Rosemary Prohofsky #311
Dec 7	Dan Hogle #1022
Dec 16	Anna Arriaga #1003 Eileen Brau #5009
Dec 18	Edna Carlson #1023
Dec 24	Keith Johnson #135
Dec 30	Roy Hope #424
Dec 31	Marcia Schug #305



# FLAGSTONE NEWSLETTER

## Chaplain's Corner

### Merry Christmas?

As we transition from Thanksgiving into the holiday season (Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, etc.), there is usually much anticipation and excitement about this time of year. I realize, however, that Christmas isn't *always* merry. That sometimes the holidays are hard not happy, especially when one is grieving. Christmas and grieving just don't seem to go together. After all, this is the season of bright lights, tinsel, cheer, joyful carols, and jolly old St. Nicholas.

How do you get through Christmas if this is the first one following a loved one's death? Or if your heart still aches because of the empty place around your holiday table? Karen Katafiasz, director of communications for the Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana, offers the following suggestions:

“Let go of expectations of what Christmas should be. Let yourself continue to grieve during this special time. Remember your loved one in your holiday traditions. Let the blessing of memories ease your grief. Find consolation and wisdom in the meaning of Christmas”  
(from *CareNotes: Your First Christmas After a Loved One Dies* and *CareNotes: How Christmas Memories Can Bring Healing to Your Grief*).

I would add – run to The One who knows of your pain, who sees your tears, and who is ready to hold you close amid your sorrow. This is not how life was intended to be, but, as it says in Romans 6:23, “The wages of sin is death.” Keep reading! “But the free gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Sin resulted in suffering, hardship, and death for the world, but God intervened by sending His Son at Christmas. As John 1:14 states, “So the Word became human and made his home among us.”

So, while your circumstances may leave little room for joy this year, know that there is hope because of God's gift of Jesus. Because of Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection, we know that the grave does not have the final victory. We will see and be reunited with our loved ones again someday. Revelation 21:4 reassures us that, “He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.” Psalm 30 provides a similar message: “You have turned my mourning into joyful dancing. You have taken away my clothes of mourning and clothes me with joy, that I might sing praises to you and not be silent” (12).

God CAN transform our sorrow into joy. Realize, though, that grief can take time. Be gentle with yourself. Allow yourself room to experience whatever feelings you need to, and let others know that it's okay for you to have those emotions. Please reach out and surround yourself with family and friends especially when you might be tempted to isolate yourself from all the merriment of the holidays. Know, too, that there are others here going through the same thing, and we will offer opportunities to bring you together to talk and process your shared experiences. Finally, I am also here to listen or aid you with whatever you are going through. Please call on me if I can be of assistance.

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Paula

**Call today for information or to schedule a personal tour, 952-829-6400**



Flagstone  
8350 Commonwealth Drive  
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

952-829-6400  
www.flagstonephs.org

*Postmaster: address correction requested.*



Presbyterian Homes & Services is a nonprofit organization and an equal opportunity employer serving older adults through community services, housing, and health care.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY.  
ALL FAITHS WELCOME.

## *The light of Christ shines through us*

*The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.” ~ John 1:9*

As the darkness of winter enfolds us, the beautiful lights of the Christmas season begin to shine in our communities. Their radiance reminds us that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World. The Gospel of John proclaims, “The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.” (John 1:9)

Christmas also shines light on acts of good will, reminding us that we are called to share the light of God’s love, revealed in Jesus, with one another every day. Jesus taught his followers to “...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

Jesus’ words shape Christian ministry at PHS all year long. Our mission *to honor God by enriching the lives and touching the hearts of older adults* is grounded in the belief that God’s love is revealed to us in the light of Jesus Christ and we, in turn, are called to reflect this love and light in everything we do.

Every resident, volunteer, employee, family member, donor and friend of PHS is invited to carry this light in an environment where serving one another and the world is encouraged and appreciated. We faithfully honor God when we serve and God faithfully blesses us by calling us to service that bears love and compassion.

God’s light in Jesus shines brightly at Christmas to remind us that we are loved and capable of loving in return, and that together we can cultivate communities of care where Christ’s love shines within and among us.

May the light of Christ’s love shine on you and yours this Christmas and throughout the year ahead.

*Merry Christmas!*

