FROM GENESIS IN WOMB UNTO END OF LIFE, THE SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING IS INFLUENCED BY ENVIRONMENT ST. JOHN'S





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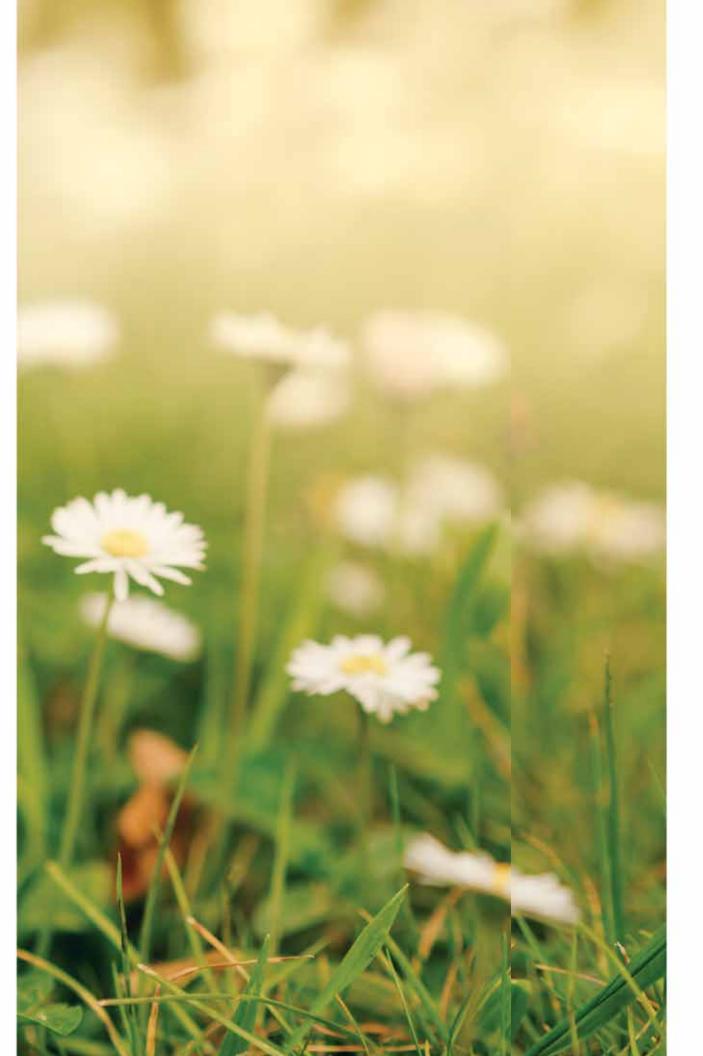
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Abiding and Adapting



Tom Schlotterback
VP OF MISSION ADVANCEMENT

he stated mission of St. John's is well-known and beloved. More so, the stated mission actually functions as an orientation guide – a "north star" for St. John's Board leaders, management and the organization as a whole to follow and live by as we serve those for whom we care.

Our mission is... to provide living opportunities within nurturing environments of hope, dignity and love.

Within this issue of Echoes, spotlight is placed on two words within our stated mission – nurturing environments.

Who among us does not desire to personally experience and

live within nurturing environments? Who among us does not desire loved ones to experience and live within nurturing environments also? From genesis in womb unto end of life, the physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being of people is influenced by environment – nurturing or not. A sociologist once wrote, "There is no question that humans vary in their genetic capacities to learn, socialize, work and be healthy. As a practical matter, however, if we want a society full of deeply productive and caring people, focus on nurturing."

St. John's has historically been recognized as a vanguard example of adapting to emerging realities and desires related to providing nurturing environments for aging adults. What about St. John's ability and agility, however, to adapt into the future? Our first article speaks to this question addressing future physical environments followed by articles shining a light on a variety of ways St. John's nurtures all those we serve.

The joy and adventure of providing living opportunities within nurturing environments is new every day in all of our St. John's communities. We invite you to learn more about these communities and to join us in the adventure.



S E N I O R L I V I N G

It should come as no surprise that the age wave is upon us. The Post-World War II baby boom has been a force for sweeping change across the American landscape for the last 70 years and boomers are now barreling down on senior services providers en masse. It's an exciting time to be on the leading edge of design for this group that sees themselves as individualistic. As a provider of living opportunities within nurturing environments of hope, dignity and love, St. John's is ready to adapt to the needs of the baby boomers who may not be as content as their parents with existing service delivery methods. Just what that nurturing environment will look like is yet to be determined, but there are some emerging design trends in retirement living.



Imagining Main Street, Small Town USA at its most vibrant, this innovative model is all about creating

a village atmosphere with 2-3 story mixed-use buildings within a 2-3 block radius. Currently, most senior living complexes are multi-winged apartment buildings on 30 acres of manicured grounds that are easily identified as retirement communities. The Main Street Model takes its place on that same 30 acres with ground level amenities such retail shops, libraries, galleries and performance centers. Interspersed are sidewalk cafes, restaurants and wine bars along with services such as banks, salons, spas and fitness centers.

The upper floors are for retirees who fill independent living apartments, lofts and gathering spaces. Housekeeping, meals, life enrichment activities and personal security are all part of the package as are general services such as heat, water, electricity, cable TV, etc... Back outdoors, gardens and green spaces complete the Main Street feel.

The concept is centered on the connectedness of a village, which is a deep personal need for many regardless of age. In the Main Street Model, even residents who are well into their 90s will still have the sense of small town living with easy access to every day amenities and needs. When the time comes to add supportive services in the continuum of care, a team

of health care professionals is located right on Main Street, comprising nurses, personal care attendants and both physical and occupational therapists.



In contrast, tight, landlocked areas might consider the Seriously Small Living concept. Downsizing to the extreme, many suburbanite empty nesters are flocking to urban downtowns units with fewer than 1000 square feet of living space, but packed with style and vibrancy. Wide open interior gathering spaces and access to amenities similar to the Main Street Model abound, simply self-contained within one structure when building up is more suitable than building out. Whether located in a city with a sparkling nighttime skyline or in a less urban area with spectacular mountain vistas, living vertically has its advantages.



"Thank you for being a friend." The theme song that introduced us to Dorothy, Rose, Blanche and Sophia in the 1990's says it all. Co-living design concepts are creating opportunities for interdependent living in homes shared with others or perhaps in clusters of homes with shared communal space for cooking and gathering. Many metropolitan areas already offer this style of condo/apartment living for residents

of all ages and although most tend to be in the early stages of their careers, the concept knows no demographic limitations. Mid-size communities have seen tremendous development of subdivisions filled with townhouses and patio homes designed for one-floor living that would be ideal for the Golden Girls Concept.



The ultimate desire for many retirees will be to age gracefully in their existing homes rather than making a physical move at some time during their later years. Coordinating meal preparation, housekeeping and indoor/outdoor year-round maintenance with one service provider makes living at home exponentially easier. When needed, the same organization provides the right health care provider at the right time. The old continuum of care model of independent living to assisted living to skilled care is condensed and delivered without ever leaving home.

WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN FOR ST. JOHN'S?

It means re-envisioning the nature of the physical environment of communal living to accommodate the demands of the leading wave of retired baby boomers. The delivery of services via a long institutional hallway and group dining rooms will morph into spaces that feel less clinical and more individualized, providing private spaces while still affording connectedness to community. Does it mean St. John's has the excavators and kangaroo cranes at the ready? Not by a long shot! But it does mean boards and executive planning teams are thinking strategically to determine how St. John's remains a place where every day, for every age, there is healing, meaning and purpose.

For more reading, source material for this article can be found online: "How 'Main Streets' Are Becoming a New Model for Senior Living." Senior Housing News Innovation Series, 15 Sept. 2014, innovation.seniorhousingnews.com; "Apartment Construction Has Been Booming in the Twin Cities, but Is about to Boom Even More." Star Tribune, Star Tribune, 18 Mar. 2018, www.startribune.com; "Co·Liv-Ing." Coliving, coliving, org/.



WORK THAT MATTERS

here there is water, there is life. Water nourishes and cleanses landscapes and bodies. Its sound soothes weary souls in the trickling of a brook or the lapping of a wave. The sight of water falling off a mountain inspires awe. A drink of cold water refreshes. For nearly 26 years, Laurie Movius has been St. John's Hydration Specialist.

As she fills water glasses and pitchers from her roving cart, Laurie is a fixture in the life of St. John's and is dedicated in her own way to providing living opportunities within nurturing environments of hope, dignity and love. Serving water is a simple act which Laurie approaches with joy and dedication, characterizing her own special brand of ministry to elders and fellow employees. In return, she receives as much nurturing as she delivers. According to Laurie, she has made many lasting friendships with both co-workers and elders, which brings her great joy. But of course, serving elders in the skilled nursing care wings comes with loss as well. For Laurie, who has special developmental needs, processing those losses is not easy.

Pastor Elisabeth Daniels, chaplain in St. John's Legacy Building, recounts a time when an elder had died just as Laurie was passing by with her cart. Laurie acknowledged out loud that it was hard and that she was glad the grandma was not suffering, but that she was also sad because she was going to miss her.

"My brain doesn't know how to process this because it's good and bad," cried Laurie. "That day, Laurie got it better than most of us. Laurie is direct and genuine in the moment; she is her own person and her work matters in this place," says Pastor Elisabeth.

Laurie's parents, Dave and Gail Movius, express their gratitude to St. John's in this way, "with the patience and support of staff, Laurie has thrived in her advancement for independence and self-sufficiency. In addition, she has grown to understand how lives change over the years and as a result, her faith in God has been enriched. Our family is grateful to St. John's for nurturing and supporting Laurie with hope, dignity and love."

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A Day in the Life of St. John's Lutheran Ministries



People don't just live and work at St. John's, their lives are touched daily with hope, dignity and love. Here is what a typical day on the campus looks like.

Animals

Our furriest friends
are steadfast companions
who welcome treats
and return joy
wherever they go.

Life Enrichment

Employees and residents alike are entertained at the St. John's Derby and Hat Contest.



Devotions

From daily devotions and worship to the blessing of plants and pets, care for the spirit is woven into the fabric of St. John's.



Grounds

A beautiful campus starts with bare dirt, shovels and many hands to create blossoming abundance.

Caregivers

A loving touch is sometimes all that is needed in a quiet moment.

Children

Grandkids and daycare kids interact with seniors daily.



NURTURING THE Outdoor Environment



nurturing environment doesn't get any more literal than the grounds at St. John's, perennially recognized as one of the most beautiful spots in Billings. Led by Grounds Supervisor T. J. Altekruse, the grounds team of 12 men and women work diligently to capture the beauty of each season.

Soon after the arrival of the spring the planting season starts with the annual blessing of the flowers. These flowers are carefully nurtured in the off-season by the Ranchers at the Special K Ranch in Columbus, Montana. Amidst pallets of geraniums, petunias, and lobelia, elders and employees gather to offer a blessing for the season, the

plants that will beautify the campus and the hands that will tend to them throughout the summer. It's a touching gathering that acknowledges our gratitude of and care for nature.

Summer's arrival finds St. John's Summer Concert Series in full swing and the campus in full bloom. Tending

to the lawn is no small matter when more than 20,000

feet and countless paws will stroll through the grounds. Not a day goes by that someone on the crew isn't out mowing, trimming or fertilizing the lush grass.

TI Altekruse

GROUND SUPERVISOR

According to Altekruse, the best part of his role is taking ownership of the grounds tasks and witnessing the physical outcome that teamwork can attain. Additionally, he enjoys seeing residents walking around campus. "They get outside to enjoy the campus on a beautiful day. Everyone is always so happy and cheerful. My team gets to see a lot of smiles throughout the course of a day."

As the days grow cooler and the flower beds start to fade, the colors begin to

"A beautiful environment means the world to our beloved residents. For our residents, theirs is the pleasure of seeing the colorful flowers, smelling the aroma of the trees and feeling the hope that our landscape provides."

pop once again, not on the ground but in the trees. Fall is a magical time with rusty oranges, vibrant yellows and rich greens. And when nature tucks itself in for the long winter's nap, the grounds awaken for a time in holiday wonder. Lights everywhere signal the arrival of the Christmas season creating a winter wonderland until spring comes again.

"Within the wide array of excellent

services that St. John's offers, our small Grounds crew can sometimes be an overlooked department," says Altekruse. "We take the mission of St. John's to heart and take pride in living out that mission. A beautiful environment means the world to our beloved residents. For our residents. theirs is the pleasure of seeing the colorful flowers, smelling the aroma of the trees and feeling the hope that our landscape provides. For passersby and visitors, our beautiful grounds serve as the standard for what St. John's is all about. It is what people see first when they come here and it is our aim to ensure the grounds are an accurate representation of the mission carried out indoors."

Gratitude abounds for the grounds team and the work of their hands to maintain a nurturing environment of hope, dignity and love in the great outdoors.

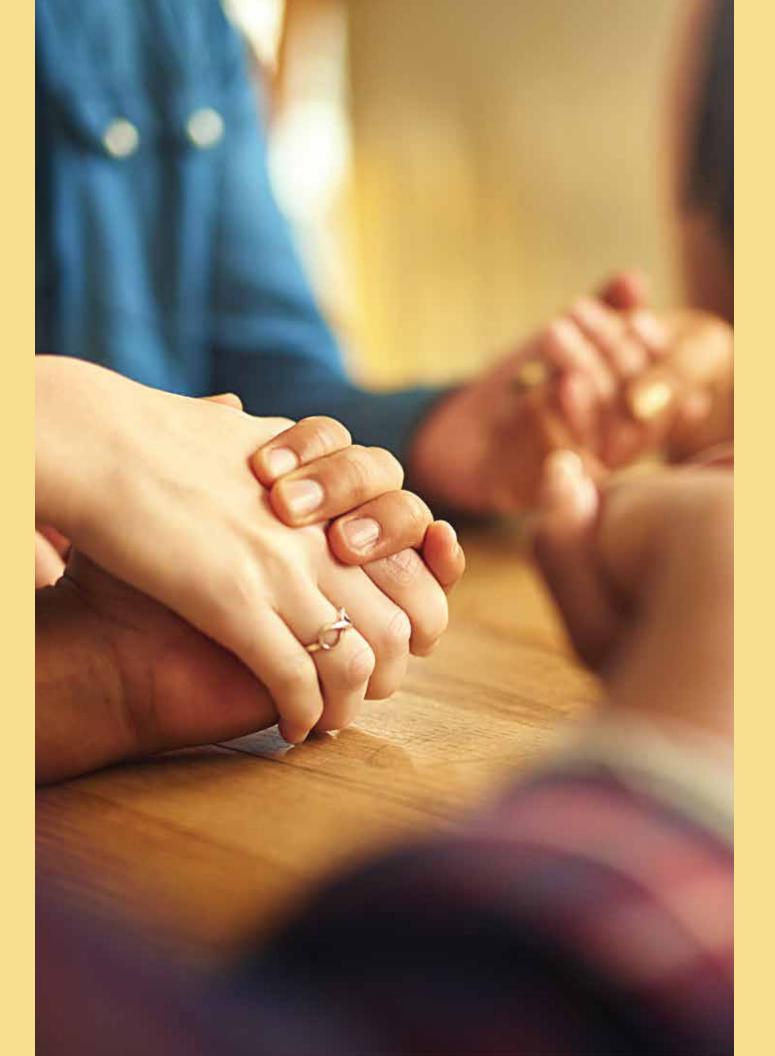
BIRTHPARENT COUNSELING

doption stories are often so wrapped up in the long awaited bundle of joy that the heartbreak on the other side is barely mentioned. Lutheran Social Services of Montana birthparent counselors are there for both sides.

A birthparent contacted the Lutheran Social Services of Montana counselor months after the birth of her child to say "thank you so much for everything you've done for me and my little one. You helped turn one of the scariest times of my life into one filled with love, support and comfort. You are an amazing woman and I am so glad that you are a part of my life". Krista, Janet and Lori are birthparent counselors who practice this work, not for recognition, but rather, because their actions provide nurturing environments of hope, dignity and love.

Nurture is defined as "to care for and encourage the growth and development of; to cherish" and the image of a mother caring for her child often comes to mind. But what happens when a mother realizes she is not ready to take on the role of parenting?

In those difficult, overwhelming moments, the support of LSS counselors is invaluable. For some birthparents, the connection lasts far beyond the pregnancy. Lori Kopp began a birth mom group about 3 years ago in the Bozeman office. Lori believes that this group



offers the best source of support as the moms have an opportunity to connect with other women who have been through similar situations. Lori shares that "I always want them to know that I'm here if they need anything and that I will never forget about them or abandon them. It's about caring for the hearts and souls of these women who I greatly admire."

Because of the authentic relationships nurtured with their clients, the counselors empower birthparents to make decisions which further their independence and self-determination. The counselors support what is in the best interest of the birthparent as they make decisions as to what is best for their child.

Janet Ross, birthparent counselor in Billings, notes that a birthparent sometimes pulls away after the placement. However, the LSS counselors remain available whenever the birth parent reaches out. Janet recalls a birthmother who contacted her after the placement because Janet "knew all the details of [the birth mother's] story. I was there when she made an adoption plan during the pregnancy, at the birth of her son, when the baby was placed in the arms of the ones who will raise him and when the mother was alone in a hospital room after all this took place. I was there for ALL those major, life-changing moments and she needed my support in a way that other people in her life just couldn't."

The counselor for the Missoula and Kalispell offices, Krista Hellem, echoes this sentiment with the observation that family members and close friends are the very best people to offer support to birthparents. However, they are often not educated or able to meet the specific needs of their loved ones at that time and that is why birth parents reach out to the staff of Lutheran Social Services.

There is deep complexity to the work of a birthparent counselor as they witness moments which are heartbreaking to one and a long awaited joy for another. Long after the placement, many birth parents find peace in the decision they made, open relationships with adoptive families and opportunities for healthy grief work through the ongoing support of the counselor. During the adoption journey, the counselor's interactions with all involved are filled with hope, dignity and love in order to provide a nurturing family for the child.



Nurturing PHILANTHROPY

Providing living opportunities within nurturing environments is enhanced at St. John's with gifts offered by generous people in the form of Seeds of Kindness annual funds or planned gifts that resource endowed funds. On the evening of April 26th, philanthropy was celebrated and donors within the 2017 calendar year were thanked during an appreciation event held at King of Glory Lutheran Church. A delicious meal was prepared by St. John's chefs and served by King of Glory youth. New Legacy Circle honorees were recognized. Faces were

> smiling and toes were tapping to sounds of swing era music. It was an evening of joy, merriment and profound gratitude. We will do it all again in spring of 2018!

HONORING OUR Nurturing PARTNERS

During the 2018 St. John's Annual Meeting, the St. John's Foundation honored its 2017 Business Partner of the year - St. Vincent Healthcare; and its 2017 Philanthropists of the year - Frank and Mary Mosdal.

This year marks the 20th anniversary for the joint venture partnership between St. Vincent Healthcare and St. John's Lutheran Ministries, which formed Missions United, Incorporated. This mutually valued partnership birthed both the Mission Ridge and WyndStone senior living communities in Billings.

Frank and Mary Mosdal have been residents of Mission Ridge since September, 2010. Their affection for and generosity to St. John's, however, goes back decades prior. Their gifts of leadership, service and finance have modeled so well the very definition of the word, philanthropy, meaning love for humanity.





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We give thanks for all of these lives remembered this year and extend our gratitude to the donors whose memorial gifts now support living opportunities within nurturing environments of hope, dignity and love. If we included or omitted a spouse in error, please let us know.

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