

The Sharing Org

Ministry to the Nursing Care Community

MARCH 2009

Dear Prayer,

To begin this month's letter I would like to pay respects to a man who had just passed. He had attended our very first services in 2003 and with his death it is only fitting to acknowledge his time with us. Although he was quiet, he was faithful to worship with us each week until his mental state kept him confined to his room. He loved the children, and along with all the residents, considered their regular visits a true blessing. As I consider his passing I am filled with the hard acceptance that it was time and it is natural but also with the emotion that we will miss a friend. I am comforted by the fact that he has gone into eternity, welcomed by the just and loving hands of the Savior, but I am saddened by the sense of loss that is present with the dissolution of every relationship. *Rest in peace, Lou, rest in grace.*



It is with great joy that Megan and I announce that our new baby has arrived! She was born on February 12 at 5 a.m. weighing in at 9 pounds and 3 ounces with a length of 21 and 1/2 inches. She is named **Gemma Sophia** (Jě-mäh Sō-fī-äh), and the unusual pronunciation of her middle name has been borrowed from one of our original residents who is still with us.



In February, three people were installed as board members for the Sharing Org. We are blessed to welcome Dena Endres, Doug Hon, & Virginia McMacken as they will help us to continue to accomplish our Mission each week and to continue to strive to accomplish the Vision of the Sharing Org. **Please pray** for them as they are joining our current board members to make the legal decisions that effect our ability to accomplish our ministry work.

Along with the new board members, it is our great pleasure to welcome the **Risen Lord Community Church** in St. Charles, MO, to our ranks as ministry partners. The Risen Lord Community Church has expressed their "special effort to making those with mental, social, or physical challenges know they are loved and valued" as part of their core values. I am thrilled to have the support of Risen Lord Community Church as together we are able to share the love and gospel of Jesus Christ to many people who are often overlooked.

This month I met with Cindy Holtrop, a chaplain with the Hope Network out of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Cindy is working with some of the churches in my community in order to help them serve and provide ministry opportunities for people with disabilities in their own churches. **Please pray** for Cindy as her work indirectly coincides with the Sharing Org Vision of helping churches to minister to Adult Foster Care Homes in their community.



We have been collecting our pocket change for the 2009 Shoebox program in our milk-jug penny banks. Some of the residents are so enthusiastic about the Shoebox program that they too have began collecting their pocket change. While their resources are limited, I am impressed with their heart to give – I am reminded of the Widow's Mite. If you would like to help us with this year's Shoebox program, please visit our website and click on the piggy face so you can print off the sheet and make your own bank.

Thank you for joining me in His service,
John

www.thesharing.org

PO Box 73 · Armada, MI 48005 · (586) 949-6885

*It is the **MISSION** of the Sharing Org to share the love of God and to build relationships with residents of care facilities by providing them with weekly interdenominational Christian worship services.*

Ministry Moment

This past week I noticed that one of the residents was missing. It is not uncommon for a resident to not attend a service, for one reason or another, but I noticed this particular resident's absence because this resident's companion was alone.

Months ago I noticed that a certain gentleman and lady were always together. They always shared a song book, they always sat together on the "love seat," and they always shared the blanket that kept them warmed. It is not the first time that I have seen a relationship like this in a home, but it did seem to be the most intense of these relationships. It was nice to see two people who did not have anyone left in this world providing companionship and love to one another.

This past week I realized that the gentleman was not present, and I inquired about his whereabouts. I learned that he had been transferred to another location. This produced a sadness in my soul that stemmed from the dissolution of relationship. The man had not died but the effect certainly felt the same. The woman found herself without her companion and felt the very real loss from that severed companionship, the staff of the facility felt the void that the man's lively presence no longer filled, and I certainly felt the loss of his presence as each week I was able to share with him the love and grace of the savior. Now, he's alone, she is alone, and I am sad that I cannot be with him during his transition in the new home.

While it is true that Jesus is with the man throughout this ordeal, it does not make the human side of the lost relationship any easier or less painful. He might be alive but to his former companion, the staff, and myself the reality is that he will never come back into our lives – this side of glory.

While it is my extreme privilege (*and I mean that*) to serve the residents in the care facilities, I find that the turnover rate can be quite exhausting. Situations like these are very often the reality for everyone whom I minister to – the residents experience these kinds of losses much more often than they experience grief from a friend passing away.

~ John

I would like to partner with the Sharing Org and serve the residents of care facilities by giving them the love of God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I would like to partner with the Sharing Org by making a **monthly contribution** of: \$50.00 \$25.00 \$15.00 **\$9.00** for 2009 \$_____ Other

I would like to support the Sharing Org by making a **one time donation** of: \$500.00 \$250.00 \$100.00 \$75.00 \$_____ Other

#0607030.5
Prayer Partner
12345 Anywhere St.
Your Town, MI 48---

Thank you for partnering with us as together we share the Love of God with the residents of care facilities.

You've pledged \$0 per month to support the Sharing Org.

Please make checks payable to: **The Sharing Org**
Please mail to: PO Box 73
Armada, MI 48005

Your gifts for 2009 have totaled \$0