

Community *Matters*

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LifeSpire
of Virginia
Faith. Wellness. Community.

Community Matters

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LifeSpire of Virginia operates four continuing care retirement communities throughout Virginia: The Culpeper in Culpeper; The Glebe in Daleville; The Chesapeake in Newport News and Lakewood in Richmond.

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Faith is intellectual. We choose who, what, or where we will place our trust. Faith is physical. Our day-to-day priorities and activities reflect our deepest values. Faith is emotional. When our world is rocked by circumstances beyond our control, we often turn to that which matters most to sustain us. Faith is personal. We position our souls to rely on something or Someone beyond ourselves.

At LifeSpire, faith is essential to our identity, and in this issue, we share the faith stories of some of our residents. You'll read how Dr. Franklin and the late Dorcas Fowler demonstrated faith through nearly 40 years as international missionaries, how Dr. Kathryn Schmeding reconciles faith and science, and how Helene DeVries experiences God's love in the day-to-day. As you read, we hope you'll be inspired to think deeply about your own faith story and the difference it makes in your life.

— Ann Lovell, Editor-in-Chief

Lakewood's Cumberland Group wins LeadingAge award

What do these have in common: six sisters, a sister-in-law, a brother-in-law, and a cousin; four housekeepers, three CNAs, an LPN, and a floor tech? At Lakewood, they are a family known as “The Cumberland Group,” and they represent 156 years of combined service. The family received the inaugural “Power of Purpose” award June 7 at LeadingAge Virginia’s annual conference in Norfolk. The award recognizes a front-line caregiver – or in this case nine – who demonstrate remarkable commitment to the people they serve.

The legacy began in 1988 when Dorothy Trent joined the staff of Lakewood as a housekeeper. Her sister, Nancy Wheele, came as a

RIGHT: Members of Lakewood's “Cumberland Group” pose with Executive Director Barrett Way at the Norfolk Waterside before the LeadingAge awards ceremony in May. (Photo by Felicity Wood.)



CNA in 1989 and worked there until her death in 2016. Other members of the family soon followed. Sister Annie Trent worked as a housekeeper from 1991-1998, and Julie Athey, a third sister, joined as a CNA in 1992. Five years later Becky and Jimmy Edmonds, Trent's fourth sister and brother-in-law, came in August 1997 as a CNA and floor tech, respectively. Annette Johnson, a cousin, came to work as an LPN in 2003, and Laura Langhorne, Trent's fifth sister, and her sister-in-law Lucy Langhorne joined as housekeepers in 2008 and 2013, respectively.

“The family carpools about an hour each way from their home in Cumberland County to Lakewood,” said Patricia Morris, vice president of the VBH Foundation who nominated the group to receive the award.

“We are very honored to have been nominated,” said Jimmy Edmonds, speaking on behalf of the family at the awards ceremony held at the Norfolk Waterside Marriott. “We enjoy the residents and consider them part of our family. We travel long distances, but we do that because we love our jobs, the residents, and the staff. We greatly appreciate this award.”



Joe Kelley is LifeSpire's Chief Financial Officer.

LifeSpire's financials give CFO reason to smile

Joe Kelley is a stereotypical accountant. A quiet guy with a dry sense of humor, you'll most often find Kelley sitting quietly at his desk in his corner office surrounded by mounds of paperwork. As LifeSpire's Chief Financial Officer, Kelley spends his work days analyzing the financial situation of its four continuing care retirement communities. For financial reporting purposes, Kelley explains, Lakewood in Richmond, The Chesapeake in Newport News and The Culpeper in Culpeper make up what's known as "the obligated group." The Glebe in Daleville is a separate financial entity.

Although he's always up for a good laugh, co-workers say Kelley rarely gets excited. When he's happy, those closest to him notice a slight smile and a twinkle in his eye. Based on the consolidated financial statements released in LifeSpire's 2016 Annual Report, Kelley's smile is broader than usual — for very

good reasons. "For the first time in nearly 20 years, LifeSpire posted a net operating gain in 2016," Kelley reports.

Kelley gets particularly excited about debt service coverage ratios. The debt service coverage ratio compares debt payments to adjusted net operating income, Kelley explains. Anything over 1 means a company

has enough cash to cover its debts. Generally, banks require a debt service coverage ratio of at least 1.2. The higher the ratio, the stronger the organization is financially. "Our debt service ratio for the obligated group is 2.09 and for The Glebe it's 2.11. That's amazing considering where we were just a few years ago," Kelley says.

Jonathan Cook, LifeSpire's president and CEO, also appreciates the significance of these numbers. "A few years ago, it was very common for the financial benchmarks in each of our communities to hover around debt compliance levels," Cook says. "Thanks to the hard work of staff in each of our communities, we now have the opportunity to build some reserves to sustain us in the event of future economic downturns."

"Thanks to the hard work of staff in each of our communities, we now have the opportunity to build some reserves ..."

— Jonathan Cook, LifeSpire CEO

The future is very promising, thanks in large part to the commitment of staff at each community, says LifeSpire board chair Susan Rucker. But, she adds, sustainability can't be achieved "by senior management alone."

Cook agrees, "Our goal is to provide lifestyle-based services with hospitality, dining, and wellness as the focal

points. This vision relies on the full buy-in of staff at every level."

"We want to build on being a place where people want to come," Rucker

says. "Over the next five years, we envision significantly refreshing our physical plant, offering new programs and finding other ways to serve the market that are relevant to seniors."

Kelley and Cook share Rucker's vision and enthusiasm for the future.

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GO GREEN

To receive Community Matters electronically instead of in print, email Ann Lovell, alovell@lifespireliving.org

Faith stories

Dr. Kathryn Schmeding, a resident of The Glebe, studied infectious diseases and microbiology. Her late husband's position with U.S. AID provided her opportunities to teach in countries around the world, including Nigeria, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Yemen, and Cameroon. As a Fulbright professor, Dr. Schmeding also taught at the University of Cameroon. She worked for eight years as a consultant in women's clinics through Johns Hopkins University. This is her story:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe that God, the Father Almighty, is the designer of the universe. About ten years ago, my husband gave me a copy of "Darwin's Black Box" by Michael Behe. This book helped launch the intelligent design movement based on irreducibly complex biochemical challenges to evolution. As a graduate student, I studied the cell with all its intricate molecular machines for copying DNA and transcribing it into cellular proteins. These machines are too complex and inter-related to have evolved by step-by-step natural selection. I believe God is the Intelligent Designer of the cell. All nature exhibits evidence of this complex design, which cannot be explained by Darwinian randomness.

I believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God.

From the time I was a child, my parents took me to Sunday School, and I learned of Jesus and his love for me. Although there were years when I didn't spend much time thinking about this sacrificial love, I began to think about it more seriously when I was in college and managed to take some religion and philosophy classes along with my chemistry major. Then I met my future husband who was a seminary student, and the discussions began in earnest. We were married 59 years and lived and worked in ten developing countries, many of them Muslim. My worldview was greatly altered by these experiences, and I came to see clearly what being a Christian means to me. I believe Jesus was sacrificed for my sins; that



A crowd of Muslim men celebrates their Friday prayers at the Baitul Mukarram National Mosque in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Dr. Kathryn Schmeding's faith in Christ was strengthened after working in a Muslim context. (Photo courtesy of IMB).

His death has washed away these sins; and that by dying, He disabled death itself. I believe, Lord, help Thou my unbelief.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life.

There have been many times in my life when I have needed the comfort only the Holy Spirit can give – times of illness, times of grief, times when I've been in danger. Through prayer – my own and the prayers of others – I believe the Holy Spirit has guided me through the valleys of my life, and I pray He will continue to comfort and sustain me this day and in the days to come.

Helene DeVries has been a resident at The Glebe since 2011. She retired from Cleary School for the Deaf in Long Island, New York, and she and her husband, Bill, moved to Smith Mountain Lake before moving to The Glebe. Bill passed away in 2016. Helene has four children, nine grandchildren, and one great-grandchild. This is her story.

I attended Sunday School from an early age at Trinity Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in Brooklyn, New York. I was confirmed and married there. In college, I attended church but not on a regular basis. The churches were in town, and college was out

of town, so I relied on someone who had a car. I knew about God; I knew He loved me. But it wasn't until I was married and raising children that I realized how much I needed God in my life.

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LET'S CONNECT!



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LifeSpire of Virginia

The Culpeper

Lakewood Retirement Community

The Glebe Retirement Community

The Chesapeake Retirement Community

Fowlers demonstrate faithful living

Franklin and Dorcas Fowler had been married 70 years when Dorcas died peacefully in her home June 26, 2017. She was 96. Just before Franklin's 100th birthday in March, the couple was asked how long they'd been married. They exchanged a puzzled glance and then laughed.

"We don't remember!" Dorcas said. "Forever."

In that same conversation, Franklin reached for his Bible, opened the front cover, and pulled out a photo of Dorcas as a young woman. He didn't say much, but his message was clear. His God and his wife are his two most important relationships.

The Fowlers epitomize lives of faithfulness. From childhood, both sought to share God's love through medicine. Franklin grew up as the child of missionary parents in Argentina, and committed his life

to Christ at age 10. After college at Carson-Newman University in Jefferson City, Tennessee, he went on to Vanderbilt Medical School in Nashville, where, thanks to the start of World War II, he and his class earned their medical degrees a few months earlier than planned. Franklin served in combat in France, Luxembourg, and Germany as a doctor with the 110th Evacuation Hospital, semi-mobile. He returned from the war and married Dorcas, a registered nurse, on Aug. 25, 1946.

Dorcas was born in Oklahoma City and received a Bachelor of Arts degree from William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri; a nursing degree from St. Luke's Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri; and a Master of Arts degree from The Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia.

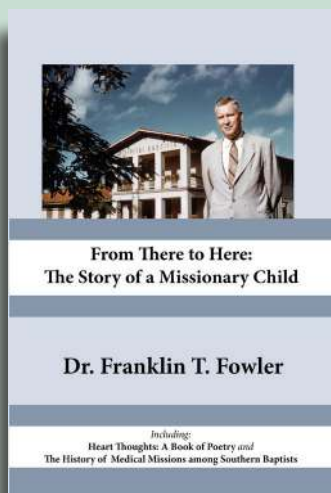
In 1947, the couple was appointed to Paraguay as medical missionaries



Dr. Franklin and the late Dorcas Fowler pose with an early proof of his autobiography, "From There to Here" in April 2017.

with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board (now International Mission Board). Their task was to build a hospital. Two years later, after surveying the needs, deciding on a location, and purchasing property, Dr. Fowler sent a cable to the FMB: "HOW DO YOU BUILD A HOSPITAL?" He soon received a simple

Continued next page



From There to Here by Dr. Franklin T. Fowler

In honor of Dr. Fowler's 100th birthday and the couple's strong legacy of faith, LifeSpire of Virginia is pleased to publish his autobiography, "From There to Here: The Story of a Missionary Child," including the history of Southern Baptist medical missions, which he wrote in 1975, and a collection of poems and paintings, which he created at Lakewood.

Proceeds from the sale of the book benefit LifeSpire's VBH Foundation, which raises funds to help LifeSpire's life care residents who outlive their financial resources remain in their homes. The book is available for \$14.99 on [Amazon](#), from the VBH Foundation, and from Lakewood's resident services office.

FOWLERS DEMONSTRATE FAITHFULNESS

reply from Dr. Everett Gill, FMB's area secretary for the Americas: "WE ARE PRAYING FOR YOU."

Looking back on his 100 years, Dr. Fowler credits the hospital in Paraguay as one of his greatest accomplishments. He has reason to be proud. Today, the Baptist Medical Center in Asunción treats about 16,000

patients a month. Under Paraguayan leadership, the hospital has a reputation for excellent

medical care and fair business dealings. In 1995, the Baptist Medical Center expanded to include a heart institute, and the next year, doctors there performed Paraguay's first successful heart transplant.

The Fowlers left Paraguay in 1956 to accept an assignment in Mexico, and in 1960, the family moved to Richmond where Dr. Fowler served as the FMB's first medical consultant on the home office staff and Dorcas worked as director of the nursing school at Johnston-Willis Hospital until it closed. During his tenure in FMB's home office, Dr. Fowler focused on missionary health and started the Baptist Medical/Dental Fellowship, which remains active today.

The Fowlers moved to Lakewood in 1987, where they quickly became active in the community. They started a worship service for healthcare residents, and Dr. Fowler continued to write and paint, chronicling his life in "From There to Here: The Story of a Missionary Child." The mis-

sionary life is mobile, and ironically, the Fowlers have lived in retirement at Lakewood for 30 years – longer than anywhere else in their storied and very active lives.

"I can't imagine Lakewood without the Fowlers," said Eileen Kwak, the community's director of resident services. "They are an icon here."

The Fowlers represent a generation who understand words like faithfulness, loyalty, commitment and community.

The Fowlers represent a generation of people who un-

derstand the meaning of words like faithfulness, loyalty, commitment, and community – values on which LifeSpire communities are built and continue to thrive. Even at the end of her life, Dorcas faithfully cared for Franklin, Kwak said. As Dorcas' life ebbed away, Franklin sat quietly, holding her hand.

Franklin and Dorcas also believed they could make a difference in the world for the cause of Christ, and they were willing to endure any hardship to do so. Franklin's autobiography tells of their first trip to Paraguay by boat when Dorcas was eight months pregnant with their oldest child.

"This proved to be a bad time for Dorcas to travel," Franklin wrote in "From There to Here." "Eight months pregnant, the rolling of the ship kept her in her bunk most of the way. I'm afraid this was not a pleasant Caribbean and South American cruise for her."

A few weeks later, she delivered

their oldest son in a clinic in Asunción, Paraguay – without anesthesia. "I asked Dr. Aguire later why he did not use anesthesia," Franklin wrote. "He said that if he lost a Paraguayan patient, it would be considered the will of God, but if he lost an American patient or the baby, his reputation would be ruined, thus he took no risks. Dorcas wished he had taken a little more risk!"

In spite of the difficulties, the Fowlers laid the foundation for international missions – medical and otherwise – for generations to follow. Southern Baptist missions efforts today rest on the shoulders of men and women like Franklin and Dorcas Fowler. More importantly, in a world shaken by brokenness, turmoil, and violence, their lives are steadfast examples of genuine love and faithfulness.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Dr. Franklin T. Fowler

I wanted to be a star
To shine in His grand display.
He made me but a candle
To light a pilgrim's way.

I wanted to be a tree
Rugged on a mountain steep.
He made me a common weed
To feed a hungry sheep.

I wanted to be an ocean
Deep and wonderfully wild.
He made me but a lowly stream,
To quench the thirst of a child.

I wanted to be a master
Of an extended domain.
He made me a servant
To care for humanity's pain.

Feb. 1989

Faith in action offers ripples of hope

Every year, LifeSpire's communities and foundation are blessed with the generosity of those who have left a legacy of caring for others. Not surprisingly, we see wills and trusts that leave portions of an individual's estate to their church, to their college, and to our organization. They are giving back to institutions that have served them well during their lifetimes.

It isn't just that they care. They know that giving often creates a desire in the beneficiaries to give to others however they are able — like the ripple effect of a pebble on a pond. One gift, no matter the size, generates more sharing than the donor imagines. Residents volunteer their time and talents

in so many ways: making waterproof bedroll mats for the homeless; knitting caps and blankets for infants, sailors, and cancer patients; and raising money for Alzheimer's and other local organizations, just to name a few.

Some residents who receive benevolent support have spent their lives serving others through churches and missions. Those who can still volunteer in their communities, both inside and outside of LifeSpire. Those who are in declining health still share their smiles and appreciation with



grateful staff who care for them. Everyone pays it forward with love. This is faith in action.

Thank you to all who have helped us focus on our mission of ensuring each of our seniors lives with love and peace of mind.

Patricia Morris is vice president and head of the VBH Foundation.

Among those receiving benevolence:

87% are women | **63%** are widows | **55%** are over 90

Make a plan to amplify your impact

Take the time to learn more about enhancing your own financial plans, as well as benefiting seniors in need with your generosity. You can help by including us in your will or estate plans. Visit our website, vbh.planmylegacy.org, for more information.





Five tips for highly effective seniors

Seniors residing in LifeSpire communities can take great comfort knowing their life and care needs will be met, as LifeSpire strives to instill a sense of security in our residents. Ensuring that financial plans are in place prior to moving in provides our residents and their families with peace of mind, knowing they are well prepared for situations that may arise in the future. Plans in place now will help alleviate added worries in stressful situations later.

Based on a study done by David A. Kremer of the Santa Fe Senior Living Foundation, we share these “5 Habits of Highly Effective Seniors” and encourage you to review or reinforce your plans. Most continuing care retirement communities, including LifeSpire, request you have in place:

1. Durable Power of Attorney (POA):

Recommended by AARP and the Alzheimer’s Association, a POA will make things easier on your loved ones should something happen.

2. Designated healthcare surrogate:

A living will, also known as a medical power of attorney, aids in the healthcare decisions your family may need to make on your behalf.

These additional tips will complement the above plans:

3. Create an estate plan:

Ensure your wishes are honored, and lay out in writing how your assets will be distributed among family, friends, and charities of your choice.

4. Establish relationships with trusted advisors:

Financial, tax, insurance and legal advisors who specialize in elder law and/or estate planning have the knowledge and tools needed for senior situations.

5. Involve and inform family:

Discussing your plans and wishes with your family now makes for easier conversations should the need arise in life care decision making.

Decision making is never easy, but these five ideas will assist you and your family later on. Remember to review your plans every few years to fit your current needs.

Jodi Leonard is fund development manager for the VBH Foundation.

Nine keys to a happy retirement

In a recent article for Forbes magazine, Richard Eisenberg offered nine keys to a happy retirement:

1. Spend time with your children and grandchildren if you have them.

2. Keep a schedule, but not like your pre-retirement one.

3. Learn new things or pursue your passions.

4. Get a part-time job.

5. To the extent possible, stay engaged and healthy.

6. Choose when to retire and then follow through.

7. Come up with a retirement income plan.

8. If you have a spouse or partner, talk about your plans together.



9. Figure out in advance what you want out of retirement.

Retirement counselors at any of our communities can introduce you to the benefits of maintenance-free living and discuss with you how you can live the life you want to live. For more information, contact them today!

Read the [full story](#) on our website.

Welcome Barrett Way to Lakewood

Barrett P. Way joined Lakewood as executive director in April. Way comes to Lakewood from Westminster Village in Terre Haute, Indiana, managed by Life Care Services. During his tenure with Life Care Services, Way led a \$2 million villa expansion project, oversaw the refinancing of \$8.9 million in debt and helped the community achieve more than 400 days in “no lost work.” His efforts led to an overall increase in resident satisfaction to 92 percent, with 96 percent of residents recommending the community to family and friends.

“We are pleased to welcome Mr. Way to lead the Lakewood com-

munity,” said Jonathan Cook, LifeSpire president and CEO. “His background in senior living and health care administration, and his proven track record of success in community expansion, financial stewardship and resident focus will serve Lakewood well. We are excited to bring him on at a time when we are expanding our community and increasing our focus on wellness, hospitality, and dining.”

Way, who grew up in Richmond’s



West End, is excited to return to his childhood neighborhood. Way holds a master’s in business administration from the University of Massachusetts’ Isenberg School of Management and a bachelor’s in business administration from Ohio University. He and his wife have two daughters.

And David Loop to The Chesapeake



David Loop joined The Chesapeake as Executive Director in June. Loop brings more than 25 years of senior housing experience to The Chesapeake and has valuable involvement with expansion and renovation projects, hospitality program development, strategic planning and fiscal management. Loop has worked in both large and small retirement communities; with single-site and multi-community organizations; for non-profit and for-profit companies; and with start-up and existing properties. He has also served on numerous professional committees, state association boards and the LeadingAge House of Delegates.

“David’s broad experience will

serve The Chesapeake well as the community goes through a major renovation project and strategic planning over the next few years,” said Jonathan Cook, President and CEO of LifeSpire. “We believe he is the perfect fit for The Chesapeake and for LifeSpire.”

Originally from Ohio, Loop holds a bachelor’s degree from Miami University of Ohio and received a certificate in nursing home administration from The Ohio State University. He has a passion for excellent customer service and has received training from Disney, Ritz Carlton and Four Seasons. He and his wife, Vera, have five children and four grandchildren with a fifth grandchild expected soon.



Louise Mason
leads spiritual yoga at Lakewood

Lakewood recently introduced a program called Graceful Moves for residents who seek the benefits of yoga but are unable to participate in a standard class due to mobility issues. The intention of Graceful Moves is to provide an opportunity for holistic healing through movement. Yoga is uniquely able to nourish the mind, body, and spirit regardless of physical limitations. Not a typical one-size-fits-all fitness class, it is adaptable to the specific needs of its participants.

The inspiration for this program was the instructor's personal experience. Louise Mason, one of Lakewood's chaplains, watched her father suffer from lifelong rheumatoid arthritis. Her mother had chronic bronchitis and died from pulmonary fibroids. After beginning her own practice, Louise realized that yoga might have immensely helped both of her parents. While receiving her instructor training, she

witnessed dramatic improvements in participants with mobility issues; many of these students, ranging in age from 75-92, now say they would never miss a class!

Lakewood's program is presently geared toward healthcare and

Yoga is uniquely able to nourish the mind, body, and spirit regardless of physical limitations.

assisted living residents. It begins with chair yoga and works up to standing positions for those who are able to perform them, using props as aids for strength and balance. Classes utilize breathing techniques and body alignment to create focus and relaxation. Specific biblical passages are quoted to provide inspiration and discussion.

Mason is a registered yoga instructor, having recently completed 200 hours of training. If you are interested in finding out more about Graceful Moves, you can contact her at (804) 521-9167 or lmason@lakewoodwestend.org.

LifeSpire
 of Virginia
 Faith. Wellness. Community.

formerly Virginia Baptist Homes

LifeSpire of Virginia operates four exceptional continuing care retirement communities that welcome people from all backgrounds.


VBH Foundation
 Faithfully supporting LifeSpire's benevolent mission

The VBH Foundation raises funds to help LifeSpire's life care residents who outlive their financial resources remain in their homes. In 2016, we provided more than \$1,100,000 in benevolence to 59 residents across all four communities.

THE  CULPEPER

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The Glebe

Blue Ridge Living
 Daleville
 (540) 339-7470


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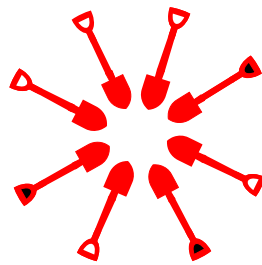
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Moving dirt at The Culpeper

Prep work is underway for new construction at The Culpeper, and the landscape is changing! Come see the progress!



Building for Tomorrow

THE  CULPEPER



CFO SMILES

Continued from Page 4

“LifeSpire has been transformed,” Kelley says. “We are actively engaged in becoming one of the premier mid-sized senior living companies in the mid-Atlantic region, financially and operationally. The groundwork we have been laying recently will enable LifeSpire to meet its commitments to current and future residents for many years to come.”

Cook agrees, adding, “If these trends hold, and I have every reason to believe they will, we may even hear Joe start to whistle.”

For more details on LifeSpire’s financial turnaround, read the [full article](#) on our website.

DEVRIES FAITH STORY

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That’s when my faith really began, and it has been growing ever since. My time talking with God each day is important to me. I thank and praise Him for all He has given me. I also ask Him for guidance each day in all that I do and how I can best serve Him. I know He is with me. He comforts me in my grief after the loss of my husband.

I feel blessed that He has placed me in this loving and caring community where I am at home. The folks here are my family, too. God’s greatest commandment is to love one another. When we obey, the darkness in our lives disappears and a new light of life in Christ shines in. Thank you, God.