



Belonging During the Pandemic

There is a sense of quiet in the corridors of Christ House as we live and work in this unanticipated world of the coronavirus.

Many routines are maintained, but more are interrupted as each day we recalibrate daily activities to safely care for our patients and the individuals in the Kairos housing program. There is no rushing about to get patients to outside appointments or ready for discharge. The patients currently on our unit will remain with us during this crisis until placement in supportive settings can be secured. With strict adherence to protocols, we are admitting individuals who are COVID-19 negative, and individuals who are COVID-19 positive and have been quarantined.

Christ House is working with local homeless outreach teams to identify and refer men to Christ House who would benefit from our 24-hour nursing care, while being attentive to their COVID-19 testing status. During this difficult time, we seek to both

A patient has his vital checked by nursing assistant.

The mission of Christ House is to provide comprehensive and compassionate health care to sick and homeless men from the District of Columbia, and to assist them in addressing the critical issues to help them break the cycle of homelessness.



Continued

maintain a posture of hospitality while reducing the risk of spreading the virus to our vulnerable patients.

“Social distancing is a form of hospitality and respect.”

- Mari Lowe, RN, NP-C

The absence of community volunteers is felt by all of us, as their vitality and generous spirits have supported every aspect of our program since the beginning. Staff members continue to come to work to do the task at hand and with a resolve to maintain the essence of our program despite this major disruption.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the normal hustle and bustle of Christ House looks quite different, especially with implementing social distancing. Nurse Practitioner, Mari Lowe says, “Social distancing is a form of hospitality and respect. By creating space, we are protecting the patients and one another by reducing risk of transmitting COVID-19.”

There is a different sense of belonging during this pandemic. It is an opportunity to see things in a different light and to recognize our interdependence. It is this vision of the common good that gives us the courage to continue the healing work of providing medical care and hospitality.

*At right : Artwork by Evelyn Walker
(YLV 2018-2019)*

Remembering Gerald Henderson

Gerald Henderson died on April 20th, 2020 unexpectedly after a brief illness.

He was 63 years old. We are all mourning the loss of a man who had been part of our community for 20 years.

Gerald arrived as a patient on our respite unit in 1999 and soon after became a Kairos member.

He was a natural leader who cared deeply about the wellbeing of others. He was part of the Kairos leadership group and served on the Christ House Board of Directors. Gerald also worked on the respite unit assisting with patient care and provided leadership at Table Fellowship on



Thursday evenings, as well as in the Kairos gospel choir.

Gerald would want to be remembered as a lover of life and a brother to each of us. We will remember him by a song he sang on Sunday morning, “I’m a pilgrim... and a stranger... traveling through... this weary land... But I’ve got a home, Lord... It’s in yonder city... Lord, I’ll do... the best that can.”

Christ House is filled with...



Thank you to all our donors who continue to support and encourage us during these challenging days

Committed to Serve

At the heart of the Christ House staff and community is the volunteer corps.

Every June, several eager individuals commit to moving their lives to Washington, DC to live and serve alongside one of society's most vulnerable populations.

Upholding Christ House's mission, the Year Long Volunteers (YLVs) support clinical staff as they work together to provide care to patients experiencing homelessness and walk with them along their journey to recovery and healing.

By definition, the YLVs pledged to serve



Year Long Volunteers working at Christ House

as respite care assistants, nurse, case management assistant, and clinical unit assistant, however they enthusiastically step into many different roles on a daily basis.

Over the past year, Hayley, Olivia Cassie, Andrei, and Makayla have served Christ House as party planners, grocery shoppers, artists, chauffeurs,

decorators, escorts, cleaners, origami masters, and self-acclaimed "diabetic friendly" bakers.

Olivia finds the work to "come naturally and with a smile; you don't sign up to be a full-time volunteer if you're not wholeheartedly committed to the well-being of those you serve."

As the clinical and administrative staff restructure patient care in alignment with The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines, the YLVs face a dilemma that many are familiar with in the midst of COVID-19; how do we continue to serve our community while adhering to the new safety regulations?

As many of those guidelines have conflicted with the routine responsibilities of the YLVs, they are once again tasked with creating unique ways to fulfill the needs of their community.

One simple way that Makayla feels called to spread love without spreading the virus is to use chalk. Many neighbors can be seen touring the local sidewalks in search of her messages of hope.

Commenting on the inspiration for her designs she says, "I write what I need to hear and what I think others need to be reminded of. I think we're all just



This year's Year Long Volunteers at home at Emmanuel House

looking for moments and spaces where the light can get through."

If you're looking for ways to spread hope and love in your community, Cassie suggests reaching out to isolated neighbors, friends, and family: "Staying connected has the ability to boost your emotional well-being. It is important to remind your loved ones that they are supported."

Whether you're spreading messages of love through phone calls, chalk, or letters; supporting small business by shopping locally; or doing your part by keeping socially distant, the Christ House YLVs remind us that even if we're physically apart we're all in this together.



Year Long Volunteer working at the nurse's station



*Sharing some of
the incredible
artwork
our
Year Long
Volunteers
have been
using to spread
joy!*



Join the Circle

Monthly giving is one of the best and most convenient ways to support Christ House's patients. By joining the Circle of Healers, our monthly giving program, you'll:

- Provide a steady, reliable source of income to deliver our medical services,
- Decide what you want to give and then make it happen automatically, and more!

Visit christhouse.org or use the enclosed envelope to enroll.



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