SERVING OTHERS is fundamental
Family First is Not Really New

By John Bryant, CEO

“Children are a heritage from the Lord, offspring a reward from him.” Psalm 127:3

After several failed attempts to place the Family First Act up for a vote in Washington, D.C., legislators were finally able to get it approved as a part of the Tax Relief Act of 2018. Legislators in Washington who wrote and sponsored the bill believe that congregate care housing of children (such as what Christ’s Home provides) has limitations and deficiencies and therefore should not receive Federal funding. I wrote about this in a special letter to the Christ’s Home family back in November. I asked that you
join us in prayer as we seek God’s will to turn what initially felt like a threat into an opportunity. This article is intended to provide an update on what has been happening — and to encourage you to continue to pray. But first, allow me to clarify some things about our commitment to families FIRST!

Let's begin with a theological understanding. We believe that God is sovereign. By that, we mean that He superintends over everything in the universe and that His will is perfect and good at all times. This would include procreation. In Psalm 139, David, speaking to the Lord writes, “You created my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb.” Later in the chapter, he writes, “My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place…” If God is sovereign over conception, than it would naturally follow that God gives children to parents — SPECIFIC parents. Children are not a mistake. God has an intentional design.

We can point to at least three examples in Scripture where God’s work in this regard is clearly seen. He intervened in the lives of Sarah (to bring Isaac into the world), and Hannah (to bring Samuel into the world) and caused the incarnation of Jesus through Mary. To summarize this point, it is clear that God created the family when He created our first parents Adam and Eve. God expands the family when he gives children — and this all occurs according to God’s perfect will and plan. As Psalm 127:3 says, “Children are a reward from God.” God has always put families FIRST!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
communication with family members is somewhat limited, but it does occur. Our house parents are often in direct contact to help parents re-engage with their children through supervised visits on campus and through weekend visits home. Many people are surprised to learn that in nearly 55 percent of the cases we oversee, the children are reunited back home with their family of origin.

I guess what I’m trying to share is that Christ’s Home has always put families FIRST. We recognize that God gave these children to specific parents and we desire that reunification takes place whenever possible. Yet, sadly, we realize that this is not possible in every case.

Pennsylvania has until October 1, 2020 to implement programs and a reimbursement structure for those programs to meet the requirements of Federal funds distribution under the Family First Act. Here is a quick update on things that have happened over the past three months.

1. We have organized a Task Force under the leadership of Jim McGovern, our Chief Operating Officer. Jim has more than 30 years of leadership experience in child welfare services.

2. We have hired Lynne Rainey to be our consultant to the Task Force. Lynne has recently retired as the Director of Bucks County Children/Youth/Family Services. We are grateful for her expertise and direction.

3. In mid-December, we hosted a Focus Group with more than 20 child welfare professionals from across SE Pennsylvania in attendance. They provided valuable insight as to what Christ’s Home should be considering in light of the Family First Act. We are grateful for the attendance of Bucks County Judge Robert Mellon and State Senator Maria Collett at this kickoff meeting. This Focus Group will continue to meet with us in the months ahead to help sharpen our thinking and plans.
4. Pennsylvania has commissioned its own Task Force to identify the programs that agencies in the Commonwealth can operate under funding from Family First. It is anticipated that their report will be available on or around March 1.

There is much work ahead of us. We are confident that continued evaluation of current programs and the assessment of newly approved programs will bring us to a place of continued service to children and their families in a broader expansion of services than we’ve provided for in the past. Please continue to pray for our Task Force. And, as always, thank you for your on-going and faithful support.

A Lifelong Learner

Christ’s Home is a member of Leading Age at both the State and National levels. Leading Age is the association of non-profit providers of senior adult services providing training, education, advocacy with both State and Federal Governments, public relations regarding the important work our communities accomplish on behalf of senior adults and professional collegiality.

One of the programs provided by our State association is called Leading Age Fellows - an intensive one-year leadership program focused specifically to immerse leaders in the key management fundamentals of senior living communities. Acceptance into the program is limited, and an invitation is extended only after the submission of a detailed application and support from the sponsoring organization.

We are delighted to share with you that as 2019 came to a close our own Jim McGovern, Chief Operating Officer, successfully completed the Leading Age Fellows program. Congratulations, Jim!

Everyone who knows Jim knows that he is committed to being a lifelong learner. He is never content to a "personal status quo" but is always looking to learn, refine and learn again. And, he is a firm advocate for others at Christ’s Home to do the same.

Jim joins our own Karen Alizzi - Administrator of Healthcare Services - with this distinguished recognition as a Leading Age Fellow. We are proud to now have two Fellows on our team and look forward to their leadership at Christ's Home in the days ahead.

Please join us in expressing congratulations to Jim!
For the past several years, social work students from various institutions have been a vital part of Christ’s Homes operations and trajectory of learning and service in the field of child welfare. I have been fortunate to have the privilege and honor of supervising and facilitating the learning experiences of future social workers from Cairn, Eastern, Millersville, Gwynedd Mercy and Bloomsburg Universities. The program has grown throughout the years and has continued to gain traction as students talk about their experiences to fellow classmates. The field placement experience is a unique, fun and essential part of what it means to become and how to become a social worker. It is the signature pedagogy of the profession.

Ideally, field placement enhances the threads of connection between all the theories, discussions, history and social work practice. It contextualizes them in an integrated manner. In other words, it is the seminal method of transmitting the core beliefs, skills, knowledge and values of social work via a physical agency and the agency of skills and experiences of a
practicing social worker. To ensure that this work happens, I attempt to remain directive but curious and ask questions that will galvanize this process which flows between the twin peaks of ethics and application. To facilitate growth, development and learning, I attempt to respond to the question: How have I promoted the responsibility, skills, knowledge, attitudes and standards pertaining to the social work profession? I largely respond by weaving together the practice environment of Christ’s Home, with the basic ethical, administrative, clinical and theoretical components of being a social worker.

The field placement experience is a unique, fun and essential part of what it means to become and how to become a social worker. –It is the signature pedagogy of the profession.

Social work interns at Christ’s Home are pulled into the day-to-day programmatic and case management duties that are characteristic of current employees within child welfare and congregate care settings. Through orientation, supervision and on the job training, social work students become acclimated to the operational standards of congregate care facilities and the work that social workers do (or could do) in places like Christ’s Home and beyond. They are tasked with intentionally broadening their knowledge base to embed their experiences into the defining historical foundation of the profession that focuses on “individual well-being in a social context and the well-being of society...as well as the...environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living.” Interns will often help to provide supervision of residents throughout the day and to provide supplemental coverage within the homes on campus, as a means of facilitating the quality care, permanency, educational and social goals of clients. They will often shadow staff in order to learn regulatory procedures regarding the care and management of children who are put in out-of-home placement, modeling appropriate moral, ethical and professional values for the children, colleagues and community at large. As in any social work position, interns learn how to remain flexible in the course of carrying out these duties and to embrace role ambiguity as a reality of the scope of work that is carried out each day.

Other topics covered are how to get the most out of individual and group supervision, rapport building with clients, writing treatment plans, biopsychosocial spiritual assessment, developmental stages, family dynamics, using the strengths-based approach, ecological theory, person-in-environment perspective and how to grow in navigating a macro practice lens. Additionally, students also get to experience what it is like to work with senior adults at the Christ’s Home Retirement Community as a means of embedding them into multiple practice contexts. This is all balanced with a focus on individualizing the learning experience of each student and helping them be aware of who they are in the present, while mindfully building a professional identity for the future.

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ANNE MARIE UMANI

Pennsylvania Health Care Association — 2019 Hero Award Program “Caregiver of the Year”

By Brenda Mast, Administrator of Personal Care/Memory Care

Since 1923, Christ’s Home has sustained its heritage and reputation for outstanding and compassionate care largely due to the high standards and values of employees like Anne Marie Umani.

Recently selected as the Pennsylvania Health Care Association’s “Caregiver of the Year” as part of their annual Hero Awards program, Anne Marie fulfills Christ’s Home’s mission of providing care and services with love, dignity, compassion and respect. She has consistently gone above and beyond expectations for her twenty-seven years of employment with Christ’s Home.

Anne Marie began her career with Christ’s Home in 1991 as a CNA and carries on a family tradition of well-respected service. Anne Marie’s mother was a previous Director of Nursing in skilled care. Three of Anne Marie’s sons have served Christ’s Home in the Dining Services department. In her current role as Medications Technician, Anne Marie assists the Personal Care residents with administration of their medications, helps them with their activities of daily living and serves them in the dining room where her quick wit and sense of humor have residents smiling broadly or laughing hilariously. Anne Marie provides comfort, companionship and a listening ear where it is much needed. She is most devoted and caring when someone is struggling with personal loss, illness or the debilitating effects of aging. With a serving heart and personal attention, Anne Marie possesses genuine compassion for both the residents she serves, their families and her fellow team members.

Anne Marie’s coworkers have enormous respect for her character, work ethic and devotion to duty. She is known as the expert in all things — the residents, their family members and the operation of the Personal Care residency. Anne Marie is one of the first to reach out to support her fellow team members when they are struggling with illness or loss. She ensures that her
management team maintains an awareness of the accomplishments of her colleagues by sharing the special acts of kindness and the professionalism that she witnesses from them.

Anne Marie is considered a key leader in the Personal Care department, not by position nor by her words but by example. Anne Marie sets the standard from which all who serve Christ’s Home should operate, as humble servants, not bringing attention to herself, not voicing her own needs, but looking to uplift those around her. Character, commitment and compassion such as that of Anne Marie ensures the Christ’s Home Mission and Values will endure for generations to come.

In 2019, Anne Marie’s dedication and commitment to excellence stood out as she consistently exemplified the term “hero” and was highly deserving of her selection as “Caregiver of the Year”. Anne Marie recently suffered the loss of her mother and would only have wanted to make her proud. There’s no doubt that Anne Marie has accomplished this goal and that Mom smiles proudly at her daughter’s special honor and her love and commitment to the residents of Christ’s Home.
A Generous Thought

Who Is A Good Candidate For A Charitable Gift Annuity?

By Vernon Wright, Chief Development Officer, and Danielle Bishop, Director of Life Enrichment

Charitable Gift Annuity is a great way for you to give a gift to help sustain the vital work of Christ’s Home and receive income for you and a loved one. Over the years, we have opened Charitable Gift Annuities (CGAs) ranging in size from $10,000 to $100,000. Regardless of the gift amount, the rate of return for you or another named annuitant is the same based on age. Generally, if you have $300,000 or more in investments and tangible assets — for two people the amount would be higher — there is CGA in the right amount for you.

Here’s an example for an 80 year old male or female:

• The rate of return would be 7.3%.

• A gift amount of $10,000 would pay $730 annually and can be set up for monthly payments of $60.83 ($10,000 is the minimum gift amount for your first Christ’s Home CGA).

• The payments would continue for the rest of the annuitant’s life, and a portion is tax free.

• In most cases, a portion of the gift is tax deductible the year it is given.

Over the years, donors have used different types of assets to start their CGA:

• Maturing taxable CDs has been a popular approach for many.

• Donating appreciated stock is a smart way to open a CGA and avoid capital gains tax.

• Contributing from an IRA — this gift is not tax deductible but will avoid some income tax.

• Cash and other assets can be donated to fund a CGA.

After receiving your complimentary illustration for a Charitable Gift Annuity, Christ’s Home recommends you discuss it with your tax or financial advisor. We appreciate your intention to support the programs of Christ’s Home, but we also want to be sure the gift amount or donated asset is right for your personal situation. To obtain a free illustration, please contact Vernon Wright at vwright@christshome.org or 717.687.9424 [Ext. 102].
Community Center Events

Zumba Mondays at 6:15 PM

An Evening with the Craig Thatcher Band
March 28 • 7 PM
Join us for An Evening with The Craig Thatcher Band - a band with worldwide recognition, a slew of music awards and a reputation for blending classic rock and blues standards with “impressive,” “rich,” “breathtaking” original music.
Go to christshome.org for more information

Make A Joyful Noise Puppet Show
April 24, 7 PM
Free Admission

Visit https://www.christshome.org/community-center-events/ for more information

For more information please go to the Community Center events page on our site and sign up for our community center email updates
Spirit of Volunteerism

By Vernon Morris, Administrator for Independent Living, and Danielle Bishop, Director of Life Enrichment

Our Mission Statement opens with, “The Heart of Christ’s Home is to serve the Lord...” This heartbeat is not only felt by our staff, our residents feel it as well.

Many of our Independent Living residents, along with other volunteers, assist our daily operations with duties such as office help, escorting residents to the Hair Salon and special events, planning and implementing Life Enrichment programs, leading Bingo and other games and so much more.

Another area in which the spirit of service and volunteerism shines is within some of the regular weekly groups that meet. In the past year, The Outreach Crafts group created 654 square cardiac pillows, 452 long pillows for dialysis and transfusion patients, 322 knitted caps for newborns and 23 telemetry bags. These 1,451 items were donated to Abington-Jefferson Hospital.

For the past few years, the Sketchbook group has placed a small Christmas Tree in the Clubhouse where Residents can hang a holiday message for all their neighbors. The idea is to then donate the cost that you saved in not sending cards community wide. Once again, this year’s collection resulted in a donation to Christ’s Home with the intention to help defray some of the cost of benevolence.

This summer, residents, staff and family members alike joined forces in the collection of toiletry items and gently used handbags to be donated to women in need. The Life Enrichment Department enlisted the help of our wonderful Personal Care residents who created an assembly line of shampoo, conditioners, soap, hair brushes, socks and cosmetics that were packed into over 75 handbags! Our wonderful staff Chaplain Amie Shumski kindly hand delivered the purses to the Salvation Army.

The most recent example of the willingness to step up to meet a need comes with our Quilting group. They already have a goal to make quilts for all children who pass through our Children’s Services. They have also accepted a request from Danielle Bishop, Director of Life Enrichment, to make sensory stimulation items using various types of material (corduroy, silk, Velcro, etc.). These have proven to be useful in programming with some of our more infirmed Healthcare residents.

It was amazing to attend a recent meeting of the Shepherd’s Crossing Resident Council and hear reports of these examples and more. We are truly blessed!
If you would like to join us in being a volunteer at Christ’s Home Retirement Community, please contact Danielle Bishop at dbishop@christshome.org or 215-956-2270. If you would like to join us in being a volunteer at Christ’s Home Children’s Services, please contact Amy Neill at aneill@christshome.org or 215-956-1882.
Remembrance Gifts

During August 1st through December 31, 2019, Christ's Home was blessed to receive many contributions in honor and memory of people who are important to the lives of our supporters. We extend our thanks and appreciation to everyone who chose this avenue to support the mission and services of Christ's Home, while paying tribute to special individuals in their lives.

Gifts in honor of

Mr. Bender
Stanley and Mary Lou Powell

Alexander Galambos
Elaine Sample
Greg and Katie Thomas

Mr. and Mrs. James W. Houseman
General Partition Company, Inc.

Terri Kubachka
Norma Cole

Maintenance Staff & Wellness Nurses
Patricia Maransky

June M. Maurer
Faith Hutta

Personal Care Nursing Staff
Elaine Sample

Margaret J. Rawlings
Willy and Ruth Tauber
Judith Zweig

David and Sherry Shoemaker
Thomas and Diane Abbott

Transportation Staff
Patricia Maransky

Caitlin Zauflik
George and Donna Zauflik

Laura Zauflik
George and Donna Zauflik

Stephanie Zauflik
George and Donna Zauflik

Gifts in memory of

Dorothy Arms
E. Nelson Arms

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Class of 1955 Upper Southampton Warminster High School

Marie Welch
Harold and Martha Evelyn Schwartz

David and Doris Wright
Vernon and Lois Wright

Kurt Wunder
Dolores Wunder

Robert and Hilda Braxton present a check to Christ’s Home in memory of their son Robby.
**Annual Sponsorship Appreciation**

The Annual Sponsors on this page represent local businesses that believe in the important programs and services we provide to children and senior adults. These sponsorships are available on a 12-month rolling schedule throughout the year. To learn about the different levels and what they include, please contact Vernon Wright, Chief Development Officer, at 717.687.9424 or by email at vwright@christshome.org.

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**Encounter Israel 2021**

**October 31 – November 10, 2021**

Contact ldash@christshome.org for details.
Spring Dinner
Thursday, May 14, 2020 • 6 PM

Join us at Christ’s Home Community Center for our Spring Dinner with speaker, Nathaniel Deen, Lead Project Manager for Sight & Sound Theaters.

Fall 2019

Donor Thank You Dinner with Special Guest Joe Knopp

Joe Knopp grew up at Christ’s Home, and he is now producing Hollywood films including Unplanned (2019), I Can Only Imagine (2018) and Woodlawn the Movie (2015). Joe came to speak at our Fall 2019 Donor Thank You Dinner. Thanks to all who attended.
The Suite Life awaits you at Christ’s Home

Christ’s Home is expanding by offering new 2-bedroom suite apartments. This long-awaited expansion offers comfortable apartment living with a host of exclusive amenities. Now is your chance to enjoy the retirement lifestyle you deserve. Don’t wait.

Call 215-956-1802 to schedule an appointment.