



National Lutheran Communities & Services

2023 Update for Synod Assemblies

5275 Westview Drive, Suite 110 | Frederick, Maryland | 21703

www.nationallutheran.org

*National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) honors, inspires and supports
choice and opportunity in partnership with older adults.*

NLCS President & CEO Cyndi Walters

Communities

The Village at Rockville | Rockville, Maryland

Interim Executive Director Craig Wagoner

Chaplain Charlene Curtis

The Legacy at North Augusta | Staunton, Virginia

Executive Director Cherie Powers

Pastor William "Bill" Stewart

The Village at Providence Point | Annapolis, Maryland

Pending final approval from the Maryland Department of Aging

The Village at Augsburg | Baltimore, Maryland

Executive Director Rusty Mitchell

Rev. Dr. Eric Campbell

The Village at Orchard Ridge | Winchester, Virginia

Executive Director John Loop

Rev. Heather Bumstead, M.Div., BCC

Home Care – myPotential at Home

Operates home care for both Maryland communities and The Village at Orchard Ridge

Follow the communities on Facebook and NLCS on LinkedIn

[2021 NLCS Annual Report](#)

The 2022 Annual Report will be published in July 2023 and available on the NLCS website



Click the image to access the 2021 NLCS Annual Report

Our Mission at Work

In the last 130 years, National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) has never had to ask a resident to leave if they have run out of funds through no fault of their own. Guided by our mission to serve and drawing from our faith-filled history, we view stewardship as a heartfelt way to assist older adults. We practice this stewardship through our benevolent care program, which is the core of our organization's vision of helping those in need.

Even with careful planning, unexpected circumstances can lead to older adults outliving their financial resources. As life expectancy and cost of care increases, benevolent care provides peace of mind to residents and their families — particularly in the face of emergencies and extenuating circumstances.

In 2022, over \$858,000 was provided in benevolent care to 24 residents living in National Lutheran communities. In the last three years, nearly \$2.5MM in benevolent care has been distributed to residents. In addition to benevolent care, our communities are providing for the future through environmental stewardship and team member education.

Sustainability

NLCS instituted an organizational imperative to pursue 100% clean, renewable solar energy wherever possible across the National Lutheran family.

This year, we proudly held the grand opening of our solar field at The Village at Orchard Ridge. The carbon sequestered from the seven acres of our solar field is equivalent to the carbon sequestered by over 2,400 acres of forest each year. It also will provide approximately 85% of The Village at Orchard Ridge's round-the-clock energy needs for its 400-plus residents and 100-plus team members.



Service for The Village at Orchard Ridge's seven-acre solar array was initiated in February 2023.

Additionally, NLCS has committed to putting our mission of sustainability in action through conversion to LED lighting products, installation of EV

charging stations, expanding our recycling programs. In recent construction at The Village at Rockville and our proposed community at The Village at Providence Point, we have used environmental site design features such as green roofs, rain gardens, micro bioretention systems and porous pavement hard surfaces that will reduce, filter and manage water runoff.



An aerial view of The Village at Orchard Ridge with the solar array showing to the north.

Watch a three-minute [video on the Orchard Ridge solar array](#).

Education

"It is amazing to be able to take classes and have support from NLCS. I am so eternally grateful." – Anonymous NLCS Team Member

In the last four years, over \$100,000 has been invested into team members continuing their education to reach their career goals and aspirations. We are proud to offer tuition reimbursement for team members who have been with NLCS for a year and are thankful for the donors who have helped support this program.

Social Ministry

Beyond financial support, our mission extends to our social responsibility to offer our support to the congregations within the Synods on a variety of older adult care topics, sharing the expertise gained through more than 130 years of experience. Please do not hesitate to contact us for trusted answers to your questions. We would love to join your worship for a temple talk as well as have conversations with your pastor, social groups and individual congregation members who want more information.

New Mission Advancement Director

In the fall of 2022 NLCS transitioned their Philanthropy department to the Mission Advancement department. While responsible for developing and executing fundraising strategy and writing grants, Mission Advancement is also enhancing our relationships and ministry partnerships with Lutheran congregations within our supporting ELCA synods. It is our intent that the repositioning to Mission Advancement will bolster our philanthropic ministry throughout our organization and create a stronger connection to the faith-based history of NLCS.



NLCS Mission Advancement Director Zach Heeter

Previously the philanthropy director at The Village at Augsburg, Zach Heeter was selected as the mission advancement director for NLCS. While at Augsburg, Zach had great success in establishing relationships with donors, residents, families, churches and Lutheran service organizations, resulting in an increase in number of donors, planned gifts, a grant award and a successful capital campaign for Augsburg's new Memory Care neighborhood. Over the past several months, Zach has re-established relationships with our synod partners within the Delaware-Maryland, Virginia, and Metropolitan D.C. regions through temple talks, hosting retired pastor luncheons, attending deans' conferences and speaking to our mission of benevolent care. Zach is currently a board member of the Chesapeake Planned Giving Council and serves on the church council at St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

Milestones and Recognitions

Chaplains' Installations

Bishop Bill Gohl and the Rev. Robin Simpson Litton, both of the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the ELCA joined us for the installations of chaplains at The Village at Augsburg and The Village at Rockville. The Rev. Dr. Eric Campbell



Rev. Dr. Eric Campbell serves at The Village at Augsburg.



joined Augsburg in October 2021, and Chaplain Charlene Curtis was formally installed in October 2022, after having started her service in June 2020.



Chaplain Charlene Curtis serves at The Village at Rockville.

The Legacy at North Augusta (Staunton) has re-opened its Atrium Gallery, located on the second floor close to the chapel, since the COVID-19 closures. Art exhibits, which are open to the public, bring local and regional artists' work to the Legacy.

The Legacy also continues its strong support of the Walk to End Alzheimer's. This year, they held a lip sync contest that included residents, family members and team members. You can find the video on the Legacy's Facebook page.

Residents also regularly welcome furry friends for pet therapy and young friends from St. John's Preschool for special events.



Residents enjoy guests from St. John's Preschool for trick-or-treating.

The Village at Augsburg (Baltimore) celebrated 130 years of service to older adults in 2022. It expanded its service offerings in 2022 with the opening of its Assisted Living Memory Care Neighborhood and celebrated with a ribbon cutting in July 2022. This renovated neighborhood boasts 13 private suites with open dining and living room areas, plus a spa room and an area for resident engagement.

As with all NLCS memory care programs, the Augsburg memory care team focuses on personal interactions with each resident to help us understand all things that elicit joy, comfort and engagement. These insights, as well as input from family members, guide us in creating a personalized memory care experience that supports the abilities, possibilities and authenticity of each resident.

In celebration of the 130-year anniversary, Augsburg hosted its annual Bull and Oyster Roast in August with residents, team members, donors and community supporters present. As noted by Baltimore County Councilman Izzy Patoka, "Augsburg is a vital community anchor to the 2nd District of Baltimore County for so many older adults."

Watch a four-minute [video on The Village at Augsburg](#).



L to R: Rusty Mitchell, Augsburg's executive director; Rev. Scott Maxwell, NLCS board member; Cyndi Walters, NLCS president & CEO, together during the Assisted Living Memory Care ribbon cutting.



Baltimore County Councilman Izzy Patoka with Rusty Mitchell, Cyndi Walters and Zach Heeter at the Bull and Oyster Roast.



The Village at Rockville welcomed Craig Wagoner* as the executive director in December 2022. Craig quickly established rapport with residents and team members and began guiding the community through the community's long-range planning.

In early 2023, Rockville announced the renovation of its existing triplex cottages to create duplex "villas." These renovations will create two new floor plans – a two-bedroom, two-bath, and a two-bedroom, two-bath with den – with an open kitchen into a great room with vaulted ceilings. With stainless appliances and plank flooring as standard, new residents will have the opportunity to select their interior finishes in these new villas. Interior plans will be finalized in June 2023, with reservation deposits following shortly after. Renovations should begin in mid-summer and be completed by January 2024.

Rockville also introduced a new future residency initiative – The Village Explorer program. As a Village Explorer, future residents have the opportunity to participate in community events while they wait for their preferred apartment, cottage or villa to become available. This is a great opportunity to *explore, evolve and thrive* with current residents.

The Village at Rockville continues its annual tradition of greater community-wide Easter celebrations and Halloween costume and trick-or-treat events.

In March 2023, retired rostered ministers with a combined total of 544 years of ministry experience gathered at The Village at Rockville for a time of fellowship and learning. We look forward to continuing this tradition.

**Craig is currently serving as the interim executive director, as he was promoted to NLCS vice president of operations in March 2023.*



An example floor plan for the new villa duplexes at The Village at Rockville. Construction is expected to begin late summer 2023, with move-ins expected in early 2024.



L to R: Zach Heeter, Metro D.C. Synod Bishop Leila M. Ortiz, the Rev. Richard Graham, retired bishop Metro D.C. Synod



Resident and greater community members hear Brian D. McLaren in the Chapel at Orchard Ridge.

The Village at Orchard Ridge (Winchester) celebrates its 10th anniversary in 2023! A community-wide celebration will be held in June.

In August 2022, Orchard Ridge opened its Assisted Living Neighborhood on the third floor of the Clocktower and Proclamation Place buildings. Designed to offer independence with a helping hand, these spacious one-bedroom apartments include a kitchen, bath and living room and plenty of storage, while the care team provides the perfect balance of freedom and support and robust ConnectedLiving programming.

In November 2022, the Orchard Ridge Residents' Association hosted its annual Grateful Giving lecture series, which endeavors to bring the greater community together in faith and gratitude. This year, author, speaker, activist and public theologian Brian D. McLaren gave a compelling lecture entitled, "Do I Stay Christian?"

The Village at Providence Point (Annapolis) received approval from the City of Annapolis Planning Commission in February 2022, which was followed by the grand opening of the Sales Center in the Annapolis Exchange building. Pre-sales (reservation) efforts continue during this pre-construction phase. We continue to work through the remainder of the necessary approvals, one of which includes clearing an appeal of the Planning Commission's approval from a local environmental conservancy group. In the meantime, future residents, known as Charter Club members, gather monthly to create community and relationships prior to the community opening. Additionally, the Sales team hosts regular informational events to share the future of retirement living in



In February 2022, The Village at Providence Point held a grand opening of its Sales Center. Above, Cyndi Walters offers a toast to the expansion of NLCS's ministry and mission to Annapolis.



Providence Point Charter Club members gather in the model apartment in the Sales Center.

Annapolis and at

The Village at Providence Point. Currently, more than 135 of the cottages and apartments have been reserved.

NLCS Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Having a dynamic program and strategy for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) gives National Lutheran Communities & Services (NLCS) a competitive advantage in the market for talent. DEIB programs and initiatives are

critical to the success of organizations. For NLCS to be an employer of choice, it must sustain a workforce that is diverse by continually seeking ways to foster an inclusive culture and by identifying challenges and barriers that impede inclusion and create inequities.



The NLCS DEIB Council formed in 2022 and is comprised of individuals from each NLCS entity.

NLCS is proud to serve our diverse customers who are from a range of cultural groups and identities. We are also committed to attracting, retaining and sustaining a workforce that reflects diversity. Equity employs fair practices that allow all people to have an equal opportunity to thrive within NLCS. Inclusion is paramount to building a culture of belonging where everyone can be authentic and feel valued and respected. Belonging is when team members sense that their uniqueness is accepted and even treasured by their organization and coworkers.

NLCS formally established a DEIB program and formed its first DEIB council in 2022 to create a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment within NLCS. The DEIB program is led by Victoria Blakemore, vice president of Talent & Culture, and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. The DEIB council is comprised of a diverse representation of members from

across NLCS whose purpose is creating a culture that embraces and promotes diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging—and keeps DEIB at the forefront of leadership across NLCS. The DEIB Council works to raise awareness and champion diverse perspectives and inclusive behaviors to promote a culture and climate that fosters belonging, respect and engagement for all. They will serve as role models for diversity and inclusion and related behaviors as the “work of all” versus the “work of a few” to strengthen diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging efforts and further integrate these beliefs into the foundation of NLCS.

Leadership plays a key role in driving conditions that foster inclusion and belonging, but it takes each and every one of us to truly achieve belonging.

COSTAR (Connect and Stay) Onboarding Program

The Connect & Stay Program (COSTAR) is one of the ways that NLCS strives to be an employer of choice. Our goal is to do more to welcome and support new team members as they begin their new journey with the organization. When COSTARs help new team members feel welcome, they demonstrate our Guiding Principles, We CARE values, collaboration and service excellence! In fact, since implementing the COSTAR program in 2022, NLCS has seen a 24% increase in retention among those who participate in the program.



The need to support new team members is often limited to a new team member’s introduction to an organization. Coaches (managers) play a vital role in shaping a new team member’s experience in the first weeks and months. However, a team effort can ensure the experience is more positive and productive. An onboarding program in the workplace further enhances the experience of a new team member.



NLCS President & CEO Cyndi Walters with COSTARs from The Legacy at North Augusta.

COSTARs play a vital role in being a We CARE champion to ensure a successful onboarding experience for the new team member. They can guide new team members on the “ins and outs” of NLCS and serve as their “go-to” person to ask questions they may be reluctant to ask their coach. COSTARs continue to have a powerful effect on new team members, how they feel about NLCS and the quality of service that is delivered.

In early 2023, COSTAR “thank you” gatherings were hosted throughout the organization, which provided NLCS leadership an opportunity to learn more about the success of the program.

For more information about the NLCS DEIB or COSTAR programs, contact Kathleen O’Halloran, NLCS Chief Talent & Culture Officer at kohalloran@nationallutheran.org.

Thank you

We remain grateful for the support by you, our synod partners, for your generosity in helping those in need. National Lutheran was born from a donation of 27 acres of land in Washington D.C. by Sarah Utermehle of Reformation Lutheran Church in 1890. Today, as the world and our church continue to change and evolve, we reflect on our shared history and look to ways we can continue to grow in our shared mission and ministry.