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Pastoral Care Takes New Direction at Shepherd's Care Foundation

From the time Shepherd's Care Foundation opened its first facility, pastoral care has been front and centre of daily life. Over the years a number of loving persons have provided spiritual support for SCF residents—a contribution that is much appreciated and will never be underestimated or overstated.

In the last few years, however, SCF's unparalleled growth has called for the formation of a sustainable pastoral care program to be implemented throughout all SCF facilities. As SCF President John Pray says, "With the ever-increasing diversity of our clientele, and the need for new ideas and directions in a changing, complex environment of health care provision, it became apparent to the foundation that additional strategies for support would need to be developed."

And so a new position—Director of Spiritual Life—came about, following a process of assessment and evaluation during and immediately after the 2007 Annual Board Planning Retreat. In creating the new position, the board "has clearly spoken that chaplaincy—pastoral care—is a very important part of what we do."

Tyler Orn started as the new director in August, bringing his extensive

experience in health care chaplaincy to share with the residents and staff at SCF.

Orn holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology and sociology from the University of Alberta and a Master of Divinity degree in Pastoral Counselling from Taylor University College and Seminary. After chaplaincy training at the U of A Hospital, he put his faith into practice at health care facilities in Calgary, Edmonton, and Red Deer, offering support to people suffering trauma and loss.

As director of pastoral services for the foundation, Orn combines administrative duties with resident services. He supervises the chaplains and also does some clinical work, as well as leading hymn sings and some religious services.

Being the first person to hold the position has had its challenges.

"It's been a time of trying to understand the role, and the needs of the role will continue to change as the organization grows," he says of his first few months on the job.

Much of that time he spent researching the needs of the organization, facility by facility, in order to offer pastoral services appropriate to each. On determining more support was needed at Shepherd's Care Kensington and

Ottewell, he hired Chaplain Fred George. This enabled the existing chaplain team, Reverend Brian Clarke and his wife May, to focus on residents in the supportive housing at Kensington.

"The people there can enjoy more independence, such as driving to church on their own" says Orn. He adds that they can also connect with a pastor who can support more daily living options than a hospital chaplain ever could.

On the other hand, at Shepherd's Care Greenfield, which is geared to residents with dementia, pastoral care includes more intense contact with families and a greater number of staff.

The end result of the program is to find "organizational congruence—that the behaviours of our people align with the values the organization holds. Are we who we say we are?"

Looking back over the development of the pastoral care program, Orn says: "Spiritual care was always good here." "However, it was at the point that even with the in-house pastor and his wife working as a team, it was more than a full-time job."

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Pastoral Care CONTINUED...

Supporting the staff at each facility, as well as the foundation's management, is also part of the pastoral care program, he points out.

Describing himself as a person "who likes to grow things," Orn says this job "gives me something to work towards." He is enjoying "taking the good work already done and seeing it flourish.

"There are a lot of things on the go. There's no end to the work that anyone here has, but I'm very pleased to be here. I want to continue to do prayerfully the work God wants me to do."

Obviously the foundation is equally enthusiastic about the new Director of Spiritual Life.

"We are looking forward to exciting initiatives and new applications of pastoral care within each facility, and humbly ask for your prayer for both the foundation and Tyler," says Pray.

"May God give us wisdom and guidance, and in all things may His love be foremost in our thoughts, words, and deeds. Amen!"

Board Retreat Formulates Vision Statement

A simple, straightforward mission—"To remain dedicated to the celebration of life in a caring, Christian environment"—has always guided Shepherd's Care Foundation. For some time, however, SCF had been thinking and reflecting on another significant statement.

"We had a mission and we had values and beliefs but we didn't have a clear vision of where we wanted to go," SCF President John Pray says.

The board discussed this at their 2007 Annual Board Retreat, drafted a statement and asked the foundation staff, residents, and families for feedback. The proposed vision was

discussed further at two board meetings and then adopted.

The new vision—"To be the leader in providing innovative aging-in-place services with excellence"—was a matter of putting down in writing what we feel, said Pray.

"It gives the organization as a whole the direction we're headed in the long term. We've always been good at short-term thinking; now we're looking long term."

The statement captures the essence of SCF's three guiding principles: affordability, Christian care, and aging in place, with 'excellence' being key to all three.

Four strategic directions were also identified for the next five years, namely:

1. To focus on quality and excellence in all we do;
2. To maintain our leadership by focusing on strategic, sustainable growth;
3. To support our staff in accordance with our organization's values; and
4. To increase the support provided through the organization for the spiritual needs of those we serve.

The foundation for the last of these strategic directions was quickly put in place with the hiring of the new Director of Spiritual Life (Tyler Orn).

More about the Spiritual Life Team

Chaplain Fred George is chaplain for long-term care and assisted living at SCF Kensington Village and SCF Ottewell. Before entering the ministry, he was a quality assurance manager/consultant in the pharmaceutical industry. In 1990, he graduated from the University of Alberta with a bachelor's degree in chemistry; in 2006 he received his Master's of Divinity in pastoral counselling from Taylor University College and Seminary. After completing his chaplaincy training at Alberta Hospital Edmonton and Royal Alexandra Hospital in 2007, Fred joined SCF in November of that year. He is married with two daughters.

Rev. Brian and May Clarke are chaplains for supportive living at SCF Kensington Village. Both felt the call to ministry at an early age. Now, with over 50 years in ministry each, they bring a wealth of experience. Brian took his training at Kenley Bible College in northern England. After completing his required coursework, he immigrated to Canada in 1959 and graduated from Kenley a year later.

May's background is in nursing, and she's had training in midwifery, tropical diseases, and dementia. She received theological training from the Assemblies of God in England and

also holds a certificate of ministry with the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. She immigrated to Canada in 1955.

Together, Brian and May have served as pastors throughout the western provinces, including 24 years in British Columbia, 6 in Saskatchewan, and the last 15 in Alberta. They ably supported SCF Kensington as interim chaplains from March to November 2007 and have since been hired to work permanent part-time.

Brian and May, married for 48 years, had two children—one still living—and now enjoy six grandchildren.

Getting to Know the Board: Kenneth Tonn

With 17 years of service on the board of Shepherd's Care Foundation, Kenneth Tonn is certainly no stranger to the organization. Yet SCF has been very much a part of Tonn's life for much longer.

As a youngster he helped his grandparents, Adolph and Natalie Tonn, move into Millwoods Manor. His father, Edward, was one of the original board members who signed a note at the bank to build the manor. Tonn followed in his footsteps, going on the board a few years after his father retired after 15 years of service.

Watching his father head off to meetings for so many years inspired him to do the same.

"My father has taught me to be involved and to work with seniors."

Through that, plus his early introduction to SCF by way of his grandparents, "I saw already the good work that Shepherd's Care was doing."

He has served on various board committees, such as fundraising, then this year was voted to the executive for the first time, in addition to being chair

of the finance and audit committee. Being treasurer has "been quite the learning curve," but he's taken to it with the support of fellow board members, drawing on his experience from his job in the family property management business. The first audit and finance committee meeting went well and he looks forward to learning other tasks associated with his new position.

The last few years have been exciting for him in another way—watching the foundation expand its services to Kensington and Ottewell and out of town to Barrhead. In particular, it was interesting for him to see Shepherd's Care Kensington built, as he remembers his father joining with other board members to buy the land where the facility now sits.

Tonn's presence on the board is much appreciated, says President John Pray.

"Ken brings a unique perspective to the board, as one of the few members with a connection to the foundation's rich heritage. As well, he has shared his family's background in property management to help the organization.

"We draw on Ken's experience to guide us in dealing with our own rental accommodations."

Shepherd's Gardens is another SCF project of particular concern to Ken; when it's finished next year, he'll help his parents relocate there. Then his own children—he and his wife Sheryl have four daughters aged 9 to 17—will have the experience he did, helping their grandparents move and witnessing the Christian-focused care known to SCF. His oldest daughter, Deandra, however, has had a preview, having volunteered at the manor and the auxiliary home when she was in the German immersion program at Allendale Junior High School.

"It was an opportunity for her to practise her German and do something good."

In his spare time, Tonn enjoys gardening, reading, travelling with his wife, and spending time with his family. He says with a laugh that he can't claim to be as athletic as his mountain-climbing uncle and fellow board member Erwin Tonn; nonetheless, while he does not participate in sports, he likes to attend Edmonton Oilers games.

Gifts of Appreciated Securities

Can your taxes be reduced as you support charitable work?

"Gifts of securities" are shares (also called "stocks") in publicly traded companies that are sold and gifted to a charity. Many people own "stocks" in companies such as General Electric, the Royal Bank, Telus, and so on. Last year the Canadian Revenue Agency began allowing these shares, when they were sold, to benefit both the charities and the person who held the shares.

Previously, shares that are sold for a profit came under the rules of the capital gains tax (CGT), which forced a considerable percentage of tax upon

sale of the shares. This tax was assessed against the owner of the shares. The new legislation offers a much more favourable arrangement to shareholders in the form of a tax credit that can be used to offset taxes if the shares are gifted to a registered charity—a big win for both charity and taxpayer.

To qualify for special tax treatment, the securities must:

- be publicly traded securities such as stocks or shares listed on an approved stock exchange, units or shares in a mutual fund, or units of a segregated fund trust from an insurance policy

- have appreciated (increased) in value from the time of purchase
- be donated to a charity or public foundation
- not be sold by a donor; instead, ownership must be transferred directly to the charity or public foundation, generally with the help of a broker.

If you hold these types of shares and would like to reduce your taxes while helping improve the lives of SCF residents, please call Don Charnaw at 780-920-9904.

Auxiliary of Angels Enhances Life for Shepherd's Care Residents

Some equipment in the physiotherapy department would not exist if not for them. The fixtures in the main floor bathrooms at the foundation's main office will soon be automated, thanks to them. Their efforts have purchased more than 100 electric beds. And at Christmas, Thanksgiving, Valentine's Day, and other special occasions, their afternoon programs with the recreation department bring cheer to the residents.

They're Shepherd's Caring Friends—a group of about 40 people dedicated to enhancing life for residents at Shepherd's Care facilities. They were called the Women's Auxiliary in times past but dropped that name when men started joining to help at the fundraisers and special events the group holds throughout the year.

"We had a man on the executive last year who must have committed at least 100 hours. He was so helpful at the yard sales, loading and unloading everything," says Marlene Rohr, the group's president.

Those yards sales, huge events held a couple of times a year, were once the auxiliary's staple fundraisers. However, they disappeared last year when

construction on Shepherd's Gardens gobbled up the spot where the sales were held.

"Change sometimes forces you to rethink and do things in a different way," says Rohr.

The group puts on a cookie sale during the residents' open house each December. About half the auxiliary members each baked three to four dozen cookies, which sold for 50 cents apiece. The first sale brought in \$400, but that wasn't the point, she stresses.

"It's not about how much we raised but how many people participated—that they had fun doing it and the residents were blessed."

Obviously it worked, as twice as many people were scheduled to make cookies this year.

A concert with the Hunter Family last June drew 800 people and raised \$4,000 in donations—an eye-opener for the auxiliary.

"The yard sales took so much time, over 100 hours of labour, compared to

a concert that took 20 hours and raised the same amount."

All funds raised are used for items not funded by government.

Come spring, the group will hold a banquet to mark 25 years in operation. It's also hoped it will raise funds and draw new members. (Usually Rohr recruits from two of SCF's founding churches, Mill Woods Pentecostal Assembly and Southside Pentecostal Assembly.)

Being president is a lot of work but she has always taken up other members' offers of help, making it a team effort so others will be willing to take over when she steps down in 2009.

An auxiliary member for 12 years, Rohr is in the midst of her second term. She first thought of joining the auxiliary in its early days, on hearing about SCF from her father, who was one of the founding members. That went on hold when she married and moved across the country. When her husband's work brought them back to Edmonton, she got involved in the auxiliary right away.

Funds Development Manager Hired

John Pray is pleased to announce that Don Charnaw has been appointed as the new Funds Development Manager for SCF, after a comprehensive search to fill this important position.

Don began his duties in early January, bringing his considerable experience raising funds for not-for-profit groups in central Alberta and coordinating many fun and profitable special events.

His major focus will be working with the president, board, Revenue Development Group, and Friends of SCF to generate funds for the work of the foundation. His priorities will include planned giving, special events, and procuring major gifts.

"Don has a wonderful way with people and will be a great addition to the work of funds development," Pray says.

"Over the next while he will get to know the organization and the residents. Please welcome him to the staff team and introduce yourself when he comes around."

Don is a fitness enthusiast whose interests include long-distance running and triathlon. He lives with his wife Karen on the south side of Edmonton.



Shepherd's Care Foundation

P.780.463.9810 F.780.462.1643

www.ShepherdsCare.org

Shepherd's Care Millwoods
6620 – 28 Avenue
Edmonton, AB, T6K 2R1
P. 780.463.9810

Shepherd's Care Ottewell
6675 – 92 Avenue
Edmonton, AB, T6B 0S3
P. 780.490.7614

Shepherd's Care Greenfield
3820 – 114 Street
Edmonton, AB, T6J 1M5
P. 780.430.3613

Shepherd's Care Millwoods Manor
6640 – 28 Avenue
Edmonton, AB, T6K 3X8
P. 780.463.9810

Shepherd's Care Kensington
12603 – 135 Avenue
Edmonton, AB, T5L 5B2
P. 780.447.3840

Shepherd's Care Barrhead
5236 – 59 Avenue
Barrhead, AB, T7N 1L2

Shepherd's Care Southside Manor
10741 – 29 Avenue
Edmonton, AB, T6J 5H6
P. 780.435.3169