



Northwest Washington

# To serve in the name of Christ

By the Rev. Wm Chris Boerger, bishop

I hear regularly that one out of every 50 people in the U.S. receives services from a Lutheran Services in America agency.

That is a significant number of people who turn to agencies that have in most cases been established by this church in times of need. It is also important to note that it is through many of these social ministry organizations that we continue to work with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

As the body of Christ, the church is to respond to Jesus' Great Commission and Great Commandment. Too often we place these two commands of Jesus in tension with each other. We spend time arguing about whether sharing the love of Jesus through the means of caring for those in need is as important as sharing the word of salvation through the death and resurrection of Jesus. This is not a choice for us to make. We are to do both.

In this synod we are blessed to be able to support the work of 14 affiliated social ministry organizations. We have:

- Five nursing homes or assisted living communities in our synod. They are Bethany of the Northwest, Everett; Columbia Lutheran Ministries, Seattle; Foss Home and Village, Seattle; Josephine Sunset Home, Stanwood; and The Hearstone, Seattle.
- Lutheran Community Service Northwest, a comprehensive social services agency owned by this synod and Southwestern Washington, Eastern Washington-Idaho and Oregon synods as well as the LCMS Northwest District.

- The Compass Center in Seattle, which addresses the needs of the homeless and veterans and, most importantly, their housing issues in Snohomish and King counties.

- The Lutheran Counseling Network, with offices in congregations around this synod.

- Lutheran Alliance to Create Housing (LATCH) in Seattle. LATCH is a model for developing long-term transitional housing solutions in our community.

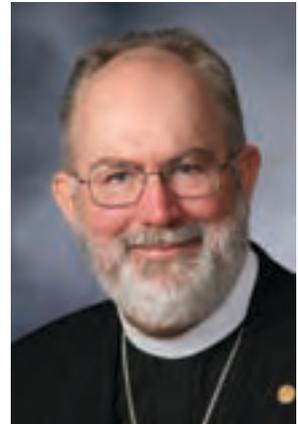
- Immanuel Community Services and the Community Lunch on Capitol Hill, Seattle, which are outgrowths of congregational ministries that expanded into the larger community.

- Lutheran Ministry Services Northwest, which provides chaplaincy for a number of institutions in the Seattle area.

- Compass Health, Everett, which provides a variety of mental health services in Snohomish County.

- Open Door Ministry, Seattle, which provides pastoral care for HIV/AIDS and gay and lesbian concerns.

I know congregations are also supporting local social ministry activities in ecumenical responses to the needs around us. We need to be about this important work. The widow, orphan and alien are those whom we are commanded to serve in the name of Christ (Deuteronomy 10:17-18). God has given us this work and it is ours to do. Truly this is God's work, our hands. □



**As the body of Christ, the church is to respond to Jesus' Great Commission and Great Commandment.**

# A new social ministry is born

**A**fter months of prayerful discernment, the Compass Center Board of Directors and LATCH have voted to merge. The shared goal is to sign necessary legal documents and operate as one entity by Jan. 1, 2010. Under a not-yet-determined name, the new organization will offer a strong, full-continuum of housing services for low-income people.

The Compass Center and LATCH are each small nonprofit groups with strong Lutheran connections. Both were formed by representatives of the Lutheran faith who responded to

people's needs in the larger community. Each serve as visible signs of the church's commitment to the poor and understanding of the gospel as a mandate to "love one another."

Begun as a ministry of hospitality and an emergency services center, the Compass Center evolved from a skid road mission into an agency that now provides a continuum of housing—from emergency shelter to permanent housing. LATCH was formed to be, and remains, a housing developer/owner of low-income housing. It uses a staff-supported, cooperative housing

model to promote the well-being of residents of the LATCH properties.

The new entity will be uniquely positioned to provide the Seattle and King County areas with the most comprehensive set of solutions available to community members who are homeless or in need of affordable housing and a supportive community. The resulting merger will include housing as well as other resources for those experiencing poverty, domestic violence, addiction and mental illness.

Rick Friedhoff, executive director of the Compass Center, said, "This

## 'Pathways to Wellness'

*(Names in this article have been changed to protect the families.)*

**A**small toddler clung to Ayan's skirt. She quietly rocked the baby in her arms while her oldest child, Ghedi, played nearby.

The Lutheran Community Services therapist listened carefully for details that might be inappropriate for his young ears, but in reality Ghedi had not only heard these stories, he had lived them. Ayan and her children were refugees from Somalia and had fled war and persecution. She was on the verge of homelessness. Their refugee assistance was running out and Ayan needed medical care from injuries sustained during their escape.

The therapist not only listened to Ayan but also helped her obtain medications, connect to resources that stabilized her family's housing situation and find a refugee women's support group.

Helping families such as Ayan's is one of the refugee assistance ministries of Lutheran Community Services Northwest. Pathways to Wellness: Integrating Refugee Health and Well-Being is a new LCS program providing critical screening and prevention services to vulnerable refugees who are new to our community.

Most refugees have experienced violence and persecution. Their medical treatment has been rudimentary or nonexistent. All of these factors cause refugees to be isolated, marginalized and in some cases, medically compromised. The rate of post-traumatic stress disorder among refugees is 10 times the rate among the general population.

Pathways assists refugees through:

- **Integrative health care.** Incorporating not only physical but also mental health through their first year here.
- **Outreach and training.** Reaching out to community-based organiza-

tions serving refugees to connect with those who can benefit from mental-health care.

• **Program evaluation.** Including continual program evaluation to identify the most successful screening and treatment tools.

This new program is the result of a two-year, collaborative effort with key community service agencies, resettlement organizations, city officials and refugee mental health providers to develop new avenues of early intervention and support. The U.S. resettles more refugees than any other country in the world and Washington state has the fifth highest number of refugee arrivals.

For more information about Pathways to Wellness, please contact the International Counseling and Community Services Program of Lutheran Community Services Northwest, Elizabeth Farmer, director, 206-816-3252. □

Anita Proudfoot  
*Proudfoot is director of church and community relations, Lutheran Community Services Northwest.*

merger provides the opportunity to be more effective advocates for the people we serve, to be better educators as to the health and personal challenges faced by the men, women and children who come to us seeking help. I believe that combined entity will result in a vibrant, strong and effective social ministry organization and a visible sign of the vitality and values of the Lutheran faith community.”

Cindy Jackson

*Jackson is director of fund development, the Compass Center, Seattle.*



**A child receives a special word from a friend.**

## Where age greets ageless

**A**s you walk through the parking lot to the front entrance, you notice a brightly colored playground and hear the sounds of young children playing. Upon entering the front door, you see a huge window behind which more children are crawling around and playing with toys. You might ask yourself how this can be. After all you are in a nursing home.

Welcome to Josephine Sunset Home, an intergenerational care facility located in Stanwood. Josephine’s mission is to care for individuals in our community, whether they be the elderly, frail, those rehabilitating from recent surgery or young children who need day care while their parents are at work. Today Josephine celebrates more than 100 years as a ministry associated with the Lutheran church and the ELCA. Josephine is licensed for 160 beds in the skilled nursing and rehabilitative health units, and 57 assisted living suites. We also have programs for

240 children ages 4 weeks to 12 years old.

Josephine strives to be innovative, and having lots of children mixed in with lots of elderly residents is innovative! It’s also part of our mission statement to have a “special focus on integrated programs.”

Children play a vital role in the wholeness and wellness of our intergenerational community. Their bright faces and laughter add a noticeable spark of energy to our home. Child-care classrooms are incorporated throughout the building with opportunities for all ages to interact just like an extended family. The elderly love seeing and hearing the sounds of the young children. Their energy is contagious. The children have many



**Nourishment of the soul and body—for both.**

experiences of being held, played and talked to by many extra grandmothers and grandfathers. It’s a very unique environment. □

Becky Bunke

*Bunke is community outreach director, Josephine Sunset Home, Stanwood.*