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We caught up with him recently to ask about his remarkable career.

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**It’s All About Connections at Immanuel Lutheran Church**

Through Jenni Weese lost her father to cancer, the kindness of hospice professionals who cared for him made a lasting impression. Jenni wanted to help others in hospice, and as a member of the activities committee at Immanuel Church in Buffalo, began thinking about how to involve congregants. She found a solution after attending a fundraiser at Lakeside Oasis, which is part of Buffalo’s Lake Ridge Care Center and provides comfort care for those facing the end of life.

The church requested and received seed money from Thrivent Financial in 2016 to create fleece blankets for hospice residents, along with nightshirts, pillows, towels, lap blankets and welcome bags for families. Immanuel Lutheran also donates snacks so hungry visitors don’t have to leave their loved ones.

Giving to others is vital to the church, which is affiliated with Augustana Elim Care Services. “It’s all about CONNECTIONS,” says Jenni. “If a warm blanket or small snack can make a difference at the end of one’s life, then it’s an honor to make a connection like that in our community.”

**Life-changing gifts**

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Beginnings | Mary of the Autumnal | 9-11-2018

What kept you awake at night? We do our utmost to train and supervise staff and develop policies, but unforeseen issues can always develop. Success depends on having a good, knowledgeable team.

You've been described as a visionary leader. What's your philosophy? Advice for other CEOs?

You have to listen to others, solicit their ideas and be open to what you hear. Now, with relinquishment, we have the opportunity to do great work for more people in more diversified ways and locations.

What thoughts do you have for non-profits to address the unique needs of older adults?

We should continue to be innovative and develop services that surround the core business we have become known for, while pursuing partnerships and collaborations with other like-minded organizations.

What are your future plans?

My wife and I are excited to enjoy our two grandchildren and embrace new opportunities as we look to the future.

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Baptist Health Care Center Embraces Infant and Baby Care

The last thing staff and residents at Augustana Elime Care Services Baptist Health Care Center in Bismarck expected was a baby—but in the past several years, they have had the opportunity to care for two of them.

Initially, the center was called by a local hospital to ask if they would take a baby with special needs until a longer term solution could be found.

New Trinity Springs Community in Florida Invites Older Adults to Live Well and Joyfully

For many years, Elime Care wanted to partner with a church community to expand its work outside of Minnesota. Several years ago, Elime Care found its partner in the Live Oak Community Church, affiliated with the Evangelical Free Church of America. The result is Trinity Springs in Oxford, Florida, which opens in early 2019 to provide care and services to older adults.

Trinity Springs will be adjacent to The Villages—the largest retirement community in the country— in early 2019. The community will open called Trinity Springs.

Stafﬁeld, residents and volunteers embraced the opportunity to rock, talk and sing to the baby. Presently, another baby is receiving care at the health care center. Some have donated speciﬁc items for her. Staff donated clothing and toys and everyone has pitched in to welcome the baby.

“Research shows the beneﬁts of intergenerational relationships, so we are very glad the babies are here,” says Director of Nursing Deanna Berg. “We are so pleased that Baptist Health Care Center is able to help not only older adults, but people of all ages in our community.”

Centenarian Mim Manfred Returns After Moving Away

Mim Manfred (known affectionately as Mim) was born 101 years ago, the youngest of six daughters. While her older sisters took piano lessons, Mim played by ear after listening to them. She was also a soprano soloist as a student and after graduation. Today, you can hear Mim playing at our Minneapolis campus events.

After marrying and raising a family, Mim became a kindergarten teacher for twenty years. When she and her husband grew older they moved to Augustana Apartments of Minneapolis, knowing more comprehensive care was available if they needed it.

Though Mim moved to another care community about a year ago, she returned to Augustana Apartments because she missed us “People here are so friendly,” she says. “There's something about being in a Christian atmosphere that also made me want to come back.”

We too missed Mim’s beautiful playing and her bubbly energy. In addition to all she does, Mim is also a generous donor “It’s important to me to give,” she says, “so people who are here in the future can enjoy what I am enjoying now.”

Director of Nursing Deanna Berg (at left) and Team Leader Licensed Practical Nurse Mirandy Schmitt say babies enrich the lives of staff, residents and volunteers at Baptist Health Care Center.

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As a faith-based nonprofit organization, Trinity Springs also offers a deep commitment to those we serve. Numerous studies cited by the Center for Medicare Advocacy show nonprofits rank higher than for-profit organizations for the quality of care they provide.

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Activity Committee members Vernetta, Jenni and Bridget Weese enjoy some family time while creating gifts for Lakeside Oasis residents.

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Let’s All Change the World

The church team at Immanuel Lutheran in Buffalo is on a mission to make a difference. After Jenni Weese lost her father to cancer, she wanted to help others in hospice, and through the church’s activities committee, she found a way to make a difference.

Jenni and her team have created fleece blankets and welcome packets for hospice residents, along with snacks for visitors. They also provide snacks to families and local organizations.

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