

# Every Day Matters

A NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF GENESIS HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE



## GENESIS HOSPICE HISTORY



### Making the most of our time

As we enter autumn, many people are busy with day-to-day tasks. The title of this publication is *Every Day Matters*, but how do we make every day matter? It is important to stop and appreciate all that we have in the moment. Ask yourself, how do I make every day matter? What matters to you? Is it an act of kindness? Or perhaps it is making a difference in someone else's life.

Whatever matters to you to make every day matter, I challenge you to do more of it. In this issue, you will find how your Genesis Hospice staff makes every day matter.

**Pebbles Thornton, MSN, RN, OCN**  
Director Genesis Cancer, Palliative Medicine and Hospice Services

It all began in 1986 when Good Samaritan Hospital broke ground for a nonprofit hospice program that opened in August 1987. The program offered home-based care with a freestanding seven-bed unit and was called Hospice of Southeast Ohio. It was funded with community-raised funds, and Dr. Robert Morrison donated the land for the facility.

In 1994 Bethesda Hospital started a home-based Hospice Care of Bethesda program with an inpatient unit.

In 1997 the two programs came together as Hospice of Genesis HealthCare System at the Good Samaritan Campus. The focus of providing caring and compassionate end-of-life care for patients and families from Muskingum, Perry and Morgan counties continued.

In 1998, the hospice building was renamed Morrison House after Dr. Robert Morrison, a beloved pediatrician whose practice stood in the current Morrison House location.

Now known as Genesis Hospice Care, our mission is to provide compassionate, comprehensive end-of-life care, support and assistance to those in the communities we serve. Services have expanded to add Guernsey, Licking, Noble and Coshocton counties. We are still a non-profit organization with 35 years of experience.

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## Spiritual matters

Would you say that each day of your life matters? What does it mean to say that every day matters? What exactly must happen in a day for it to matter, for it to be productive? Does something have to happen for it to be a day that matters in the multitude of days we experience? I'm asking a lot of questions to start this article.

This issue of *Every Day Matters* has, of course, focused on its title. What exactly do we have to accomplish in a day to say, "This has been a meaningful and purposeful day?" We need to explore this from a unique perspective.

I love that we chose *Every Day Matters* as the title of our newsletter, as it was a suggestion from one of our nurses. I believe this title is appropriate for a hospice newsletter when we consider the nature of our work and service to those with a terminal illness. I think it is important to try and live each day purposefully and meaningfully when you know the days that remain on this earth are limited. Is this necessarily true for those not facing the end of life, at least in a medically known way? In a sense, we are all facing the end of life each day because life is unpredictable. I imagine only a few of us live it this way, going about our day as if it might be our last. I wonder, too, if it is humanly possible to make each day matter.

For those who live each day with chronic pain or some other debilitating illness, I don't know that it is possible to live each day to the fullest, at least in the sense of what that means to most of us. Are we giving meaning to what it means to live each day in a fulfilling sense from a strictly humanistic viewpoint? I think that perhaps we are. I believe this is where the tension lies. What if we try to view our lives and days from God's perspective? We can never completely accomplish this, of course, but I believe we can at least try.

Chiefly, I believe that God desires for us to live each day with a pure heart, a love for one another, and knowing that his love for us is the most meaningful thing in our life. Not always easy to do, right? It is hard to live a spiritual life intertwined with our physical life, but that is exactly what God hopes for each of us. At times, it is almost as if the two are at odds with one another. We have moments of being in touch with the spiritual aspect of our being, but our bodies, being physical as they are, can and do seek dominance as we live out each day. To be human and genuinely make each day meaningful, I believe we must strive to be as spiritual as we are physical. By spiritual, I do not mean religious. Religion is a human manifestation of trying to understand God, who cannot possibly be wholly understood. I think spirituality can have religious undertones, but predominantly it should involve seeking to understand our existence and what that means individually and, in the broader sense as part of humanity. What makes our lives matter, whether it is every day or a whole lifetime, is intrinsically a spiritual question. It is a journey evolving every day and one that is a great mystery. Maybe living each day seeking to better integrate our spiritual nature with our bodily nature, to live intentionally and with love is the best understanding of what it means to make every day matter.

- Tim Patton, Chaplain  
*Hospice and Palliative Care*



## Every day matters

For hospice patient Michael Lindsay, June 13, 2022, marked a special day. Family and friends celebrated the love between Michael and Cassandra Skeens as they began a committed relationship as husband and wife. Onlookers watched and listened as the couple vowed to share the great and challenging adventure into the heights and depths of caring, affection, trust and understanding.

Genesis Hospice Chaplain Gary Cooper accepted the privilege to officiate their covenant of new beginnings as groom and bride. Together, they affirmed their willingness to seek patience and compassion for each other during challenging times. If suffering becomes a part of life, their belief in God and abiding love will empower them to endure. Indeed, every day matters in the lives of hospice patients. However, some days are extra special.



## Teaching grief relief activities

Recently, Genesis Hospice Care presented grief-based activities at the Y Summer Camp. Campers learned various ways to cope with difficult situations. The sessions included music therapy, memory boxes and calming globes. The Genesis Hospice Clowns added a touch of fun. We look forward to collaborating with this community program every summer.



## Every day matters in the garden

The Morrison House Hospice walled gardens have always been a vital part of the facility. Every patient room has a wall of windows with a view of secluded seasonal gardens. Peace and solitude are broken only by the busy squirrels and birds who enjoy the areas.

The presence of these gardens is central to our hospice mission. People often feel an innate connection to nature, whether in a wild forest or a carefully manicured garden. Dr. Oliver Sacks, Neurologist and Author, explained this connection in an essay titled *The Healing Power of Gardens*, published in the collection *Everything in Its Place: First Loves and Last Tales*. Dr. Sacks said that when we spend time in nature, at a beach, a forest or a garden, we find ourselves simultaneously calmed and reinvigorated, engaged in mind and refreshed in body and spirit.

A garden is a perfect meditation space to focus on what matters. The potted flowers require constant care and watering, and our blossoms are more beautiful and precious because they are temporary. This day, this moment is what matters in the garden. The Master Gardener Volunteers of Muskingum County, who maintain the Morrison House Gardens spring through fall, hope that patients, families and staff find comfort and renewal.

The 2022 volunteers Alice Graham, Lisa Browning, Mary Hildebrand, Betsy Kleinknecht, Lynne Skowronski and Nikki Slack would like to acknowledge the generosity of Dan Quinn, owner of the Sunshine Shop, who generously donates all the annual flowers each spring and this year included four large planters in memory of his wife, Kristy.

- Betsy Kleinknecht, Master Gardener Volunteer  
*Hospice and Palliative Care*

## Care when and where you need it

Receive hospice care anywhere you call home, including a family member's house, a nursing home or an assisted living residence. The hospice team will visit regularly and a hospice nurse is available 24/7 to answer questions or assist with medical concerns.

If you need more care than can be provided at home, ask about staying at Morrison House.

You may receive hospice care for an unlimited amount of time, depending on the course of the illness. If you believe hospice is a good option now, but change your mind later, you may stop receiving hospice services at any time. Resuming hospice care is as easy as a phone call to our office.

Genesis Hospice helps patients and their families live life to its fullest. If you'd like to volunteer, donate or need more information, call 740-454-5364 or go to [genesishcs.org](http://genesishcs.org).



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