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AIOS

Augsburg Lutheran Home and Village

Initial planning, begun in 2007, to transform Augsburg's Nursing Care Center from an institutional model to a more homelike environment continued to solidify in 2008.

Countless hours were spent meeting with architects who specialize in long-term care construction and who could interpret Augsburg's desire to make life more livable for residents. Numerous configurations were suggested, designed and re-designed. Input from members of the Lutheran Community was incorporated into plans through Forums held in various congregations throughout the area. Suggestions and thoughts on such ideas as kitchens where residents might get a snack or even make one at any time of day or night; rooms that provided more privacy than the traditional double rooms already in use; sitting areas for families and friends; and the construction of smaller neighborhoods where residents would live in family-like settings were all discussed. Reaction was immediate and positive. Providing this type of care to our residents was something that ignited imaginations and encouraged support.

Planning for funding had a somewhat different outcome. The state of the economy has had a slowing effect. As drawings were made and refined, taking ideas and suggestions from our constituents into account, sources for funding were also changing. Yet, believing in the strong support from a close knit community who support our mission to care for others as if each were the Lord Himself, plans for the most ambitious change to Assisted Living to our core services, continue to grow. We acknowledge the support of the Lutheran Home and Hospital Foundation which has pledged a five year grant to help see this project through.

We are also grateful for the support of a grant from the Lutheran Services for the Elderly Endowment at the ELCA Foundation which joined us in an opportunity to initiate the Transformation Program on a staff level. While realizing that transforming a building into a home could be challenging, Augsburg's Administration also realized that changing how care is given by individuals to individuals might be even more challenging, thus a two-year intensive period of "culture change" was begun. With 12 separate educational units designed, Augsburg's staff enthusiastically began to learn many aspects of changing how care is delivered to residents. The first component, a "Peaceful & Quiet Environment", which had previously been identified by staff and residents themselves as of utmost importance in creating a home like living environment was accepted, implemented and is on-going. Other modules such as Learning Circles, designed to increase communication, are being introduced to staff and residents. This training and education are the foundation for culture change and the assurance that when the construction is complete, Augsburg will be able to create and sustain an atmosphere of a loving, home-like environment set in a series of small neighborhoods.

Another aspect of the Transformation of Augsburg which resulted from study and input by various individuals is the inclusion of worship space that is safe and comfortable for the entire community. As plans developed for the Nursing Care Center, it became evident that an unexpected outcome would be available space for a new Worship Center. The Pastoral Care Committee

working with an architect affiliated with the Lutheran Church Extension Fund has designed a long desired Worship space with the capacity for all to worship together.

The entire project is one that has been blessed by the dedication of the persons who have worked to "Make Augsburg Home" a dream that affects every person in Augsburg's care.

Clare Workneh, development director