



NEWS RELEASE

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St. Matthew Center for Health in Park Ridge Celebrates 50th Year of Serving Area's Seniors

This year, St. Matthew Center for Health in Park Ridge celebrates its 50th year of providing health care services to the area's seniors.

St. Matthew, a program of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI), has long displayed a deep commitment to meeting the individual needs of seniors in the community. Its highly dedicated staff works to personalize and adapt activities that meet residents' specific needs and reflect each individual's life-long leisure interests. Regular outings take residents shopping, bowling, fishing and even sight-seeing to Navy Pier.

It's not surprising, then, that during the past three years, St. Matthew's recreation services staff and volunteers have won awards from the Life Services Network and area chambers of commerce for their outstanding work in providing life-enhancing programming.

In addition, as a part of the faith-based Lutheran Social Services of Illinois, St. Matthew provides opportunities for residents to maintain a strong spiritual life. Staff members include a full-time chaplain, chaplain intern and seminary student, all of whom work together to provide ecumenical worship services, Bible study, religious celebrations and counseling.

"We are very pleased and blessed to have St. Matthew Center for Health as part of our ministry for seniors," says Rev. Dr. Denver Bitner, LSSI president and CEO. "Being part of celebration of the St. Matthew family during this important anniversary year is very exciting. It is truly a pleasure to serve seniors in an organization with such a rich history."

St. Matthew Center for Health started as a dream of Dr. David Davy, a Lutheran pastor from Chicago who was interested in meeting the needs of older persons. The women's Social Mission Auxiliary raised a significant portion of the funds to build St. Matthew. Ground was broken in 1958, and the first residents moved in

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Lutheran Social Services of Illinois

during the spring of 1959. The first phase of the complex consisted of three residential wings, dining facilities and a chapel.

In 1965, an addition created two enclosed courtyards, increased the number of rooms and added a larger chapel. The east building, with four separate care areas, was completed in 1976. St. Matthew became Medicare certified in 1989 and began a specialized dementia care area – called Faith Place – in 1993. St. Matthew has grown from 31 resident rooms in 1959 to 121 rooms. St. Matthew also houses Rainbow Hospice’s inpatient unit, the Ark.

Originally called St. Matthew Lutheran Home, the name was changed in 2004 to reflect the continuum of services, which focuses on health, wellness and independence. St. Matthew serves people of all faiths.

One of the highlights of the year-long celebration of St. Matthew’s 50th anniversary will be a gala dinner dance on Saturday, April 25, at the Park Ridge Country Club, located at 636 N. Prospect Avenue. The evening will begin at 6 p.m. with cocktails and a silent auction. Proceeds from the event will benefit St. Matthew clients by funding continued enhancements to residential areas of the building. Tickets to the gala may be obtained by calling 847/993-4211.

For more information, call 847/825-5531, or visit www.StMatthewCenter.org.

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About St. Matthew Center for Health

St. Matthew Center for Health, a program of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI), has served the community since 1959. St. Matthew offers rehabilitation services, long-term care, specialized dementia unit, respite, and support for hospice and palliative care services.