“A generous person will prosper; whoever blesses others will be blessed.”
—PROVERBS 11:25

LSSI Celebrates 150 Years of Transforming Lives

On October 31, 1867, in the town of Berlin, Illinois (now Swedona), the doors of a new orphanage opened to receive its first ward, young Edward from Galesburg. When Edward crossed the threshold, that small step marked the beginning of a long history of service to people and communities across Illinois.

In 1871, the children moved to nearby Andover Children’s Home, in Andover, the first Lutheran charitable institution in the state and one of the earliest in the country. Dorothy Norberg, 76, a lifelong resident of Andover, remembered her arrival there. “I got to the home, and they were very good to me, very compassionate and caring,” she recalled. “I had a roof over my head. I had food on the table, and I had clothes.” Norberg was later adopted into a “loving home.”

Throughout our history, we have been known as ‘Lutheran,’ a steadfast presence in people’s lives,” said Mark Stutrud, President and CEO of Lutheran Social Services of Illinois (LSSI). “We are privileged to share in life in ways that bring love, support, and transformation.”

Homes for children orphaned by a cholera epidemic

(Continued on page 21)
In 1933, children in Bill Fleck’s Sunday school class were asked to save pennies and nickels to donate to the nearby Nachusa Children’s Home. Ever since, he’s spent his life dedicated to supporting LSSI’s programs and mission.

“I’m 93 years old, and LSSI has been part of my life for 85 of those years,” Fleck said.

Finding ways to support LSSI has been simple for Fleck and his late wife, Jean, who was also a devoted volunteer. When a congregation he was a part of disbanded, he pushed to provide over $40,000 of its investment fund to LSSI.

An ambassador for LSSI’s programs, he encourages others to do the same. “It just involves getting out and spreading the message,” he said. “I remember collecting for Edison Park Home in front of Jewel. Everyone would provide a dime here, maybe a dollar there, and we’d end up with over a thousand dollars.”

Fleck knows that support like his will lead to another 150 strong years of ministry for LSSI. His advice? Become a representative to your congregation. Use your talents to help others and ask them to support LSSI. Give up presents on your birthday! For his 90th he asked for donations to go to LSSI or his church. Based on his lifetime experience, he knows such acts make a difference.

LSSI has a history that sets it apart from other organizations. At the same time, the history binds the current participants in a bond of gratitude and with a challenge to pass on to others that which has been received from the past. There is an understanding that what has been received has been given to be nurtured and enhanced and shaped to fit the needs of the present day.”

— REV. JOHN P. PETERSON IN LSSI’S A HISTORY OF SERVICE
As LSSI celebrates 150 years of transforming lives, we’re proud of our history that has brought us to this milestone. As we look to the coming years, we yearn to do more.

Our strategic plan, that I have written about in this newsletter before, is rooted in caring for the whole person. Responding to the Gospel, taking the view of the whole person requires us to promote the dignity of others with greater compassion and respect. We must understand healing involves more than treating symptoms. We must also apply evidenced-based practices. We understand each client, no matter their age, needs a network of support. And as we assist them in creating positive change in their lives, our staff must have the technology to encourage, manage, and track our client’s success!

All of this is accomplished in the natural setting—the home. Home is the place where we feel a sense of permanence—it has a magnetic pull. Home acts as a point of alignment with the outside world and allows for a sense of personal control.

As we look to LSSI’s future, this is what occupies our hearts and minds: to create a generative movement of care and service, and to help build lives that are safe, with a greater sense of well-being and permanency for the people we serve.

This is our vision as we enter the next 150 years. We are grateful for your support that has been an integral part of our history and will be vital to our future.

In Faith,

Mark A. Stutrud
President and Chief Executive Officer

LSSI’s Church Connection

For 150 years, LSSI has been proud to provide healing, justice, and wholeness to the people of Illinois. These good deeds could not have been accomplished without the continued generous support of congregations throughout the state. As the social service branch of the three Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Illinois synods, and with the support of countless other congregations, LSSI continues to be an advocate for neighbors who need support.

LSSI was started by groups of Lutheran congregations banding together in order to provide a greater good. You and your congregations are the foundation to the lives we are able to transform.

Getting involved with LSSI is easy, and we appreciate your support whether it be your time, money, talents, or simply an offering of support. To get your congregation involved in one of our ministries, contact Susan Greeley at Susan.Greeley@LSSI.org or 847.635.4617.
Lutheran Social Services of Illinois does not discriminate in admission to programs or employment in compliance with the law.

**Events**

Please mark your new 2018 calendars with the following important dates and check LSSI.org for more details.

**Sunday, April 22**  
Good Shepherd Sunday

**Saturday, April 28**  
Spring Fling presented by The Women’s Network  
The Westin Chicago, Itasca

**Tuesday, May 8**  
Lutheran Day, Springfield

**Saturday, October 6**  
37th Annual Amicus Certus Celebration  
Union League Club, Chicago

For more information, contact Mariah Heinz at 847.635.4656 or Mariah.Heinz@LSSI.org.

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**Good Shepherd Society**

LSSI is a constant, stable presence in the lives of our clients. By joining the Good Shepherd Society, a group of donors who give monthly to LSSI, you, too, can be a steady presence in LSSI’s mission.

It’s easy to join the Good Shepherd Society and become an automatic monthly donor. Simply visit LSSI.org and click on “donate now” at the top of the page. There you can elect to have automatic payments at any time you choose.

You can also arrange to have your monthly gift deducted from a savings or checking account. For more information contact Linda Wilberg at 847.635.4638 or Linda.Wilberg@LSSI.org.

**Transforming lives one month at a time!**

“I find that making a commitment to donate monthly to LSSI has helped me keep my priority for this organization up front.”  
— GOOD SHEPHERD SOCIETY MEMBER

**Thank you** to the more than 200 people who attended the 2017 Amicus Certus Gala—A Harvest of Blessings celebrating LSSI’s 150th Anniversary!

Through corporate and individual sponsorships, the wine reveal, and the appeal for LSSI, the event raised $130,000 for our programs that help transform lives across Illinois!

We would like to extend a special thanks to the Amicus Certus Event Committee for all their efforts to create a special evening. LSSI acknowledges the three Illinois ELCA synods for their ongoing leadership and support: (pictured from left after Mark Stutrud) Bishop Jeff Clements, Northern Illinois Synod; Bishop John Roth, Central Southern Synod; Bishop Wayne Miller, Metro Chicago Synod. LSSI does its work in the name of these synods and its members and is grateful for their commitment.