



ADVENT CHRISTIAN RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES

COMMUNITIES OF CARING. SEASONED WITH GRACE.

REPORT TO THE EASTERN REGIONAL DELEGATES

The headlines in the trade journals paint a stark picture. “Empty beds, untenable staffing needs push the nation’s rural nursing homes closer to the brink,” stated one outlet. Another: “Faced with financial pressures and ever-changing regulatory oversight, non-profit organizations are increasingly exiting the nursing home space.”

The uncertain path now traveled by providers of 24-hour senior care isn’t a strange one to Vernon Green – the nursing home at Vernon Homes in Vermont. The dynamics noted above, even more challenging as the remnants of the Covid pandemic continue to linger, have been daunting. But dim as the path may be, we’ve been encouraged by several realities that have brought light along the way in the past year.

First, there’s the strength of the ACRC community. Vernon Green doesn’t stand alone. Flanked by Vernon Hall and Vernon Birches on the Vermont campus along with Meetinghouse Village campus in Maine, our human and material resources as a whole serve to sustain our respective parts.

There’s also our historic profile as senior care innovators. “Re-invent or die” has been the catchphrase of recent years for care providers who wish to survive the times. Fortunately, innovation was one of our corporate values long before it became a necessity. For years, you’ve surely heard about the revolutionary care model we’ve been pursuing called the “Green House.” This transformative model will replace the current Vernon Green with a “real home” approach to nursing care that replaces the traditional, hospital-like model familiar to many. Details can be found at www.greenhousevt.org.



A Green House Living Room

That said, one of the year’s brightest beams on the path appeared late last year when the state government issued its Certificate of Need authorizing the replacement of Vernon Green with the Green House facility. After a year assembling the complex, 240-page application, we received approval last December to move ahead. This isn’t the only hurdle: an onerous Vermont environmental permit is the next challenge. But the CON is the biggest of them all, and we trust it will facilitate the rest until groundbreaking in 2025.

It was an encouraging year as well in Kittery, Maine, where Meetinghouse Village continued to enjoy strong satisfaction rankings among its resident family and high demand for its services. The latter yielded over 98% occupancy and stable fiscal operations, repeating previous years’ trends.

Perhaps the most gratifying light on this past year’s journey was the support from friends of ACRC. We received gift income of over \$150,000 from our open-handed family of donors – one of the highest on record. These gifts – and the hearts behind them – help make possible the program distinctives and improvements that the fees we collect cannot.

We’re also grateful for the capacity at both campuses to subsidize Advent Christian pastors, missionaries, and other denominational workers whose income is not sufficient to meet care and residential needs. Continuation of our “Minister’s Fund” is all the more poignant since it was the founding principle on which the old “Vernon Home” was established in 1920.



North Campus, Meetinghouse Village

What’s not mentioned above is a hidden source of strength, namely, our history of 104 years. ACRC and its communities stand on ground laid through the faith, perseverance, toil, and prayers of countless servants whose names fade with years. But heeding the words from the old book, “Rise up before the aged and honor the gray-haired; I am the Lord,” they sustained a mission that we who follow them are confident will endure – even in the complexities of our times.

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