

## Emmanuel Home Chaplaincy Proposal

**Request:** That Classis Alberta North support the implementation of a Chaplaincy program for the Christian Senior Citizens Homes Society of Northern Alberta operating as Emmanuel Home. Emmanuel Home requests that Classis provide financial assistance in the amount of \$150,000 over three years to hire a qualified full-time Chaplain (CPE or working towards) who will be endorsed/ordained by the Christian Reformed Church.

**Grounds:** With over 250 residents presently living at Emmanuel Home, the needs for pastoral care have increased beyond what local churches can provide. Today, the average age of our residents has risen to 85 years of age. Spiritual needs tend to increase in proportion to the multiple losses associated with aging, losses such as displacement from home, loss of health, loss of independence and loss of loved ones. A Chaplain can establish healthy relationships with residents during good times and provide consistent, ongoing support during times of pain and loss.

The Chaplain will provide spiritual support to all residents of Emmanuel Home regardless of church affiliation. With most residents (56%-2019) being members of the Christian Reformed Church who have been faithful supporters of local congregations for most of their lives, we together can acknowledge our communal responsibility to care for our senior members as they age.

This proposal is endorsed and supported by the Council of Trinity Christian Reformed Church with a willingness to enter into a *Covenant of Joint Supervision* with Emmanuel Home once a qualified Chaplain is hired.

**Funding Proposal:** Our request to Classis is the approval of financial support of \$150,000 over a three-year period to help Emmanuel Home establish a Chaplaincy Program to benefit all the residents of Emmanuel Home. Along with the hiring of a qualified Chaplain there will also be other costs associated with the development of a program of discipleship, education, spiritual care and community outreach which will provide benefits to all the supporting churches in Classis Alberta North.

Emmanuel Home has recently been consulting with other groups/communities in Classis Alberta North who are interested in establishing a seniors' home in their communities. With more than 45 years of experience and service, Emmanuel Home is well-positioned to provide leadership in this area. With the addition of a qualified chaplain, there will be increased expertise and support to be shared with congregations and communities through pulpit supply and consultations as our senior population is predicted to significantly increase over the coming years.

This proposed funding formula will see descending financial support from Classis over the next three years. It will be concluded with an extensive review of the project and final report. The benefits to Classis Alberta North will continue to benefit all congregations in Classis Alberta North for years to come. See as follows:

Proposed Chaplaincy Project Funding		
	Classis	Emmanuel Home
Year One	\$75,000	\$25,000
Year Two	\$50,000	\$50,000
Year Three	\$25,000	\$75,000

Emmanuel Home will continue to raise funds to support the Chaplaincy Program by encouraging all churches in Classis Alberta North to continue to include Emmanuel Home on their annual collections schedule. Other fundraising efforts will also be increased to make this project self-sustaining by Year Four and beyond.

**Our History:** In 1968, the Christian Seniors Citizens Homes Society of Northern Alberta was registered as a charitable not-for-profit society under the Alberta Societies Act legislation. In 1972, Emmanuel Home opened its doors as a brand-new senior living facility offering 36 one-bedroom and 10 bachelor suites. With continued

growth 51 suites were added in 1995. With the West and Centre wings continually fully occupied, expansion was again necessary and in 2012, the East wing was completed adding an additional 56 new suites.

The waiting list continued to grow so plans were then finalized in 2017 to add 50 more suites (30-2-bedroom, 20-1 bedroom). Early this year, the North wing was completed and is now fully occupied. This brings the total number of suites to almost 200 and total population to well over 250 residents.

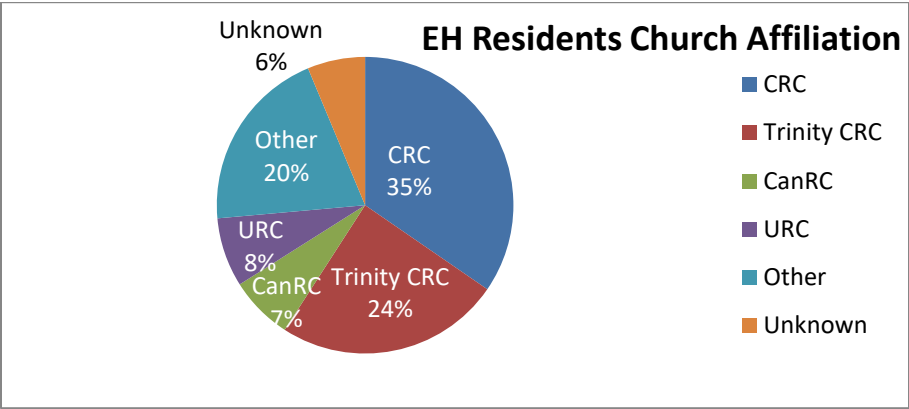
**Background:** Emmanuel Home’s mission is to offer seniors a Christian environment that is safe and comfortable so they can live in dignity. Emmanuel Home accommodates those who desire independent living as well as those who require more care through supportive living facilities. All residents can benefit from a health care program provided through Alberta Health Services that includes care from Certified Health Care Aides (HCA) and/or a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) who is on site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is also a Registered Nurse available on call.

Providing more than just seniors’ housing and healthcare, Emmanuel Home is committed to meeting the physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual needs of residents in our Christian community. Recreation staff provide a wide range of programs and activities including fitness and exercise programs, entertainment, social events and outings to attractions, as well as daytrips to cultural events and activities throughout our community.

**Spiritual Care:** At the present time, Emmanuel Home provides limited services to meet the spiritual needs of our residents. We offer a Wednesday morning (twice monthly) devotion time facilitated by various pastors from the local Reformed Christian Community.

Emmanuel Home’s neighbour, Trinity Christian Reformed Church through its pastor, Rev. Rich deLange, provides spiritual support and services to some residents of Emmanuel Home who are members there, and at times they have also supported other residents. Over the years this church community has borne the bulk of the responsibility for pastoral care to our residents. With Trinity’s expanding ministries their resources are now stretched.

**Resident Faith Communities:** Emmanuel Home residents come from many communities throughout Northern Alberta, (i.e. Edson, Neerlandia, Leduc, Sherwood Park, Stony Plain and Edmonton). They also represent several different faith communities. At the present time, 59% of residents belong to the Christian Reformed Church with 15% indicating that they are members of another Reformed church. Of the 159 residents that were included in the survey in 2019, 20% indicated that they belonged to other church denominations and 6% did not indicate any church affiliation.



**Benefits of a Chaplaincy Program:** With a Chaplain who will focus on building stronger relationships with churches in Classis Alberta North and the residents of Emmanuel Home, residents will benefit from ongoing pastoral care and can still continue to feel connected with the church of their membership. With improved communication, local pastors, elders and deacons will better be able to include these members in their fellowship.

Residents often experience failing health and loss of independence. With these losses come feelings of loneliness and discouragement. Though well cared for by kind and capable staff, residents often long for someone to talk to. Residents can often feel lonely and isolated and could benefit from having someone with whom they can share a story from the past or someone to talk to about personal and spiritual matters. They will benefit from someone who makes them feel valued and included in the community.

It is also common for family members to experience a variety of conflicting emotions when someone close to them moved into Emmanuel Home. Pastoral care can help plan for how to best continue in the new mode of caring for and loving their family member or friend. Families are not perfect, and some people live with painful histories and present difficulties. We all need to come together to provide the best care for our aged relatives. A Chaplain can engage with residents and their families and friends in active pastoral care which is inclusive and clearly recognizes the impact that these transitions have on valued relationships.

#### **Chaplain Representative Duties**

- Will visit residents in their suites or when they are in hospital, conduct worship services, Bible studies, walk with residents and support their spiritual wellbeing
- Will pray with residents, read scripture and provide pastoral care
- Will minister to dying residents as they comfort them in their last chapter of the journey by being present, listening and caring.
- Will support residents and their families through end-of-life and palliative care
- Will support families when a loved one passes away; officiate at memorial services when requested
- Will bring hope and encouragement to every resident
- Will administer Lord's Supper when residents are unable to attend church
- Will provide much needed companionship to those who are lonely
- Will support employees who work with residents and families on a day-to-day basis
- Will enhance pastoral care with the use of trained volunteers

#### **Possible Job Description (Emmanuel Home)**

**Purpose:** The role of the chaplain at Emmanuel Home is based on the recognition that all human beings have spiritual needs, whether such needs are specifically religious or not (e.g. for meaning and purpose; for love; for forgiveness; for creativity; for hope). The chaplain engages the spiritual needs of residents, enhances the spiritual life of every person in the community, and advocates for spiritual values in community life through explicitly religious channels and spiritual programs; through spiritual programs that are open to those of all faiths or those of none; and through their care, presence, and counsel.

#### **Essential Responsibilities:**

##### Pastoral presence:

- Build relationships of trust through visits, presence, counsel; conversations with residents, staff and others.
- As part of the Health Care Team, regularly visit residents. Visit residents in hospital facilities as appropriate.
- Collaborate with staff in assessing resident needs and proposing and/or delivering appropriate responses, especially when facing transitions of level of care.
- As appropriate, counsel residents and their families, as well as staff, especially in response to issues of life transitions, end of life, grief, and loss.
- Work with residents and staff to assist new residents in their transition into community life.
- Collaborate with employees to help meet needs of staff during times of crisis, as appropriate.

Worship:

- Lead or provide regular worship services within the community and be available to the churches of Classis Alberta North for a minimum of 10 services per year.
  - Lead or provide special services that are inclusive and welcoming to all residents. These may include special celebrations or memorial services.
- Coordinate with Pastors and congregations from supporting churches and other faiths to provide appropriate services as fit the needs of the residents.

Programmatic:

- Organize a diverse spiritual program to meet the needs of all residents.
- Collaborate with staff to initiate or participate in programs and activities aimed at fostering wellness and spiritual well-being.
- In consultation with the Executive Director, provide support and training for staff on topics such as counseling at times of loss, caregiver support, bioethics, etc.

Administrative:

- Collaborate and consult regularly with the Executive Director regarding the overall spiritual care program and spiritual health of the community.
- Attend meetings with the Edmonton CRC ministerial and chaplains of other faith communities.
- Communicate with the Program Director about changes in plans and new developments in the Spiritual Care program in the community. Consult with the Program Director as needed.
- Provide oversight and training for resident volunteers assisting with chapel activities.
- Provide recruitment, screening, oversight and training for volunteer or visiting clergy or seminarians or lay pastoral care volunteers.
- Participate in staff and resident committee meetings, as appropriate.

**Requirements:**

- Master of Divinity (MDiv) or Master of Theological Studies (MTS) or equivalent from an accredited college or university or theological school.
- Ordained in good standing with the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) and/or ecclesiastical endorsement for specialized ministry; or in the ordination process.
- One or more units in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). A CPE residency program is preferred.
- Ability to provide pastoral care to residents and staff, regardless of religious or spiritual background or belief and to support the whole community as an ongoing, organic system.
- Special skills in non-judgmental listening and providing counsel, guidance in ethical decision making, and mediation and conflict resolution.
- Ability to work collaboratively.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality in accordance with provincial and federal regulations.
- Ability to distinguish between spiritual counseling and psychotherapy, and—in consultation with other staff members—a willingness to make referrals to appropriate professionals.
- Ability to respond effectively to the most sensitive inquiries or complaints.
- Ability to apply logical thinking to a wide range of intellectual and practical problems.
- Ability to deal with a variety of abstract and concrete variables.

**Preference given to applicants with the following skills and experience:**

- Training and experience in gerontology, geriatric care, and/or the spirituality of aging.
- Experience in a residential/clinical setting.
- Experience with palliative care, hospice, or end of life services.
- Experience leading a church congregation.
- Some prior experience with business or in a business environment.

**Reporting Relationships:**

- This position reports to the Executive Director/Program Director.
- This position does not directly supervise other employees.
- This position will be under the denominational accountability of Trinity CRC of Edmonton or another local CRC council.