

# WINTER BEACON

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2025

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## *A Season of Hope*

As we step into the winter season at the Leamington Mennonite Home, we are reminded of the unique warmth this time of year brings—created not only by festive lights and familiar melodies, but by the sense of community we share. The weeks ahead offer many opportunities to gather, celebrate, and reflect on the blessings of the past year. Throughout December, our residents will enjoy concerts from a variety of musical groups, each bringing their own contribution to the joy and beauty of Christmas. We are also looking forward to our Christmas Open House on December 11<sup>th</sup>, featuring the annual tractor parade, followed by hot drinks, seasonal treats, and warm fellowship with friends, families, and neighbours. Our chapel gardens will once again be transformed into a glowing winter display—an inviting space for gathering and a reminder of the light of Jesus Christ that guides us into a new year.

We are especially grateful to continue our Christmas Stocking Project, a cherished tradition that brings delight to residents each year through thoughtful, personalized gifts prepared by resident families and our staff. As the holidays come to a close, we look forward to the calm and renewal that January brings, stepping into a new year with open hearts and hopeful minds.

Wishing you a season filled with peace, joy, and meaningful moments of connection.

*Jeff Konrad, Administrator*



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# Seasonal Reflection

ANNA-LISA SALO | LMH CHAPLAIN

When Christmas rolls around each year, we become hyper-focused on gift-giving. Here at the Home, each resident in LTC and RR receives a Christmas stocking filled with treats and gifts. Staff are invited to help with filling these stockings, ensuring no resident is left out. It's a small act that brings a big smile to their faces on Christmas morning.

When it comes to gift giving, the story of the wise men plays a prominent role in the nativity narrative. Those pilgrims "from the East" who navigated their way to the Christ child by following a star came bearing a strange assortment of gifts. Through their presentation of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, the wise men paid homage to this newborn king. The star guided them to the place where giving became a way of showing devotion.

In our senior's home, giving gifts may look different. Sometimes they come wrapped in the form of a surprise visit, a smile, a phone call, a card, a kind word, a listening ear, or a gentle touch. These gifts may not be covered in colourful paper, but they shine just as brightly. Each act of kindness is a reflection of the star's light that guides others toward the love of God. Just as the star pointed the wise men to Jesus, the Prince of Peace, our residents can rest in the assurance that His peace is eternal and His presence is near. Every gift we give, no matter how great or small, becomes part of God's light that shines in our community, and illuminates the ways in which Christ's presence is breaking into our world.

# Stargiving by Ann Weems

What I'd really like to give you for Christmas  
Is a star...

Brilliance in a package,  
Something you could keep in the pocket of your jeans  
Or in the pocket of your being,  
Something that would never snuff out or tarnish,  
Something you could hold in your hand,  
Something for wonderment,  
Something for pondering,  
Something that would remind you of  
What Christmas has always meant:  
God's Advent Light in the Darkness of this world.

But Stars are only God's for giving,  
And I must be content to give you words and wishes and  
Packages without Stars.  
But I can wish you Life  
As radiant as the Star

That announced the Christ Child's coming,  
And as filled with awe as the Shepherds who stood  
Beneath its Light,

And I can pass on to you the Love  
That has been given to me,  
Ignited countless times by others  
Who have knelt in Bethlehem's Light.

Perhaps, if you ask, God will give you a Star.

*In Christ's peace,*

*Anna-Lisa Salo, LMH Chaplain*



# Autumn 2025 Activity Highlights:

This autumn, residents enjoyed a full season of outings, creativity, and community. We took several shopping trips to Walmart and Giant Tiger, began each week with uplifting Monday sing-alongs led by Brenda Fischer, and our retirement residents ventured to Thiessen's Orchards for warm fritters and coffee. Seasonal crafting filled our mornings, from painting pumpkins and creating "What We're Thankful For" turkeys to making poppy crafts in honour of Remembrance Day. RR residents also designed beautiful fall wreaths with Erna Dick, and many enjoyed browsing the Artisan Market hosted in our JC Neufeld Auditorium. On Halloween, our residents delighted in welcoming little trick-or-treaters, gathering together to hand out candy and share in the joy of the evening. Each Tuesday, our residents enjoyed musical entertainment and attended Worship services on Wednesdays, led by several of our supporting churches.



## Meet Your Neighbour!

### **Margaret Toews, Resident of our Retirement Home**

Margaret has been part of our Retirement Home community since 2021. Before that, she and her husband Peter lived in our Heritage Townhouses, where they built many meaningful connections until Peter's passing in 2014. Married for 62 years, they raised three wonderful children: Ron, Sharon, and Elaine. Sadly, Elaine passed away in 2023 after a prolonged illness.

Born and raised in Ukraine until the age of 16, she moved with her family to Germany, where she worked on a farming estate. After immigrating to Canada in 1948, she lived in Guelph, working for a university professor and caring for her ailing mother. She later became a receptionist at a financial lending company in Kitchener. After marrying Peter, she joined him in running the family farm. She also dedicated 25 years as a volunteer at the Etcetera Shop in Leamington, contributing greatly to the community she cherishes.

Margaret has a lifelong passion for sewing, knitting, quilting and crocheting, and she enjoys learning about a wide range of subjects. A woman of deep faith, she practices her Mennonite beliefs by watching church services online and reading her Bible regularly. At LMH, Margaret attends activities and enjoys playing games with fellow residents. In the warmer months, she loves spending time gardening and nurturing plants with care in our courtyard.

We are grateful to have Margaret as part of our LMH family!

# Seasonal Snapshots: Autumn at LMH





## Meet Your Neighbour!

### Irene Froese, Resident of LTC

Irene has been a resident of Long-Term Care since January 14, 2020. Before that, she lived in our Heritage Gardens Apartments on Pickwick Drive and later moved into the Retirement Residence in 2015, following the passing of her husband, Jake, in 2013. At that time, they had been married an incredible 65 years. Together, they raised eight children, many of whom remain closely connected to LMH.

Born in Saskatchewan, Irene moved to the Windsor-Essex area at the age of seven. She cherished her roles as a mother and wife, and also enjoyed a fulfilling working life. She was the caterer at UMEI, preparing meals for all of their events, and volunteered at the Etcetera Shop. She was also part of a Verein at NLUMC, contributing to her church community in meaningful ways. In her leisure time, Irene has always enjoyed quilting, sewing, reading puzzles, and listening to well-loved hymns such as Jesus Loves Me. She fondly remembers travelling to Florida and Northern Michigan with friends. She's the proud Oma of 22 grandchildren & 30 great grandchildren! Today, she continues to enjoy frequent visits with her children here at LMH—especially her daughter Ruth, who also resides on Pickwick Drive. Irene is a valued member of our LMH community, and we are grateful for the warmth, faith, and kindness she brings to those around her.

## *This or That? - Winter Edition*

Winter Morning or Winter Evening

Hot Chocolate or Tea

Snowy Walk or Cozy Indoors

Christmas Music or Quiet Moments

Holiday Lights or Candlelight

Reading a Book or Watching a Movie

Gingerbread or Shortbread

Warm Sweater or Festive Scarf

New Year's Reflections or New Year's Resolutions

# Flu Season is Upon Us

## Please Note:

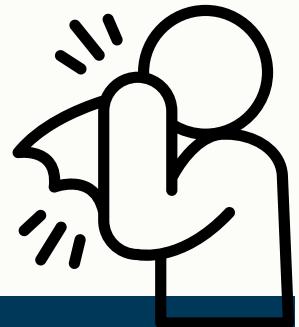
In a community environment like LMH, illnesses can spread more quickly due to shared spaces, close interactions, and vulnerable populations.

An outbreak can lead to:

- Increased risk of complications for seniors
- Temporary restrictions on group activities and visitation
- Additional infection-control measures to protect residents

Your cooperation helps us maintain a safe, healthy environment for everyone who calls LMH home.

Together, we can help reduce the spread of illness and keep our community well this winter!



## Symptoms

Please refrain from visiting our Home if you are experiencing the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough or sore throat
- Runny or congested nose
- Fatigue or weakness
- Headache or body aches
- Nausea or loss of appetite
- Vomiting or diarrhea

## Prevention

- Wash hands often with soap and warm water
- Use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting resident care areas
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your sleeve or a tissue
- Avoid visiting if you are feeling unwell
- Wear a mask during periods of increased illness or if directed by staff
- Consider receiving the annual influenza vaccine

# Seasonal Craft Corner

## Winter Luminary Jar

### Materials Needed:

- 1 clear mason jar or glass jar
- Mod Podge or clear-drying glue
- Soft paintbrush or sponge brush
- Epsom salts or faux snow
- Ribbon, twine, or neutral lace (optional)
- Battery-operated tealight or LED candle

### Instructions:

#### 1. Prepare Your Jar

Make sure the jar is clean and dry. Remove any labels so the glow shines through smoothly.

#### 2. Apply the Frosted Coat

Brush a thin, even layer of Mod Podge around the outside of the jar.

Your choice of:

- full frosted look
- snow-dusted bottom, fading upward

#### 3. Add the “Snow”

While the jar is still tacky, gently roll it in Epsom salts or sprinkle faux snow from above. This creates a sparkling, wintery texture that reflects the candlelight beautifully.

#### 4. Add Finishing Touches

Tie ribbon or twine around the top rim—keep it simple and elegant.

Optional additions:

- A small evergreen sprig
- A tiny charm or bell
- A neutral bow

#### 5. Light It Up!

Place a battery tealight inside.

The jar will give off a soft, warm glow perfect for the winter season!





## Employee Spotlight

### Meet Kris Lowes, our LTC Ward Clerk!

Kris has been a valued member of the LMH team for nearly 26 years. She takes great joy in supporting our residents and helping them with the tasks that may have become more challenging with age. Born and raised in Leamington, Kris attended the University of Windsor, graduating with Honours from the Social Sciences Department. Before joining LMH, she worked as an administrative clerk and bookkeeper for Sunparlour Contracting and Knights Sanitation.

Kris has been married to Richard for 37 years, and together they have two wonderful children, Amanda and Dylan. While she is still patiently waiting for grandchildren, she happily enjoys her grand-dogs, Rusty and Max, and grand-cat, Gus. Her mother also lives close by—just across the street in our Heritage Townhouses. In her spare time, Kris loves exploring her creative side through painting and crafting of all kinds. Her warm spirit, creativity, and dedication to staff and residents make her a cherished part of life at LMH.

## Did You Know?



- The Home's independent-living community includes two apartment buildings: Homeview Apartments (16 units) and Pickwick Apartments (38 units).
- Homeview was added soon after LMH's original facility, giving seniors access to independent, affordable living close to the Home's care services.
- Recently, LMH completed updates to the kitchens in the Homeview Apartments, improving everyday living for residents.
- In Pickwick Apartments — built in 1979 — a major renovation project is still underway, modernizing units and building infrastructure to ensure safe, welcoming homes for the future.



**After**



**Before**

### Pickwick Apartments Renovation Update

To date, eleven apartments have been fully renovated to meet the safety needs of our residents. Two more apartment renovations will begin at the beginning of December.

With many thanks to our incredible community, over \$120,000 was raised at our 60<sup>th</sup> Diamond Anniversary Celebration that took place on November 8<sup>th</sup> at Mastronardi Estate Winery. These funds will go directly towards completing the rest of the upgrades as units become available.

# Winter Wellness

## *Tips for Staying Healthy This Season*



Winter brings beauty, rest, and reflection, but it can also present challenges for health and well-being. Here are a few gentle reminders to help everyone stay comfortable, safe, and energized through the colder months:

- *Stay Hydrated*

Cooler temperatures can make it easy to forget about fluids. Keep a water bottle nearby or enjoy warm beverages like herbal tea, broth, or decaf coffee throughout the day.

- *Boost Your Immunity*

Eating balanced meals, including fruits, vegetables, and soups rich in nutrients, can help support the immune system. When possible, spend a few minutes outdoors or near a sunny window for a natural boost of Vitamin D.

- *Keep Moving!*

Light indoor movement, stretching, or walking to programs, (like exercise class!) can help maintain strength, flexibility, and mood. Even a short daily walk around the halls makes a difference.

- *Layer Up for Warmth*

Wearing soft, comfortable layers helps regulate temperature whether indoors or out. Don't forget warm socks, slippers with grips, and cozy blankets for added comfort.

- *Look After Your Mental Well-Being*

Winter can feel long and quiet. Staying connected through programs, visits, music, and fellowship helps lift spirits. Don't hesitate to reach out to staff if you're feeling low or need support!

- *Be Mindful of Hand Hygiene*

Frequent handwashing and sanitizer use help keep everyone healthy during cold and flu season.

- *Prioritize Rest*

Early sunsets make winter the perfect time to slow down. Good sleep and moments of relaxation support overall wellness.



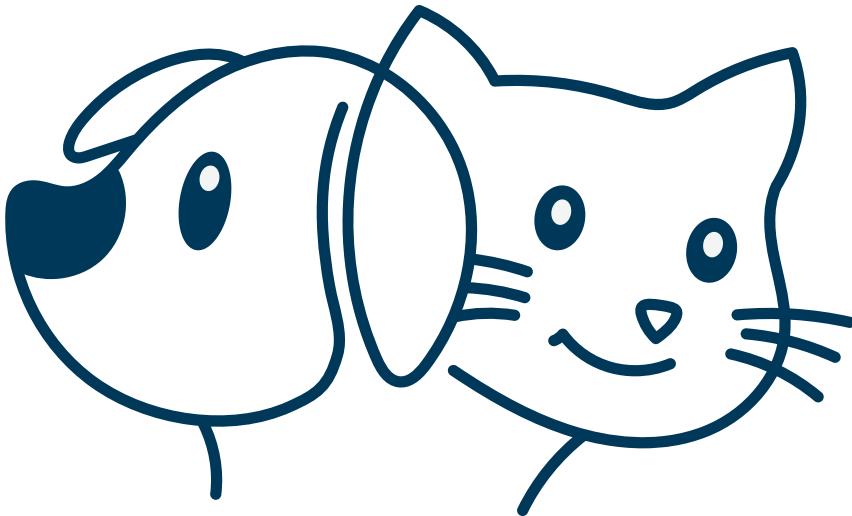
# BRINGING A PET INTO OUR HOME?

**The Ministry of Health & Long-Term Care requires all pets coming into our Home to be registered with our Front Office.**

**Pet owners must provide proof of the pet's vaccination on an annual basis for Infection Prevention & Control purposes.**

**Unregistered and/or unvaccinated pets will not be permitted in our building.**

**Pet owners will be provided with our Pet Visitation Policy upon registration.**





# Birthday Treats & Dessert Drop-Off Guidelines

If you are planning to bring cake or dessert for your / your resident's birthday celebration, please contact:

Receptionist: [mackenzie@mennonitehome.ca](mailto:mackenzie@mennonitehome.ca)

Director of Social Recreation: [judy@mennonitehome.ca](mailto:judy@mennonitehome.ca)

Please notify us by 2:00 p.m. on the day prior to your desired date of service. This allows our Dietary Department adequate time to prepare and ensures your dessert is served at the correct time.

## Dessert Delivery Times:

- 9:00 a.m. for desserts served with lunch
- 11:00 a.m. for desserts served with supper



# Mennonite Home

# Room & Meal Reservations

## General Room Reservations

Room reservations should be made ahead of time to ensure availability. **Reservations for rooms & meals can be made by contacting our Front Office Monday-Friday between 8am-4pm. Reservation requests cannot be fulfilled on holidays or weekends.** There is no fee for reserving a room in long-term care. We encourage families to plan ahead and make reservations early.

## Meal Reservations

We are pleased to offer family members the opportunity to share a meal with their loved one. To ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for everyone, please take note of the following guidelines:

## Designated Dining Area

- Visitor meals must be enjoyed in the designated lounge. Shared meals are not permitted in the main dining areas.

## Reservation Guidelines

- Reservations should be made at least one day in advance to ensure availability.
- Each reservation holds a maximum of 4 visitor meals.

## Meal Cost & Payment Options

- Each visitor meal is \$10. Payments can be made ahead of time or on the day of the meal, except for weekend reservations, which must be paid for in advance.

### **Acceptable payment methods include:**

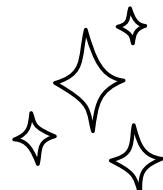
- Cash (exact change preferred)
- Credit card
- Cheque
- Charge to the resident's room

## Meal Choices

- Each meal has two choices available. Due to limited quantities, meal choices must be specified at the time of reservation.

Please note that during an outbreak, all reservations and visitor meals must be suspended. You will be notified if your reservation must be cancelled.

# Fill in the Blessing



Take a quiet moment to reflect on the simple gifts in your life. Use the prompts below to write your own personal blessing for the season.

Today, I am grateful for:

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Someone who brightens my days:

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This season, I pray for / hope for:

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A blessing I wish to share with others:

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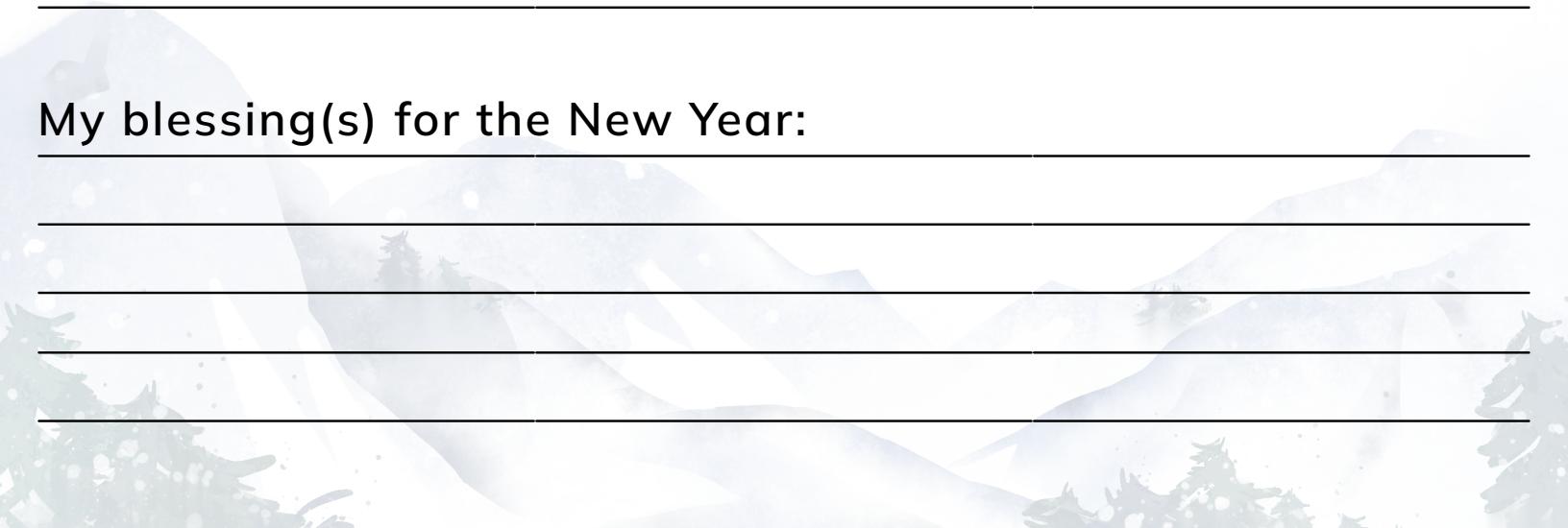
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My blessing(s) for the New Year:

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# Design Your Own Ornament!



**Need ideas?**

**Draw snowflakes, holly, stars, or stripes**

**Add words of encouragement or a holiday blessing**

**Use your favourite colours**

**Add meaningful symbols or doodles that represent your family traditions**

**Enjoy expressing your creativity this season!**