

## The Tradition Returns: The UMH Foundation Golf Tournament Tees Off June 25, 2026

The United Methodist Homes Foundation is excited to announce the return of its Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser after a three-year pause.

The tournament will take place June 25, 2026, at Conklin Players Club in Conklin, New York. We look forward to a fun day of golf, camaraderie, and community impact.

Proceeds from the tournament will benefit the Resident Support Fund, which aids residents of our middle levels of care (personal care or assisted living) facing financial hardships and helps ensure they receive the care and support they need.



Left to Right: Abbie Evans, Betsy Vannatta, Debbie Fiume, and Jared Gardner  
The Tournament Planning Committee met at CPC to finalize plans for the event.

We are thrilled to welcome back our vendors, staff, friends and community partners for a fun day of golf. We appreciate the overwhelming support received for this special event as we bring back a beloved tradition while making a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

Those interested in supporting this cause may still do so! Consider a general donation to support this major fundraising event. **Donations can be sent to: United Methodist Homes Foundation; 10 Acre Place Binghamton, NY 13904 and reference the UMH golf tournament.**





# Stronger Together

UNITED METHODIST HOMES

# Evolving with Purpose



As we move through the spring and into the summer season, I feel a strong sense of optimism and gratitude for all that we have accomplished together as an organization over the past year. While change and transformation are never without challenges, they also create opportunities for growth, renewal, and make way for a vibrant future for those we serve.

At the start of the year, we proudly unveiled our new mission, vision, and recommitted to our core values as part of our strategic plan for the future of UMH.

These guiding principles reflect who we are, what we stand for, and our commitment to providing exceptional care and services to our residents, families, and community for years to come. They will continue to shape our decisions, priorities, and the way we serve others each day. UMH is evolving with purpose.

One of the most exciting developments underway is the continued progress of “Harmony Gardens” at Wesley Village Campus. This new secured memory care offering represents a significant investment in the future of senior care in our region and addresses a growing need for specialized memory care services. As we near completion of this major capital project, we look forward to welcoming residents to Harmony Gardens in the near future. We are incredibly excited about the compassionate, safe, and supportive environment this new service will provide for individuals living with memory-related conditions and for the families who love them.

To support this important initiative and future organizational priorities, we also launched a capital campaign this year. We are deeply grateful for the generosity and support we have already received from donors, community partners, residents, families, and friends of UMH. Their support plays a vital role in helping us continue our mission and expand services and amenities that enhance the lives of those we serve.

Another highlight this season was the opportunity to celebrate our dedicated team members during our annual Employee Service Recognition Awards across our communities. Recognizing the commitment, compassion, and years of service of our employees is always one of the most meaningful events of the year. Our staff members are the heart of UMH, and we remain incredibly thankful for the care and professionalism they demonstrate every day.

As we look ahead, our organization remains focused, forward-thinking, and committed to continuous improvement across all our campuses and services. We are excited about the future and the many opportunities ahead to strengthen our communities, enhance resident experiences, and continue building upon our legacy of caring, connecting, and community.

I would like to thank our entire leadership and staff, Board of Directors, and the entire UMH family of residents and friends for your continued trust, support, and loyalty to our organization. We are privileged to serve you.

In sincere appreciation,

Brian Picchini, President & CEO

# Wesley Village's Partridge-Tippett Nursing Ranked Among Best in Pennsylvania by U.S. News & World Report 2026

Since 2009, U.S. News & World Report's annual Best Nursing Homes ratings have guided American families through one of the most important healthcare decisions they will ever face — finding quality short-term rehabilitation or long-term care for themselves or a loved one. We are proud to announce that Wesley Village has once again earned its place among the Best Nursing Homes, achieving a rating of "High Performing" for Short-Term Rehabilitation — the highest designation U.S. News bestows.

"We are very proud to again be the recipient of this designation, as it directly reflects the hard work and dedication of the entire team at Wesley Village," said Brian Picchini, President & CEO. "Each and every staff person, regardless of their position, plays a vital role in delivering quality and compassionate care to achieve positive outcomes for our residents. At the forefront is our mission — to provide a wide range of senior living services with exceptional care and compassion. We are honored to serve both the short- and long-term care needs of seniors in our community."

The 2026 edition is the most rigorous yet, nearly doubling the number of quality measures evaluated — expanding to 17 distinct measures for both Short-Term Rehabilitation and Long-Term Care, up from 9 and 8 respectively in 2025. The ratings recognize fewer than 19% of the nearly 15,000 nursing homes evaluated nationwide, making Wesley Village's continued recognition a true distinction. "Choosing a nursing facility — whether for post-acute rehabilitation or long-term residency — is one of the most crucial healthcare decisions a family can make," said Ben Harder, chief of health analysis and managing editor at U.S. News.

We are grateful to our entire Wesley Village community — our staff, residents, and families — whose trust and partnership make this recognition possible, year after year.



Left to Right: Danielle Janeski, Eric Yashinski, Amy Graber, Brian Picchini, and Ron Patti



# Potting Plants and Planting Smiles in the Sun Unit

This past spring, residents in the Sun Unit at Hilltop Campus rolled up their sleeves for a fun afternoon of repotting plants – and it turned into one of those simple, joyful moments that's hard to forget. With about 10 plants in need of a refresh, five residents jumped right in to get their hands dirty while another five took on an equally important role: official commentators.

The spectators kept the laughs coming throughout the afternoon, offering gems like, "Wow, look at the mess they are making – hope they don't ask us to help clean it!" By the end of the afternoon, both staff and residents walked away with freshly potted plants to brighten their spaces – and plenty of good memories to go along with them.

It's these lighthearted moments of togetherness that make Hilltop Campus such a warm and vibrant place to call home.



L to R: Joyce R., Name, Dawn G., and Betsy L.

## Coming Soon to Wesley Village: Harmony Gardens Secured Memory Care

Exciting changes are underway at Wesley Village! Construction continues on Harmony Gardens, our new secured personal care memory care neighborhood – a major campus renovation that will expand our continuum of care for individuals living with Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia. Upon completion and regulatory approval, Harmony Gardens will offer newly renovated private accommodations, thoughtfully designed common areas, enhanced safety features, and specialized programming that promotes engagement, dignity, and well-being.

The project has already inspired tremendous generosity, with our Memory Care Capital Campaign raising \$105,000 to date – and a donor recognition tree display in the renovated neighborhood will celebrate that growing community of support for years to come.

Watch for the full story in our upcoming Annual Report! To learn how you can support Harmony Gardens, or to honor or memorialize a loved one through our tree display, **contact Betsy Vannatta, VP of Marketing & Development, at 607-725-7112 or [bvannatta@umhwc.org](mailto:bvannatta@umhwc.org).**



# Six More Weeks of Smiles: Groundhog Day Brunch at Brooks Estates

Whether or not Punxsutawney Phil spotted his shadow this Groundhog Day, one thing was certain at Brooks Estates: the warmth inside more than made up for whatever winter had left in store outside. Residents came together for the neighborhood's Groundhog Day Brunch, filling the air with the smell of delicious food, sweet treats, and laughter!



Ed and Fran E.

Everyone was excited to celebrate the quirky mid-winter holiday in the most neighborly way possible. The brunch drew a wonderful crowd. A few festive touches like groundhog shaped cookies and decorations set the scene. Events like this are the heartbeat of what makes Brooks Estates more than just a

neighborhood. They're a reminder that the people who live here genuinely enjoy each other's company – no holiday required, but Groundhog Day makes a pretty perfect excuse.

A big thank you to everyone who brought a dish, helped set up, and stayed to clean up. And of course, thank you to every neighbor who showed up and made the morning exactly what it was: a little bit silly, a lot of fun, and entirely worth getting out of bed for.



L to R: Rick P., Andrea P., Alberta H., Mike H., John H., Bev H., and Donna P.



L to R: Joe K., Mary M., Jeanne L., Nancy F., Theresa B., and Joanne K.



L to R: Marion H., Maria C., and Carmella S.

## Pedaling for a Cause

Brooks Estates residents Phil Zachary and Ron Bartinkowski took to their stationary bikes recently with a goal bigger than fitness in mind—raising money for the Cancer Wellness Center. Mile after mile, the two pedaled their way toward a cause close to many hearts, proving that making a difference doesn't always require leaving the comfort of home. Their dedication drew plenty of encouragement from neighbors and staff alike, turning an ordinary workout into a community rally that raised \$2,125!



# Celebrating the Hearts Behind Our Campuses: Our Volunteers!

April was National Volunteer Month, and all of our campuses had the joy of celebrating the incredible people who make it all possible – our volunteers!

At Hilltop Campus, volunteers were honored at the campus's annual Volunteer Appreciation Event, where we celebrated their time, heart, and commitment with sweet treats, a special gift, and a certificate recognizing their service. At Wesley Village, volunteers were treated to a special luncheon and received gifts as a token of gratitude for everything they give to the campus community.

Volunteers are woven into the fabric of daily life across our campuses. They lend a hand, share a smile, and give generously of themselves – not because they have to, but because they care. Whether they're helping with activities, visiting with residents, or pitching in behind the scenes, their presence makes every campus feel like home.

To every volunteer who shows up for our campuses each and every day – THANK YOU. We couldn't do this without you.



Dave K. and Louise K.



L to R: Diane V., Barbara W., Gene W., and Lowell V.



L to R: Helen E., Carolyn B., and Lurita D.



Alice C., Vera C., Sheila M., and Louise L.

## A Very Important Update from Finley

*Hi everyone, it's me – Finley, Head of Morale and Chief Supervisor of Naps. I've been extremely busy lately. While the humans typed away on our brand new blog, I provided critical support: keeping laps warm, testing every chair for comfort, and reminding everyone to take walk breaks (you're welcome). It was hard work, but somebody had to do it. The good news? All that supervising paid off. Our new blog, "The UMH Connection" launches in June, and I can confirm it's very good – I sniffed it myself. Stay tuned!*



# In Loving Memory: New Benches Tribute to Dick Eltz at Hilltop Campus

The Hilltop Campus community extends its heartfelt thanks to the family and friends of Dick Eltz, whose generous gifts to the UMH Foundation funded the purchase of two beautiful new benches, new patio furniture, and a new umbrella that will grace the front of the campus – the very spot where Dick so often enjoyed reading his newspaper. These benches are a fitting tribute to a man who appreciated life's simple pleasures, offering residents, families, and friends a peaceful place to sit and enjoy the outdoors, just as Dick loved to do.



Dick E. at last year's Hobby Show



Sheila M.



L to R: Julie S., Marmy B., and Amy D.



Thelma L.

We are also deeply grateful to the Eltz family for sponsoring a wonderful Donut Party at Hilltop in celebration of Dick's life. It was a sweet and joyful gathering that brought residents and staff together to share memories and honor a man who meant so much to our community.

Dick's presence is dearly missed, but thanks to his family's thoughtfulness, his memory will live on in a special way at Hilltop. Each time someone pauses to rest on one of these benches, they'll be reminded of the warmth, kindness, and quiet joys that Dick brought to campus life. Thank you, Eltz family, for this lasting and meaningful gift.



Marmy B. enjoying one of the new benches!



# Employee Announcements

We are excited to share recent updates within our team, highlighting key promotions and new hires across various departments. Join us in congratulating our newly promoted team members and welcoming those who have recently joined our community!

## Elizabeth Church Campus

Molly King was hired as Director of Community Relations

Ashley Shea was hired as Social Services Director

Christopher Dellario hired as Plant Operation Director

Troy Horton hired as Assistant Culinary Manager

Ashley Gillmer hired as Assistant Culinary Manager

Helen Hyndman was promoted to LHHCA/ALP Director (Licensed Agency- Assisted Living)

Holly Blake was promoted to ADON

Karema McCray was promoted to DON

## Hilltop Campus

Nicole Policare was promoted to RN Case Manager - ALR

Darren Wienclawski was hired as Assistant Director of Plant Ops.

William Cron was hired as Culinary Services Manager.

## Wesley Village

Michael Poperowitz was promoted to Assistant Director Facility Maintenance

## Cinco de Mayo Fun at Hilltop Campus

Residents and team members at the Hilltop Campus came together to celebrate Mexican culture and brought festive flair to Cinco de Mayo this year! The celebration featured themed treats and colorful decor that honored the traditions of the holiday, and the fun reached its peak when residents and employees joined together for a lively conga line. It was a joyful afternoon full of laughter and celebration – and a wonderful reminder of how sharing in one another's cultures strengthens the vibrant community spirit that brings communities together!



Faye Clark, Calista M., and Teresa Felter



RuthAnn L., Linda A., and Bernis P.



Adam Elsayad and Vera C.

# Honoring Our Dedicated Team

## Employee Service Awards

Each year, United Methodist Homes proudly recognizes employees who have reached milestone anniversaries, ranging from 5 to 40 years of dedicated service. These awards are a heartfelt way to honor the individuals who help bring our mission to life each day.

We are truly grateful for our team members' hard work, loyalty, and ongoing commitment to excellence. Their contributions make a lasting impact—not only on the quality of care we provide but on the culture of compassion and community that defines each of our campuses.

Employee longevity strengthens our foundation and allows us to build deeper relationships with residents, families, and each other. Whether caring directly for residents or supporting essential operations behind the scenes, every role is vital in creating an environment where residents feel safe, valued, and at home.

To our award recipients: thank you for your years of dedicated service. You are an essential part of the United Methodist Homes family, and we celebrate your achievements with pride and gratitude.

### **Corporate**

Sal Lamantia **45 Years**

Jennifer Balchikonis **15 Years**

Monica Clark **15 Years**

Brian Grant **15 Years**

Ronald Patti **10 Years**



### **Elizabeth Church Campus**

Stephanie A. Boland **25 Years**

Laura A. Kostyshak **25 Years**

Maria S. Chambers **10 Years**

Syravan Phommarath **10 Years**

Helen L. Hyndman **10 Years**

Daniel C. Lomodong **10 Years**

Dianne A. October **10 Years**

John Wallmar-Hernandez **5 Years**

Kara E. Beaudette **5 Years**

Jasmine R. Leggett **5 Years**

Sarah A. Cochran **5 Years**

Holly A. Decker **5 Years**

Meghan E. Lepkowski **5 Years**

Caitlin M. McMahon **5 Years**

Christopher M. Meyer **5 Years**

Melissa S. Wasco **5 Years**

Alejandra A. Martell **5 Years**

Robert G. Birtch **5 Years**

Qualeah T. Davis **5 Years**

Sarah M. Tramble **5 Years**

Vastie Joseph **5 Years**



## **Wesley Village Campus**

Audrey L. Zeller **35 Years**

Kathleen Harrington **30 Years**

David J. Ksiezopolski **30 Years**

Romayne Kowalczyk **25 Years**

Danielle Janeski **25 Years**

Rebecca L. Psolka **25 Years**

Mary Ann Wheeler **25 Years**

Eric W. Traver **25 Years**

Justine M. Hritzak **25 Years**

Jill D. Woodring **15 Years**

Sharon L. Kreitzer **10 Years**

Jude R. Glasgow **10 Years**

Shirley E. Zalenski **10 Years**

Cheryl L. Falvo **10 Years**

Melanie S. Duggan **5 Years**

Elisa V. Tomasetti **5 Years**

Selina M. Zemantauski **5 Years**

Margaret E. Gifford **5 Years**

Amy S. Graber **5 Years**



Leslie A. Hawkins **5 Years**

Stacey M. Hintze **5 Years**

Carra L. Jones **5 Years**

Lynn M. Klapat **5 Years**

Charlene M. Krawchuk **5 Years**

John E. McGurk **5 Years**

Melissa C. Scalese **5 Years**

Sylvia F. Shemelewski **5 Years**

Joseph L. Sipple **5 Years**

HanaRae Slusser **5 Years**

Shannan M. Lord **5 Years**

Iliana A. McCloe **5 Years**

Jenna A. Dolman **5 Years**

Erin L. Kuren **5 Years**



## **Hilltop Campus**

Michael F. Mclaughlin **35 Years**

Karen J. Acly **30 Years**

Bruno J. Stillittano **25 Years**

Cheryl L. Haggerty **25 Years**

Rose D. Rosa **15 Years**

Joanna M. Slater **15 Years**

Daniel B. Sherman **10 Years**

Nicole M. Policare **5 Years**

Kathy A. Hlavacek **5 Years**

Michele L. Miner **5 Years**

# UMH Promoting Health & Wellness

Welcome to “UMH Promoting Health & Wellness,” a new section in our newsletter. Each story will focus on various topics, from nutrition and healthy eating to fall prevention, heart health, and more! Become a guest writer for Connections! We are seeking volunteer contributors for this section. Do you have a topic of interest that could benefit the public in this area? Contact Betsy Vannatta or Abbie Evans at [bvannatta@umhwc.org](mailto:bvannatta@umhwc.org) or [abevans@umhwc.org](mailto:abevans@umhwc.org).

## The Healing Power of Gardening

As the days grow longer and the campus comes back to life with color, there's no better time to celebrate one of spring's most rewarding pastimes – gardening. Whether it's tending a flower bed, repotting houseplants, or simply enjoying the beauty of fresh blooms, gardening offers remarkable benefits for the body, mind, and spirit at every age.

Physically, gardening is a wonderful form of gentle exercise. Digging, planting, watering, and pruning help build strength, improve flexibility, and support balance and coordination – all without ever feeling like a workout. Even light gardening activities get the body moving and the blood flowing, and spending time outdoors provides a natural boost of vitamin D, which supports bone health, immune function, and better sleep.

The benefits don't stop there. Research has shown that gardening can lower stress levels, reduce blood pressure, and lift one's mood. There's something deeply calming about working with soil and plants – the textures, the scents, and the satisfaction of watching something grow. For individuals living with memory loss, gardening can be especially meaningful, as familiar sensory experiences often spark cherished memories and provide a soothing sense of purpose.

Gardening also nurtures connection. Whether residents are working side by side in a garden bed, sharing tips on caring for a stubborn houseplant, or simply admiring the results together, these shared moments foster friendship, laughter, and a sense of accomplishment – as our friends in the Sun Unit at Hilltop Campus can certainly attest after their lively afternoon of repotting this spring!

Best of all, gardening meets you wherever you are. A sunny windowsill with a few potted herbs, a raised garden bed, or a single cheerful geranium can deliver the same sense of joy and purpose as a sprawling backyard garden. So this season, we encourage you to get your hands a little dirty – your body and mind will thank you. After all, as we've learned around here, a little dirt never hurt anyone!



# Celebrating Our Social Workers: Nancy Gartland and Shannon Kane Honored

In honor of National Social Worker Month in March, Visiting Angels - Wilkes-Barre named our very own Nancy Gartland and Shannon Kane from the Wesley Village Campus as the winners of their Social Worker Appreciation Contest! To celebrate, Visiting Angels hosted a pizza party and presented the pair with a plaque recognizing their outstanding work and the meaningful impact they make each day. Nancy and Shannon's compassion, dedication, and unwavering commitment to the residents and families they serve truly set them apart. Congratulations, Nancy and Shannon — this well-earned recognition is a wonderful reminder of the heart and care that define the Wesley Village community.



Shannon Kane and Nancy Gartland

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## Sweet Treats and Great Company

Residents at The Highlands gathered for a delightful ice cream social — and it was the perfect recipe for an afternoon well spent. With a variety of sweet treats to enjoy and live music performed by David Hores setting a warm and festive mood, the event was filled with smiles and plenty of laughter shared between neighbors and friends.

It's afternoons like these that capture the spirit of life at The Highlands — simple pleasures, great company, and a community that knows how to celebrate the sweeter moments together.



Barbara and Gene W.



Al and Judy P.



Nancy and John H.



Norma J. and Barb H.



Carolyn B., Ben H., Judy H., and Pet M.



Rosalie R., Maria L., Mike L., and Nick R.

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# Across Our Campuses, a Celebration of Mothers

This Mother's Day, communities across United Methodist Homes came together to honor the mothers, grandmothers, and mother figures who have shaped so many lives. Across all of our campuses—Elizabeth Church, Wesley Village, and Hilltop—residents, families, and staff marked the occasion with celebrations as varied as they were heartfelt.

From festive brunches and morning breakfasts to creative crafting sessions, each campus found its own special way to make the day memorable. Tables were filled with good food and even better company, while shared activities gave residents and their loved ones a chance to connect, reminisce, and create new memories together.

What tied every celebration together was a spirit of gratitude—a recognition of the love, wisdom, and care that mothers give so freely. The smiles, laughter, and warm conversations throughout the day were a testament to the enduring bonds that make our communities feel like family. To all the remarkable mothers in our communities: thank you for everything you do, and for the joy you bring to those around you.



Mother's Day Breakfast at Hilltop



Mother's Day Breakfast at Hilltop



Photos from the Brooks Estates Mother's Day event.



Photos from the Elizabeth Church Mother's Day craft. Top: Patricia G. Middle: Louise C. Bottom: Anna R.



# Teams That Celebrate Together, Stay Together

The Wesley Village team got together to participate in the Pittston St. Patrick's Day Parade — and it was a celebration to remember! Floating together through the community, the team brought plenty of spirit and smiles to the route, showing up not just as colleagues, but as neighbors who genuinely enjoy each other's company.

Moments like these are a big part of what makes Wesley Village such a special place to work and live. When a team celebrates together, those bonds carry right back into the hallways and into the care they provide every day.



Top Photo: Danise Carne, Gina Cabrera, and Rebecca Seville



Bernie Lombardo and his daughter



# An Egg-cellent Easter Adventure at Wesley Village

Springtime fun was in full swing at our Wesley Village Campus as residents from Personal Care and Independent Living at Myers and Anderson set out on an Easter egg hunt adventure!

Armed with clues and a healthy dose of friendly competition, residents searched high and low throughout Myers Manor and Anderson to uncover hidden eggs — and plenty of sweet treats along the way. A special congratulations to one of our newest residents, Jeanne Lewis, who took home the win with an impressive 42 eggs collected!



L to R: Clara R., Charlotte B., Rosarie Musto, Laura Bushinski, Vilma S., and Lois S.



Charlotte B.



L to R: Jeanne L., Ida L., and Vilma S.



**Connections is designed for easier readability. Contact Abbie Evans at [abevans@umhwc.org](mailto:abevans@umhwc.org)**

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