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NEWSLETTER | NOVEMBER 2018

Exalta Health reflects the spirit of Christ by providing compassionate, accessible healthcare.

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THANK YOU!

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT

The Problem With Thanksgiving

I have a problem with Thanksgiving.

My problem is not with the intent of the holiday. Thanksgiving in the U.S. is intended to remember how early settlers to this country thanked God for what He had provided.

These immigrants, who fled their country because of persecution and danger, were looking for a better life for themselves and their families. When they met the current residents of the new country, they did not have much to offer. They were poor and had few skills to help them be successful in their adopted country. And yet their new hosts showed them how to succeed, and shared food. And for this they were grateful to God.

My problem with Thanksgiving is that as we celebrate this holiday, we tend to forget for what we are thanking God.

Most of us are doing well, and it is relatively easy to thank God when we are doing well. Our Thanksgiving prayers are for the bounty that God has provided. Our tables and plates are filled with turkey, ham, sweet potatoes, vegetables, salads, cranberries, dressing, and pies – sometimes multiple times in a single day! We enjoy friends and family, overeat, and perhaps take a little nap. The only disappointment in the day usually is watching the Lions.

Life IS good. And it is easy to thank God when life is good.

But spend a few minutes with Carlos to understand how to give thanksgiving. Carlos, who is working two jobs to keep food on his

family's table, doesn't have money to pay his wife's medical bills. She has diabetes and managing this disease is not cheap. His family heard about Exalta Health, and medical services are now being provided at a cost he can afford. It's not easy, but he is grateful to pay what he can.

Kim can tell you how to celebrate Thanksgiving. It is within a week of the first anniversary of her beloved husband's death. This has been a hard year, one filled with financial, medical, and emotional challenges. And as she is willing to tell anyone who will listen, she is so thankful to God for the work being done through Exalta Health.

At Exalta Health Thanksgiving will once again take on special meaning. Our dependency on our donors was demonstrated multiple times this year. When you are thinking about dipping into the line of credit for the next paychecks, you are really grateful for the anonymous \$70,000 that comes in the mail.

As the Pilgrims knew, genuine thanksgiving comes not out of abundance but out of struggle. We learn how to thank God for what He provides BECAUSE we struggle.

This Thanksgiving we are thanking God for you. We are grateful that you help us and the people we serve experience God's provisions through the struggles.

Bill Paxton,
President

SERVICE CORNER

Finding Solace at Exalta Health



Thirty years ago, Kim and her husband, Sam, moved to Grand Rapids from a small town in Pennsylvania after her husband lost his job in the steel industry. Kim and Sam bought a small barbeque restaurant, Dallas Deli.

She fondly remembers the days that she and Sam spent there while getting to know the members of the community.

As small business owners, Kim and Sam found themselves

struggling to pay for health insurance. The health insurance they had at the time didn't cover any of the services they needed, so they cancelled it. Kim did a lot of research, trying to find a plan that they could afford that covered the dental services she needed and the medical care that Sam needed.

In the midst of their search, Kim saw Exalta Health staff and volunteers on WOOD TV8 during the 24 Hour News 8 Daybreak show promoting Free Dental Day at the clinic. She thought she would check it out.

From her first experience at Exalta, she was blown away by the kindness and patience that was shown to her. The staff and volunteers at Exalta took the time to listen and explain things in a way that she understood.

She started receiving dental services and Sam began seeing the medical team for symptoms that were undiagnosed at the time.

Kim and Sam became more and more involved in the variety of services at Exalta. Whitney helped them walk through the process of getting an insurance plan that fit their needs well. Sam continued to receive medical care and his symptoms were unfortunately diagnosed as cancer.

Staff members and medical volunteers at Exalta were instrumental in getting Sam the care he needed until he passed away in November 2017.

After Sam's passing, the staff and volunteers surrounded Kim, providing her with spiritual support and counseling. Because they had developed a relationship with Kim during her visits, they were able to support her and provide a safe place for her to grieve.

When asked about Exalta's role in her life, Kim says, **"God has done work in me to find my purpose and carry on without Sam, and Exalta has been a part of that...Exalta Health is vital to my health: spiritually, emotionally, and physically."**

To hear more about Kim's journey in her own words, please watch her video on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/exaltahealth/videos

Introducing Cindy: Building Relationships

The team at Exalta Health keeps on growing!

Cindy Mackey joined our staff at the beginning of October as Development Director.

Cindy attended Michigan State University, Muskegon Community College and Baker College and is currently enrolled in Cornerstone University Professional and Graduate Studies' Bachelor of Business Administration program with plans to continue on to an MBA.

She brings 20 years of experience working in healthcare and ministry nonprofits to her new role and most recently was the Senior Director of Development with Mel Trotter Ministries. Cindy has also worked with the American Heart Association as a Corporate Events Director and the Northwest Michigan area of the American Cancer Society as Director.

She first learned of the position at Exalta Health through the local group, Women in Development. She was excited to learn more about the work God is doing in the neighborhood surrounding Exalta Health and beyond, and helping people without insurance get the important healthcare they need.

On what excites her about serving with Exalta Health, Cindy says, "I look forward to building relationships with community members to show them the amazing work Exalta Health is doing.



Cindy Mackey, Development Director

Cindy has been married to her husband, Kurt for 22 years and lives in Rockford, MI. Besides spending time with friends and family in her spare time, Cindy loves reading and watching football with her husband.

"I love the holistic approach to healthcare and healing we offer, because it is about the whole person...body, mind and spirit."

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Dr. Jean Craig: Serving in her own community

As a physician with her own practice, Dr. Jean Craig would sometimes see patients who couldn't afford insurance, but didn't qualify for government assistance for medical services that they required. She noticed that there weren't many places for these people to receive their care.

During a conversation about this dilemma with a colleague, Dr. Craig was introduced to Exalta Health. She was informed about the mission of Exalta and how the staff and volunteers serve those in the community who don't receive coverage for medical services. Her colleague encouraged her to get involved through volunteering.

In April of 2003, she did just that. Dr. Craig's children were now adults and she had cut back on her hours at her practice. This provided time for her to volunteer her services at Exalta Health. After several years of volunteering, she became even more immersed in the community at Exalta Health by serving on the board of directions from 2007-2009.



Dr. Craig's husband Rich, has also been involved at the clinic by volunteering his architectural services during the renovations that took place several years ago. He was also instrumental in organizing donations for some of the furniture in the updated facility.

During Dr. Craig's time on the board at Exalta, she was impressed by something another board member said -that you don't have to go to a different country to do mission work; mission work can be done right here in Grand Rapids. Dr. Craig encourages people to find a "mission field in your own backyard."

For her, that place is Exalta Health. She is able to serve people in need of medical care in her own community. When asked about her desire to help people and provide care through

Exalta Health she says, **"It's not for other people to do; it's what all of us can do."**

STEWARDSHIP MATTERS

The Impact of the New Tax Law: More Questions Than Answers

Both donors and non-profit organizations are assessing the impact the Tax Cut and Jobs Act of 2017 will have on philanthropy. Truth is the impact of doubling the standard deduction is not known. Will tax payers who are no longer able to deduct their charitable giving reduce their giving? In January we will have more of an answer.

As donors and advisors seek wise and creative ways to be generous stewards, we may see more gifting of appreciated assets such as stocks, which can eliminate capital gains taxes. This remains unchanged in the new law. The use of donor advised funds may also increase to take advantage of this provision.

We often hear "West Michigan is extremely philanthropic." The thinking is that West Michigan donors are not motivated to give by whether or not their charity is tax deductible. At Exalta Health we know that our donors are generous, and we think their motivation is mission and not financially based. However, we also know that stewardship matters. As the Bible teaches, "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver" (II Corinthians 9:7).

We recommend you consult a financial advisor about ways to continue to be wise stewards. We often see Exalta Health donors work with the National Christian Foundation of West Michigan, the Barnabas Foundation and the Grand Rapids Community Foundation to assist them with their giving strategies. If it would be helpful, we can provide you with contact information.

Contact Cindy Mackey for information or schedule a meeting to learn more about the work God is doing at Exalta Health: 616-475-8475x107.

Introducing Rosa



Since 2013 Exalta Health has enjoyed being a partner site for AmeriCorps VISTA members. Because of the VISTA program's focus on taking on some of the most pressing challenges facing our communities and dealing with issues of poverty, it is a wonderful fit with Exalta Health and our mission.

We have had a member each of the past six years, who have been involved in various departments in the organization. Most recently, we welcomed

Rosa Torres to our team in October. We'll let Rosa introduce herself.

My name is Rosa Torres and I was born in Holland, MI. My position at Exalta Health is: Access to Care and Patient Health Advocate. Within this role, I provide medical interpretation to patients, help patients enroll in Medicaid, food stamps or select a health coverage plan within the Federally Facilitated Marketplace, provide diabetes education and can provide references to additional community resources when needed.

During my year of service, I am looking forward to engaging with the community, learning about community resources and helping improve health equity while serving at Exalta Health.