

# WALKER METHODIST FOUNDATION COMMUNITY IMPACT REPORT 2020



Despite the hardships of 2020, our teams still found joy in their circumstances. For their Christmas picture, the Westwood Ridge leadership team dressed up and brought items telling the story of what they'll remember about 2020.

Dear Walker Methodist family,

2020 tested everyone in unimaginable ways, and those living and working in the Walker Methodist communities experienced one of the most trying years possible.

It can be easy to forget what it was really like at the start of the pandemic, but, thinking back, we can see just how far we've all come and how many seemingly insurmountable mountains we've climbed.

In the early months of the pandemic, we sent out teams of people looking for more PPE at a time when masks, gloves, and gowns were nearly impossible to procure. Distillery owners and soap makers came to our rescue, donating hand sanitizer because there wasn't any to be found elsewhere. Thankfully we already had stockpiles of toilet paper!

We have all had to shift our methods and change our patterns, but Walker Methodist stood firm in our mission. And you, our donors, played an integral role in help us deliver on our promise to enhance the lives of older adults, even during a pandemic.

Thanks to generous contributors like you, our residents benefited from arts programming and access to video technology. Our team members received free meals and money was raised to help those hit hardest by the pandemic. We saw an outpouring of support through words of encouragement, handmade cards, drive by parades, choirs singing at our windows, and so much more.

Yes, 2020 was difficult. But it was a year that showed us the best in people, a year when people stepped up in big ways to help those most in need.

Today, we see hope on the horizon as residents and team members receive COVID-19 vaccinations. We know this won't quickly close the book on the pandemic, but we are standing at the dawning of a new day.

Thank you for your faithful support of Walker Methodist.

Sincerely,



Scott Riddle,  
President and CEO, Walker Methodist





# Connecting and creating during a pandemic

At the beginning of 2020, Walker Methodist communities were buzzing with activities and classes. Health Center residents in Minneapolis were partway through a series of dance classes, thanks to Kairos Alive! instructors and a grant from the Metropolitan Regional Art Council. Team members in Levande in Cambridge prepared to offer a nine-week art residency, sponsored by the East Central Regional Arts Council (ECRAC), in June. Then we reached March—and everything changed.

Initially, these programs and many more were paused as we tried to figure out the best way forward. Then, thanks to the hard work and creativity of team members, we reimagined these activities and offered virtual programs. One of our partners, Aroha Philanthropies, awarded the Walker Methodist Foundation funds to purchase iPads to use for virtual art programs, and we got started. In July, excited and engaged residents at Levande tapped into their creativity through a virtual art class. By the end of nine weeks, each resident had a beautiful portfolio of their own watercolor artwork.

This class wasn't the only way residents at our communities connected and learned during a challenging year. Dancing, flash memoir writing, nature art drawing, songwriting, and cardio drumming classes were also offered. In fact, a group of residents—who live in different communities and met during a virtual class—even took initiative to start their own monthly art discussion group on Zoom. Others have set up spaces in their apartments to continue practicing their new talents.

Jean, a resident at Walker Methodist Plaza in Anoka, explained why she enjoyed the nature art drawing class: "I liked it because we had responsibility to learn and take initiative. We collected leaves, and during class we'd ask questions about what others found. We worked together—and had a lot of fun. This class reminded me we're capable of doing new things. I started new relationships and learned more about other people, not just nature. I had a great time."

*Special thanks to our art partners, COMPAS and Kairos Alive!, as well as our funders: Aroha Philanthropies, MRAC, and ECRAC.*



58 Zoom sessions for  
100 resident artists



7 Walker Methodist communities



6 art forms



"I'm going to frame my art. Every time I look at it, I see something new." — Ron



*Photo: Team members at the Health Center receive meals provided by donated funds.*

## Team members receive kind well-wishes

This year confirmed what we already knew: the Walker Methodist community—our residents and their families, team members, neighbors, and partners—is second to none. When the coronavirus pandemic started to make things difficult for our team members, they jumped into action to show their support. First, a donor reached out and contributed enough funds to pay for three months of meals for team members at the Health Center in Minneapolis during their shifts. Kind-hearted individuals left notes on our website, thanking team members for taking care of loved ones. Those who left notes also had the opportunity to donate to support team members facing financial hardship caused by the pandemic. Seven months later, \$40,000 and hundreds of well-wishes had been shared with team members.

Frontline workers received these uplifting words, and they were encouraged by getting a glimpse of just how much they're appreciated. The donated funds provided meals and snacks, individual financial help, and retreat rooms for those working long hours.

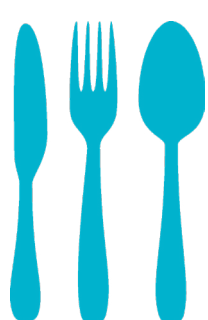
**"We are grateful beyond measure that our parents and their friends are well looked after by team members who faithfully serve and protect. Thank you, all!"**

Here are just some of the well-wishes our team members received:

- Kudos to an extraordinary team, whose commitment to residents has not wavered during this crisis. A huge thank you to all of you working on the front lines, today and every day!
- Thank you all for caring for our mother. We understand each of you are putting yourselves and your families at risk to help her, and we appreciate you. Be safe, and thank you.
- What you do does matter. It matters to residents to know someone is there for them. It matters to families to know their loved ones are safe and their needs are being met!
- Words can't express our gratitude for your commitment and selflessness. Love to you.



The contributions of our community have made a significant difference to our team members. Supporting them supports our residents, and we are all in this together. To show your support, visit [www.walkermethodist.org/wellwishes](http://www.walkermethodist.org/wellwishes).



20,000+

meals  
provided  
for team  
members



more than

150

well-wishes  
sent online



\$40,000

donated for  
team members



**"This  
is so  
kind."  
— Paul**

## Sharing joy during a challenging year

More than 30 years ago, Caroline Pilgrim, a member of the Walker Methodist Health Center Auxiliary, had a dream for every resident to receive a personalized holiday gift. So, Caroline gathered Auxiliary board members to create a new program: Give a Little Gift. The group reached out to United Methodist Churches in the metro area and asked for donations. Churches happily participated, sending boxes of gifts as well as monetary donations. Then, team members at the Health Center created personalized gift bags to deliver to residents. Three decades later, what started as a simple idea is now an annual program that brings joy to residents at the Health Center.

Give a Little Gift was needed more than ever in 2020. During the pandemic, Health Center residents were the most vulnerable. They experienced restrictions, saw team members in PPE, and talked to family on Zoom. Team members knew this holiday season would be different. In a tough year, they wanted residents to know they weren't forgotten. Our neighbors and friends donated generously, bringing joy to residents. Though residents couldn't enjoy a party together, team members delivered gift bags, treats, and holiday cheer to each door. This quote from resident Irene says it all: "I don't owe you anything? This is from nice people doing a nice thing for others? Thank you."

30  
years of  
holiday  
cheer



more than

10,000

bags  
gifted

40,000

items  
donated

## 2020 Donors

# We are thankful for all of our donors

The following is a list of individuals, corporations, and foundations that supported our work in 2020. We are thankful for your support—we couldn't do this without you. To steward our resources appropriately, we have listed donors of \$100 or more in this publication.

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## Introducing Kaleidoscope memory care

Butterflies symbolize change, transformation, and beauty. As a group, butterflies are called a Kaleidoscope. At Walker Methodist, we see the Kaleidoscope as a perfect metaphor of a person's journey through memory care.

The changes that individuals go through are profound, and we see such beauty in this stage of a person's life. And together, as a kaleidoscope, we share in this journey together.



# \$64,000

raised for Kaleidoscope on Give  
 to the Max Day (more than  
 doubled from 2019!)

## WALKER METHODIST EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP



Scott Riddle, president and chief executive officer; Russ Grundhauser, chief financial officer; Anneliese Peterson, chief operating officer; Sarah Wandschneider, vice president of human resources; Beverly Ransford, vice president of quality and clinical services.

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### MISSION STATEMENT

Life. And all the living that goes with it. Enhancing the lives of older adults through a culture of care, respect, and service.

### VALUES

Respect | Imagination | Collaboration

Questions or omissions?

Please contact Marilyn Peller Nelson, executive director, Walker Methodist Foundation at 612.827.8538 or [mnelson@walkermethodist.org](mailto:mnelson@walkermethodist.org).

