



Lyngblomsten

Lifestyle

Summer 2026



1906

Celebrating 120 Years!

2026

STORIES OF LIFE:

Homes for the Aging Week
Builds Relationships and Memories

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Art & Advocacy: A Day at the Capitol
Calendar of Upcoming Events

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www.Lyngblomsten.org

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Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

A little over 120 years ago, a group of 11 Norwegian women dreamed of creating a Christian home for older adults. Through careful planning and diligent fundraising, those original women and throngs of supporters built the Lyngblomsten Home for the Aged, which opened in 1912. "Home" was an intentional approach to life at Lyngblomsten then, and it remains so today.

Whether assisting with activities of daily living or tending to medical needs, staff strive to provide residents with a sense of home and belonging. Joy is woven into daily life 365 days a year. But one particular week overflows with joy: Homes for the Aging Week. You can read all about that annual celebration in our feature story. In other articles, you'll meet two people who serve joyfully as volunteers and leaders.

Growing older brings opportunities as well as challenges, and at Lyngblomsten, we believe life continues to be rich with purpose, connection, and joy. We hope the stories in this issue inspire you and remind everyone that older adults are to be known, valued, and encouraged to live each day fully.

Don't just live; leave a legacy!

Patricia A. Montgomery | Editor

Vice President of Communications & Stewardship



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On the Cover: Lyngblomsten at Lino Lakes residents, Nancy Marzuola (left) and Janet Stark (right), pose for a road trip photo during the 2026 Homes for the Aging Week festivities.



Memory Making at its Merriest

Every May, Lyngblomsten builds relationships and memories through Homes for the Aging Week

By Mara Gawarecki

Lyngblomsten's Homes for the Aging Week celebration brings a themed extravaganza of activities, giveaways, and fun for everyone on its campuses during the second week of May each year. It's a way for staff, volunteers, residents, program participants, and their families to come together for a fun time.

"Homes for the Aging Week helps remind us that aging services are fundamentally about relationships," said Jeff Heinecke, Lyngblomsten President & CEO. "At their best, senior living and care communities are places of compassion, purpose, faith, dignity, and connection. They are

places where people continue to live meaningful lives, form friendships, and experience joy, even during difficult periods of life."

Thanks to the hard work of staff and volunteers and the enthusiasm of residents, families, and program participants, Homes for the Aging Week buoys friendships and brings great joy.

"It's an immersive, themed fun week to celebrate how aging isn't always just about getting older," said Trisha Gerleman, Administrator of the Lyngblomsten Care Center at the Como Park campus in St. Paul.

Lyngblomsten
Apartments resident,
Kathy Bradford,
and volunteer, Barb
Symalla, enjoy
outdoor games at
Lyngblomsten's Como
Park campus during
the 2026 Homes for
the Aging Week.

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THE HISTORY

May has been celebrated as National Older Americans Month since 1963, when President John F. Kennedy met with members of the National Council of Senior Citizens who wanted to lift up issues older adults face and celebrate their contributions to society.

The name that Lyngblomsten uses likely comes from a 1988 proclamation from Governor Rudy Perpich, which set aside the second week of May as Homes for the Aging Week to honor the residents and workers at nursing homes and senior housing communities.

Lyngblomsten's first versions of Homes for the Aging Week were more low-key. Craft sales, open houses, and a day celebrating the careers of residents at the care center were early activities. In the 2000s, staff would dress up each day of the week according to a theme like superheroes or favorite animals. By 2016, the staff responsible for planning the week decided to dream bigger with one unified theme across all five days. It's become a highlight of the year for everyone.

"There is no other place that has this level of how they treat people," said Carol Baker, who is not only a resident at the Lyngblomsten Apartments who volunteers at the care center but also a former employee. "That became very clear during Homes for the Aging Week. Last year was wonderful, and I thought, 'How are they ever going to top it?' and they did!"

THE PROCESS

Planning begins early in the year as members of the Homes for the Aging Week Committee start brainstorming themes for the celebration at meetings held every other week. Each prospective theme must have the potential for multiple activities, foods, and other sources of fun for the full five-day stretch.

"It [the planning committee] is such a creative group of people, from all over the buildings and departments—from therapeutic recreation, social services, culinary, marketing, pretty much every department," Trisha said. (View a list of the nearly 20 committee

members on page 6.) "I love that everybody brings their creative thoughts to make it a great event."

Committee members focus on building an event that uplifts residents and program participants while giving staff a source of energy and enjoyment as well. Activities are also tailored to the interests and abilities of residents and participants at both campuses.

"The planning is all-encompassing, from what the theme is going to be, then the next level of what does every day need, then deciding what can get delegated," said Lacey Davis, Director of Therapeutic Recreation at the Lyngblomsten Care Center, who is a member of the planning committee. "You have to make sure whatever we're planning is attainable for us to handle, but we also want it to be as big as we can."

THE THEMES

Each year's celebration is thoughtfully crafted around a central topic. Themes from recent years have included "Under the Big Top," "Spirit Week," and this year's "Summer Classics."

With "Under the Big Top," people at Lyngblomsten had a chance to indulge in

▼ The Pink Ladies celebrate with Lyngblomsten Apartments resident Peggy during a classic car show.



circus-related activities all week, culminating in a circus held in the chapel. This capstone event featured circus peanuts, feats of strength, and a lion tamer, of course, but other highlights included a tightrope walker performance while one staff member's son came to campus dressed as an elephant.

Last year for "Spirit Week," residents and staff found a way to relive the glory days of the high school experience. Residents' creations from their art classes lined the hallways during the week, while Jeff Heinecke stepped up to judge the home economics cookie baking competition donning a wig, robe, and gavel. A game of human foosball represented the sports side of high school, and the week was crowned with a prom complete with live music, a photo booth, gowns and suits (and even a letterman jacket) for attendees to wear, and a visit from Roseville Area High School students dressed in their own prom finery.

For this year's celebration, those on the Como Park and Lino Lakes campuses were treated to an array of opportunities that celebrated classic summer memories. Both campuses had daily themes ranging from a road trip to a night at the drive-in movies to a county fair and more. On Tuesday, both campuses celebrated the drive-in movie experience with a movie viewing and a classic car show. To celebrate the county fair, Como Park residents enjoyed a petting zoo before an afternoon talent show took place. For Road Trip day, campus-wide scavenger hunts for posters featuring some of Minnesota's iconic roadside

attractions were on the docket, along with savoring cinnamon rolls from Tobies in Hinckley and, for Lino Lakes residents, grabbing a snack at a pop-up "gas station" outside Sophia's café. Both campuses held a contest to design the perfect bumper sticker. The final day started with a trout pond at the Como Park campus for residents to fish from, with the catch turning into a fish fry held later that afternoon.

Rene Turner, a resident at Lyngblomsten at Lino Lakes who won her campus's bumper sticker contest, was tickled pink by the opportunity. "I don't usually think of myself as an artist, but a voice told me to participate," she said. "And I won! I was so thrilled."

Continued on page 6

Lyngblomsten President & CEO Jeff Heinecke judges the home economics cookie baking contest for the 2025 Homes for the Aging Week.

Students from Roseville Area High School take to the dance floor with Como Park residents during prom as part of the 2025 Homes for the Aging Week.



Recent Homes for the Aging Week Themes

2016: Under the Big Top

2017: Garden Party

2018: Celebrating Life Stories

2019: Author Your Life

2020: Hawaiian Luau

2021: Sunny Days Just Ahead

2022: Enjoy the Ride

2023: Made in Minnesota

2024: Let the Adventure Begin

2025: Spirit Week

2026: Summer Classics

Homes for the Aging Week 2026 Planning Team

Colleen Anderson

Director of Environmental Services (Care Center)

Nicole Buchholz

Director of Lifelong Learning & the Arts

Savannah Dahl

Caregiver Specialist (Community Services)

Lacey Davis

Director of Therapeutic Recreation (Care Center)

Linda Dickinson

Administrative Assistant (Lino Lakes)

Alisa Ehrlichman

Activity Coordinator (The Heritage at Lyngblomsten)

Trisha Gerleman

Administrator (Care Center)

Carrie Godfrey

Gifts & Annual Fund Administrator (Foundation)

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Director of Culinary Services (Como Park)

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Assistant Executive Director (Lino Lakes)

Mary Simon

Executive Director (Lino Lakes)

Ruth Sorenson

Director of Spiritual Care

Cosmina Strain

Executive Director (The Heritage at Lyngblomsten)

Diane Strandquist Sell

Director of Volunteer Services

Additional support provided by Tony Sarkilahti (Assistant Executive Director, The Heritage at Lyngblomsten) and Savannah Treleven (Marketing Communications Specialist).



▲ Activities from Homes for the Aging Week 2026 included a classic car show, a petting zoo, fishing at a portable trout pond, and a Como Park campus talent show.

Continued from page 5

THE MOTIVATION

A key part of the week is the way it brings the Lyngblomsten community together for a weeklong celebration.

“For residents and participants, it is a reminder that they are valued, respected, and part of a vibrant community,” Jeff said. “Aging often comes with loss, uncertainty, or isolation, but communities like Lyngblomsten help create belonging, purpose, and connection. Homes for the Aging Week gives us a chance to celebrate that.”

Homes for the Aging Week is a way to create a positive source of memories—both reliving old ones and creating new ones—and a way to build community, Lacey said.

“Residents can share really special moments with their families,” she said. “It’s a way for the residents and their families to bond with the staff, too, over shared experiences.”

Relationships are often the glue that holds a community together, and Lyngblomsten is no different. Homes for the Aging Week brings together staff from across both of its campuses to create a celebration for residents, participants, and their families. By fostering connections through thoughtful activities and a healthy dose of fun, this week gives everyone at Lyngblomsten a way to share old memories while building new ones. **L**

Chuck Norton Honored with Fergstad Award at President's Luncheon

By Mara Gawarecki

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On April 8, Lyngblomsten President & CEO Jeff Heinecke hosted more than 100 supporters for the Lyngblomsten Foundation President's Luncheon held at Midland Hills Country Club. The annual gathering recognizes and thanks those who have made a significant financial contribution to the foundation in the previous year and/or who have arranged for a future gift through their estate plan. Together, these supporters help make possible a variety of programs and services that enhance the quality of life for older adults.

As part of the luncheon, Charles "Chuck" Norton was presented with the Anna Quale Fergstad Award for Distinguished Service in recognition of his contributions to Lyngblomsten and the broader community. The award is named for Lyngblomsten's first president, whose volunteer leadership and generous financial support aided Lyngblomsten's mission and several other organizations in the Twin Cities and beyond.

Chuck's curious nature, quiet leadership, and desire to serve God have undergirded his involvement with Lyngblomsten for more than 20 years. His service began through his former church, St. Rose of Lima in Roseville, where he volunteered with the Care Team Ministry—a visiting and helping-hands program then in partnership with Lyngblomsten. Chuck became a delegate for his congregation, but he found that role was not as involved as he preferred. Wanting to know Lyngblomsten more deeply, he joined the Resident Life Committee.

Through that committee, then-President & CEO Paul Mikelson took note of Chuck's skills, which led to an invitation to join the board of



Chuck Norton (left) received the 2026 Anna Quale Fergstad Award for Distinguished Service from Lyngblomsten President & CEO Jeff Heinecke. ▲

directors. Chuck served two terms from 2009 to 2015, holding the roles of Vice Chair and Chair and leading the CEO Search Committee. He later served a third term from 2017 to 2020. When the Resident Life Committee disbanded, Chuck joined the Governance Committee, where both his board experience and legal background continue to inform myriad discussions. Through all these years, Chuck and his wife, Jean, have been generous donors to the Lyngblomsten Foundation.

Chuck is a retired estate tax attorney and has a special interest in the care of and advocacy for older adults. In addition to his involvement with Lyngblomsten, Chuck has actively served his community, including as a weekly respite care provider and friendly visitor for Catholic Charities and as a communion minister at St. Pius X in White Bear Lake, where he and Jean attend.

Chuck's steady commitment to service—offered with humility, wisdom, and faith—has left a lasting mark on Lyngblomsten and the broader community. His legacy is one of thoughtful leadership and generosity, inspiring others to serve with the same depth of purpose. **I**

Snapshots

Photos of Springtime Happenings

Residents of The Heritage at Lyngblomsten put their green thumbs to use in raised garden beds.



Lyngblomsten hosted the Midway Chamber of Commerce for its monthly gathering in May, during which guest speaker Erick Garcia spoke about the work of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. Lyngblomsten is honored to be a part of the chamber, which connects and supports businesses and nonprofits serving the Midway community of St. Paul.

Employees at the Como Park campus participated in Lyngblomsten's annual Easter meal giveaway for staff, receiving eggs, pie, or another traditional element of an Easter dinner.



Participants at The Gathering, Lyngblomsten's group respite program for older adults with early- to mid-stage memory loss, built baking soda volcanoes during a science demonstration in April at Lyngblomsten at Lino Lakes.





Lyngblomsten honored all of its many volunteers through thank-you posters, a celebratory meal, and special gifts during Volunteer Appreciation Week in April. This year's theme was "The Power of We." Thank you, volunteers!

Lisa Edstrom, Director of the Age-Friendly Minnesota Council, addressed delegates, board directors, and senior management staff at the Lyngblomsten Corporate Annual Meeting on May 5.



Residents of the Lyngblomsten Apartments celebrated May birthdays and Syttende Mai, Norway's Constitution Day, with Norwegian foods like krumkake at their monthly party.



Celebrating the start of summer, residents of Lyngblomsten at Lino Lakes brought a dish to share at a potluck dinner.



ART & ADVOCACY:

Lyngblomsten residents participate in Day at the Capitol

By Mara Gawarecki

Residents from Lyngblomsten's campuses in St. Paul and Lino Lakes traveled by chartered bus to the state Capitol on April 22 to see their artwork on display as part of a day of advocacy for older adults.

Their creations were exhibited during Day at the Capitol, an annual event organized by LeadingAge Minnesota that educates and equips participants to engage with their state legislators on issues impacting older adults. LeadingAge Minnesota is the state's largest professional association of organizations serving older adults and provides advocacy, education, and partnerships for its members, including Lyngblomsten.

"It's really special when you can visit the Capitol and see art you've created on display in the building of the people," said Nicole Buchholz, Director of Lifelong Learning & the Arts for Lyngblomsten who coordinated residents' participation in the event. "Being able to visit with your legislators is another important aspect of this visit."

Artwork created by residents from LeadingAge Minnesota's member communities was on display in the Capitol's East Gallery. The pieces

were a tangible reminder to all who visited of how older adults are engaging in creative, impactful endeavors as they age—and why advancing legislation that supports them as they age matters.

Out of more than 80 artworks submitted and displayed, 17 came from Lyngblomsten. Pictures of the artwork had been transformed into posters featuring the works themselves as well as the names and faces of the creators. These posters will be displayed around Lyngblomsten's campuses once they're returned and prepared.

While LeadingAge Minnesota has held this artistic display in prior years, the organization took a different approach for this year's event. Artists who submitted work were invited to come and to view it on display. In previous years, the artworks were displayed in the gallery room, but the artists themselves did not go.

One of the artists who made the journey was Lu Just, a resident of the Lyngblomsten Apartments on the Como Park campus in St. Paul.

"They did a nice job of showing our work and expressing what we were part of," she shared about the art display.

While legislators representing the St. Paul contingent weren't able to join the group, others made an appearance. State Senator Heather Gustafson of Lino Lakes was one of those who stopped by the gallery.

"I thought she was gracious because she came out of the session to come talk to us," Lu said. "She took pictures and chatted with us for a bit. She said she was very glad to be part of this art exchange."

Whether through dialoging with elected officials or illustrating the impact of arts programs, the people who took this trip to the Capitol demonstrated the vibrant lives older adults lead. **L**



Residents from Lyngblomsten's Como Park and Lino Lakes campuses journeyed to the Minnesota Capitol at the end of April to meet with legislators and view their artwork on display in the building's East Gallery.

Spark Joy

FOR OTHERS THIS SUMMER!

Wherever your skills and interests lie, there's a volunteer role with Lyngblomsten that's just right for you! Here's a special opportunity:

The Minnesota State Fair is rapidly approaching, and Lyngblomsten needs volunteers so residents can attend. Accompany residents on opening day and allow them to enjoy all the sights and fun of the Great Minnesota Get-Together—from crop art to corn dogs!

Visit www.Lyngblomsten.org/Volunteer to learn more or fill out an application.

(651) 632-5464 • volunteer@lyngblomsten.org



BOARD PROFILE: Mark Knudson, PhD

Mark Knudson brings a medical, financial background to Lyngblomsten's board

By Mara Gawarecki

▲ Mark Knudson addresses attendees at the 2026 Lyngblomsten Corporate Annual Meeting.

With a background in medical technology and finance, Dr. Mark Knudson has brought a wealth of knowledge to the Lyngblomsten Board of Directors.

"I've really enjoyed being part of that board," he said. "I've been exposed to so many new opportunities."

Mark graduated with a B.S. degree in Biology from Pacific Lutheran University in Parkland, Washington, and a Ph.D. in Autonomic and Cardiovascular Physiology and Pharmacology from Washington State University, Pullman. He received an Individual Postdoctoral Fellowship Award from the National Institutes of Health and spent time as a faculty member of the University of Washington School of Medicine.

Eventually, he realized academia wasn't his calling, and he moved with his family to St. Paul to take a position in research and development management with Boston Scientific. "The engineers couldn't understand what the physicians were saying, the physicians couldn't understand what the engineers were hearing, so I took the job to translate between them," Mark said.

He started and took public a medical technology company in the 1980s which was bought by Johnson & Johnson, where Mark spent some time after the acquisition. He then was chairman of a medical technology incubator, founded several medical product companies, and served as managing partner

of an early-stage venture capital firm. Since his retirement in 2016, he's served on several other boards and consulted for medical schools and sovereign funds in Canada and Norway.

A member of Living Waters Lutheran Church in Lino Lakes (one of Lyngblomsten's member congregations), Mark initially became aware of Lyngblomsten during its expansion to Lino Lakes. He was elected to the board in 2021.

As he settled into the role, the complexity of the organization—particularly government regulations and reimbursement structures—struck Mark; nevertheless, he quickly dove in, exploring the financial details and later serving as Treasurer.

"We've done a lot of work on board development, trying to make it more efficient and increase its strategic capacity," Mark said. He played a key role selecting a new investment advisor as the Investment Committee merged into the Finance Committee. "I'm very pleased with how that's gone," he said, adding that overseeing the smooth transition between chief financial officers in 2023 was another highlight of his time on the board.

Last year, Mark even had a chance to experience firsthand the level of care offered by Lyngblomsten staff when he spent time in the transitional care unit after complications from knee surgery.

"We are lucky to have the people we have working for Lyngblomsten," he said. "These are the people who keep us moving forward and are really on top of how the place has to run." **L**



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For more information and to schedule a tour, contact Sarah Andrews in Admissions at (651) 632-5301 or admissions@lyngblomsten.org.

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www.Lyngblomsten.org/LinoLakes



CAREGIVERS:

Find resources from Lyngblomsten for every step of your journey

Are you caring for an older adult and feel overwhelmed in your role? Or just need a boost of encouragement? Lyngblomsten Community Services is here to help you on your journey.

THREE OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOU:

MEET WITH A CAREGIVER SOCIAL WORKER

Schedule a time to meet one-on-one with Lisa Brown, MSW, LISW, a Caregiver Social Worker. She will provide you with resources and guidance that are tailored for your unique situation.

Meetings are available virtually, over the phone, or in person Monday–Thursday between 8:30 AM and 1:30 PM.

JOIN A SUPPORT GROUP

Share your experience with others in a safe, supportive setting at a Memory Loss Caregivers Support Group.

- Virtual: 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10:30 AM
- In-person: 4th Tuesday of each month at 10:30 AM at Lyngblomsten at Lino Lakes

SUBSCRIBE TO CAREGIVING COMPASS

Receive Community Services' quarterly e-newsletter for caregiving guidance, resources, and upcoming events handpicked by our staff experts. Visit Lyngblomsten.org/Publications to subscribe.

To schedule an appointment or register for a support group:
Contact Lisa Brown at (651) 632-5320 or caregiving@lyngblomsten.org.

*Can't meet in person or aren't ready to attend a support group?
Give Lisa a call at (651) 632-5320 for a conversation to discover what help is available.
More resources available at www.Lyngblomsten.org/CaregivingResources.*

Gifts to the Remembrance Fund

In Memory or Honor of a Loved One



In Memory of

March 1 through May 31, 2026

Terry Bartz

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For information about making a gift in honor or in memory of your loved one, please contact Carrie Godfrey at (651) 632-5358 or cgodfrey@lyngblomsten.org.

Create a Lasting Tribute through the Remembrance Wall



Honor someone special with an engraved plaque on the Lyngblomsten Remembrance Wall. Single or cumulative gifts totaling \$750 or more are eligible for a plaque. For details, contact Carrie Godfrey with the Lyngblomsten Foundation at (651) 632-5358 or cgodfrey@lyngblomsten.org.

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Mark Your Calendars!



Thursday, July 16

Como Park Volunteer Orientation

Lyngblomsten at Como Park

3–4:30 PM

Monthly orientation for new volunteers at the Como Park campus (1415 Almond Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108).

To register, contact Volunteer Services (651) 632-5464 or volunteer@lyngblomsten.org.

Thursday, July 23

Lino Lakes Volunteer Orientation

10–11:30 AM

Monthly orientation for new volunteers at the Lino Lakes campus (6070 Blanchard Blvd., Lino Lakes, MN 55014).

To register, contact Volunteer Services (651) 632-5464 or volunteer@lyngblomsten.org.

Thursday, August 6

Lyngblomsten Ice Cream Social

3–7 PM

Celebrate Lyngblomsten's 120th Anniversary and America's 250th Birthday at this special event featuring ice cream, live music, and activities (all FREE!) in the Nash Courtyard on the Como Park campus (1415 Almond Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108). Open to residents and program participants, their families, volunteers, employees, and delegates.

Tuesday, October 6

Estate Planning Seminar

3:30–5 PM

Hear a presentation by an attorney and ask questions.

This free event is sponsored by the Lyngblomsten Foundation and will be held at the Lyngblomsten Community Room on the Como Park campus (1415 Almond Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108). RSVP to Carrie Godfrey at (651) 632-5358 or cgodfrey@lyngblomsten.org.



Stay Connected with *Threads*!

To view the latest edition of our quarterly e-newsletter and to subscribe, visit www.Lyngblomsten.org/Publications.



OUR MISSION:

Influenced by Christ, Lyngblomsten provides a ministry of compassionate care and innovative services to older adults in order to preserve and enhance their quality of life.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

For our **participants**, Lyngblomsten promotes dignity through informed choices for living options, respecting individuality, and orchestrating the best life possible.

For our participants' **families**, Lyngblomsten supports their needs through careful listening, traveling alongside them as they walk the journey with their loved ones.

For our **employees**, Lyngblomsten strives to foster an environment that encourages compassionate caregiving, innovative thinking, problem-solving, and opportunity seeking.

Through our **community** of donors, volunteers, member congregations, and socially responsible corporations, Lyngblomsten encourages the individual to live one's personal ministry by enhancing the lives of older adults.

OUR PROMISE

Lyngblomsten strives to provide unmatched person-centered experiences, valuing: who you are, where you are, and your rights to make choices and decisions.

OUR PILLARS:

Influenced by Christ
Innovation & Leadership
Resources & Support
Person-Centered &
Dignity-Enhancing Experiences
Engaged Lifestyle

www.Lyngblomsten.org



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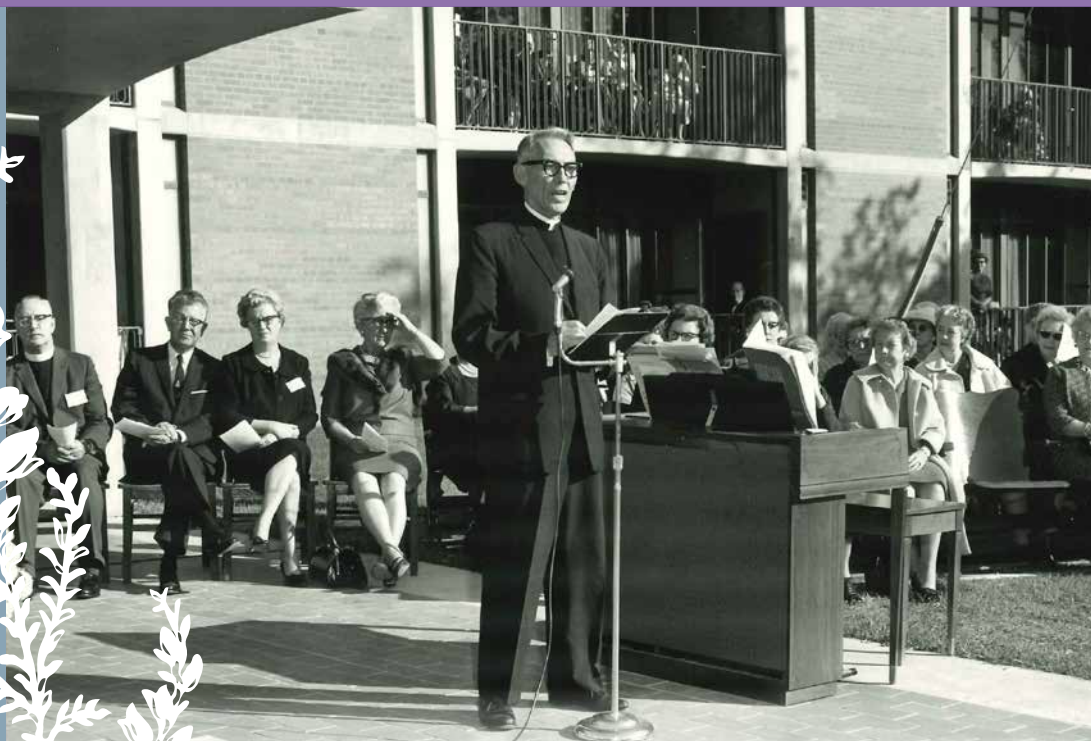
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been shaped by
growth, renewal,
and thoughtful
change—always
preserving the values
that have anchored
its mission for more
than 120 years.*

1906-2026



Pictured: Representing the American Lutheran Church (ALC), the Rev. Melford Knutson provides remarks at the dedication service for the newly constructed Lyngblomsten Care Center on September 29, 1963. When Lyngblomsten was reincorporated in 1960 under the auspices of the ALC, one stipulation that Lyngblomsten's board of trustees and branch members made was that the ALC would construct a nursing care building. Also in attendance at the ceremony are members of the Lyngblomsten Auxiliary, board of directors, and administration team, as well as care center residents—some of whom viewed the festivities from their room balconies (balconies were later converted to bathrooms).