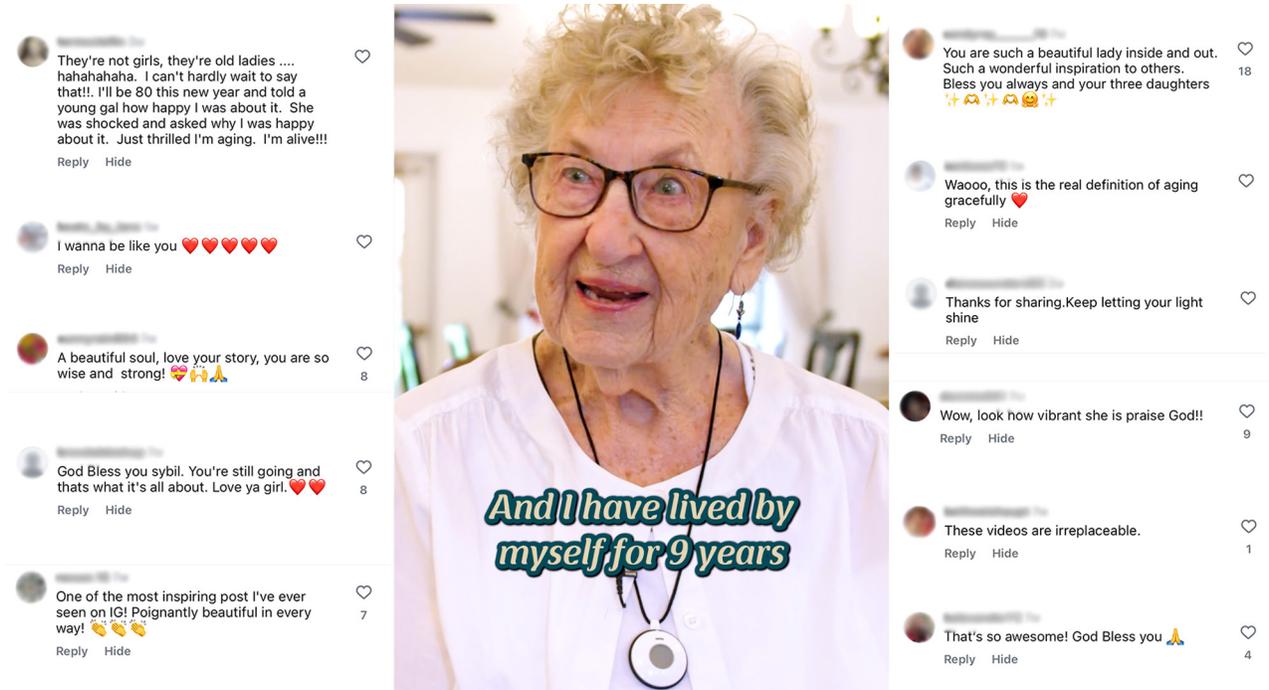


# SunsetNews

August - December 2025



Sybil Sparks talks about her life in a video shared on social media which resulted in many positive comments..

The idea of aging can be scary. The unknown can be intimidating. That's why it's so important to hear from those who come before us. Video interviews have become the online version of sitting at our elder's feet and listening closely as they share their wisdom, meaning that wisdom can have a reach most of us never would have imagined.

That was the case with 98-year-old Sybil Sparks, who sat down with Dash Media as part of the interviews we do and share on social media. Her very first video, where she talked about her faith, her daughters (who are now "old ladies" in their 70s), her husband and her work as a nurse, struck a chord with thousands people — friends and strangers alike.

Sybil's message has been viewed more than 400,000 times across LSM's social media platforms, eliciting hundreds of comments and making the nicest comment sections on social media!

Continued on page 5



Sunset Home  
College Hill Assisted Living  
Rainbow Retirement Community  
Hospice Sunset  
Sunset Companion Services

# Message from the President

Happy New Year! I hope and pray your year is off to a good start!

As I reflect on the past several months, I cannot help but see how God was with Lutheran Sunset Ministries (LSM) and working in all of the various programs and departments that exist to make our residents lives better and more fulfilling.

The fishing tank at our Grandparent's Day celebration is always a big hit, resulting in a lot of smiles and laughter as residents and their families catch "the big one"! We hosted our second haunted house at Halloween, and it was as big a hit as it was last year. In November, we dedicated the Veteran's Wall in Sunset Home in a meaningful dedication service to recognize those residents who served our country in the armed forces. And, of course, in December there were an abundant number of Christmas parties including food, music, gifts and Santa! This year we also added an Adopt-A-Grandparent tree in Sunset Home where folks could take a tag and buy a gift for one of our residents. We kept running out of tags because of the outpouring of support from all of you who participated. Thank you! The residents are very grateful you thought of them.

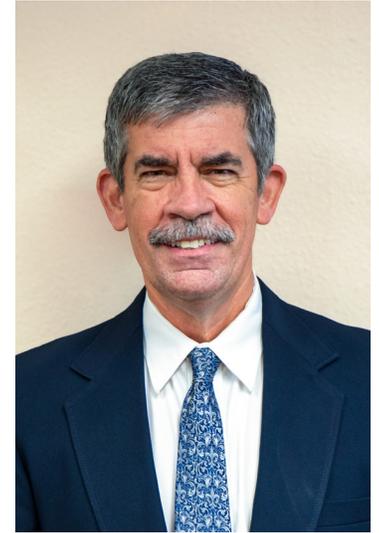
We have been blessed with great leadership in all our programs and departments. On the days when nothing seems to go right, our steady leadership team figures it out and our residents are the beneficiaries of their hard work. The good thing is most days run smoothly, which is how it should be!

When you have a well-run ministry, the word gets out. In 2025, our average nursing home census was finally back to pre-COVID levels, which we weren't sure we would ever see again. But now we have! As I write this, Heckmann Assisted Living is full, as is Rainbow Retirement Community. Hospice Sunset and our Personal Assistant Services program continue to serve LSM residents as well as the greater community.

Lastly, each year in December we receive our annual distribution from Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest (LFSW). LFSW manages our endowment fund that is a collection of all the estate gifts, etc., which supporters of LSM have donated over the years for the benefit of LSM. These are restricted funds that grow in perpetuity. If you are interested in making a donation to this fund or want to include LSM in your estate planning, LFSW can assist you with that at no charge to you. Contact info for them is on the next page with the photo of check we received in December.

As always, thank you for your continuous support!

Rodney Rueter, CEO/President



# Events New and Old



This year at our Veteran's Day ceremony, we unveiled our Wall of Honor, which was sponsored by VFW 8553 and the American Legion Post #322.

VFW Commander William Murdoch and American Legion commander JD Godby unveiled the Wall of Honor at this year's Veterans Day ceremony. What a wonderful way to honor our residents who have served. Thank you VFW and American Legion!



Grandparent's Day was a hit with families and residents alike, and this year's celebration featured a new event in addition to the traditional fishing tank: live bingo!

Our residents and their families competed for prizes and raised \$467 for our residents' scholarship fund!



Lutheran Foundation of the Southwest (LFSW) Gift Planner Kirk Barrett recently visited us to drop off our annual distribution. This year's distribution was \$211,712! This was made possible by endowments established over the years with LFSW. We are very thankful for those families and individuals who created endowments to support our ministry here at LSM.

By thinking of LSM in their estate planning, those donors ensured that the ministry of LSM will benefit for years to come. If you are interested in details about legacy planning to support our ministry, you may contact Kirk Barrett at [kbarrett@lfsw.org](mailto:kbarrett@lfsw.org).

# Sunset Spotlight

## Celebrating Staff Work Anniversaries

### 35 Years



Mary Chenault

### 30 years



Sandra Estrada

### 20 years



Judith Sarinana

### 10 years



Natalie Galbreth



Daemon Malbeck



Kathy McDaniel



Brenda Zeni

### 5 Years



Samantha Lush



Angela Vara

We are proud to have so many long-serving team members! Here are the LSM staff who celebrated milestone anniversaries in 2025.

### Not pictured:

Dr. Kyle Phillips - 15 years

Karen Rosenberry - 10 years

She even received a Christmas card from someone in Indiana who had been moved by her story.

Seeing Sybil's example of aging well meant a lot to many people of all ages. Some young people shared that they hoped they would be like Sybil in their 90s. Some shared that they missed their parents, wishing they still had them around and noting how lucky Sybil's daughters are. And others, Sybil's peers, shared the same sentiment she did: they are loving their golden years and enjoying their current stage of life.

Clearly, a life well lived is an inspiration to all. And this is a good reminder to talk to the seniors in your life and ask them questions about all kinds of topics from love to family to their favorite books/movies or childhood memories. You never know what you may learn!

You can find Sibyl's stories and more from our other residents by following us on Facebook, Instagram or TikTok: @LutheranSunsetMinistries.

## Adopt-A-Grandparent



This tree, with tags for Adopt-A-Grandparent, was located at the front of Sunset Home.

This year for Christmas, our activities team came up with the idea to help fulfill our residents' wish lists with the "Adopt-A-Grandparent for Christmas" program.

Trees with tags featuring each resident were put up in Sunset Home and the Hope Center for members of our community to take shopping. Within three days, all residents had been adopted!

We are so grateful for all of the generous donations, like those from Valley Mills High School HOSA, who adopted 30 residents!

Our activities team then turned into Santa's elves and wrapped all of the gifts to make sure each of the gifts went to the right resident. They were wrapped and ready for Santa to deliver at our Christmas party.

It takes a team effort to make the Christmas season magical, and we couldn't do it without our generous donors!



Activities Director Mildred Martinez poses with all of the wrapped gifts from the Adopt-A-Grandparent donations.

# Friends of LSM

Thanks to generous donors, Lutheran Sunset Ministries is able to provide person-centered services based on Christian values. The following gifts were given between August 1 and December 31, 2025.

## Memorial Gifts

All memorials, whether directed or not, go to the care and services provided. The residents served going forward are blessed by your thoughtfulness.

### FRANCES AMUNDSON

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### CHAPLAIN DAVE ANFENSON

Therissa Young, Clifton.

### OLEE BAKKE

Virginia Heinley, Clifton.

### RICHARD BENSON

Therissa Young, Clifton.

### MARTHA GAY BERGMAN

Phyllis Gamble & Mechelle Slaughter, Clifton; John & Jessica Erickson, Clifton; Dr. & Mrs. James Bowden, Cranfills Gap; Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton; Lance Allen, Clifton; Greg & Dawn Underwood, Clifton.

### REBECCA BIRDWELL

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### ETTA CARTER

Angie & Gary Carter, Waco.

### KAREN CARTER

Angie & Gary Carter, Waco.

### ROBERT CLARK

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### JOANN COCHRAN

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### DOROTHY CONRAD

Larry & Sherry Schulze, Clifton.

### JOHN CULP

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### EMILY CUMINS

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### RALPH DAHL

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton; James & Rita Bowden, Cranfills Gap.

### WELDON DAILY

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### DANNY DEAL

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### SHELLEY FOSSETT

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### MARJORIE FULTON

Betty Townsend, Clifton.

### CHARLES GILBREATH

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### JERRY GODBY

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### PAT GORTON

Bob & Pat Appel, Anna; Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton; Therissa Young, Clifton.

### TURNER & OLLIE MAE GREENWADE

Vic & Donna Barranco, Liberty; Sally & Ron Bates, San Antonio.

### JEROME HARDWICK

Mr. & Mrs. James M. Davis, Burleson

### MAY HARDWICK

Mr. & Mrs. James M. Davis, Burleson

### LARRY HEDGECOKE

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### ANNA JANSSEN

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### CLINTON JOHNSON

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### WILMA JOHNSON

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### LOUISE KING

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### BRENDA KYLE

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### MARTIN LIPPE

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton; Neil & Sharon Pahl, Howards Grove WI.

### SCOTT MCAFFEE

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton.

### BENJAMIN MEEK

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

### ARNOLD MILLER

Mr. & Mrs. Gene Miller, McGregor.

**DAVID MILLER**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

**JOHN MOORE**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

**STELLA NAZIMEK**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton.

**NADINE RUETER**

Calvin Rueter, Clifton.

**WANDA SEDBERRY**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton.

**ADA L. SHERRICK**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

**JUDITH SMALLWOOD**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

**CONNIE O SMITH**

Gerald & Cindy Thies, Clifton.

**DORIS STEVENS**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton; Joe & Mary Sue  
Crawson, Valley Mills.

**JAMES WELDON SMITH**

Michael & Kathleen Plemons,  
Crawford; Rodney & Melanie Rueter,  
Clifton; Lance Allen, Clifton; Mark  
& Tanya Johnson, Dallas; Mark &  
Jill Meyer, Lincolnville ME; Joyce  
Symank, Waco; Richard & Jean  
Laude, Cottage Grove WI; Jackie &  
Paul Anderson, Corrales NM; The  
Ruth Anderson Family, San Cle-  
mente CA; Jackie & Paul Anderson,  
Corrales NM; The Ruth Anderson  
Family, San Clemente CA; Dick &  
Ann Lowery, Green Valley AZ; Ted  
Lowery, Ashland OR; Joel & Barb  
Lowery, Bozeman MT; Jill Lowery &  
Will Sampson, Pittsboro NC; Aubrey  
& Virginia Richards, Clifton; Mark  
Armstrong, the Board of Trustees  
& staff of the Lutheran Foundation  
of Southwest, Pflugerville; Debbie  
Engelbrecht, McGregor; Sonja, Joe,  
Katrina & Annalise Meyer, Dallas;

Maren & Alan Nagorzanski, Dallas.

**ORIET & BILL THOMPSON**

Rosemary Fielder, Waco; Miriam  
Hussey, Georgetown.

**VIRGIL TINDALL**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

**JERRY WALL II**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

**BOB WALLACE**

Diana Wallace Hodde, Brenham.

**JANE WILLIAMS**

Rodney & Melanie Rueter, Clifton;  
Lance Allen, Clifton.

**MARGIE WOLF**

Greg & Dawn Underwood, Clifton.

## General Gifts

All gifts help LSM in its work  
and mission.

Abiding Savior Lutheran Church,  
Cameron

Dr. & Mrs. James Bowden,  
Cranfills Gap

Calvary Lutheran Church,  
Richland Hills

Central Lutheran Church, Dallas

Christ Lutheran Church, Dallas

Compeer Financial, Mankato MN

Mr. John Erickson, Clifton

First Lutheran Church, Temple

John Gilliam, Valley Mills

Mr. & Mrs. John Hoff, Clifton

Douglas Kieta, Cranfills Gap

Pastor & Mrs. Paul Krupicka, Waco

Lutheran Women's Missionary  
League, Victoria

Mabel Ekman Charitable  
Foundation, Austin

McAfee Family Foundation, Clifton

Mr. Gerald Nelson, Cranfills Gap

Oslo Lutheran Church, Gruver

Our Savior's Lutheran Church  
Women, Clifton

Mrs. Lorine L. Peters, Cedar Hill

Mr. & Mrs. Elton Ramthum,  
Gatesville

Mr. Donald Robertson, Robinson

Mr. Curtis Rueter, Westminster CO

Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schuetze, Waco  
St. John Lutheran Church – Coryell,  
Gatesville

St. Matthew Lutheran Church, Waco

St. Olaf Lutheran Church,  
Cranfills Gap

Trinity Lutheran Church, Clifton

Trinity Lutheran Church, Hamilton

Zion Lutheran Church, McGregor

Zion United Church, Clifton

## Honor Gifts

These gifts are given to honor  
and appreciate special people,  
events, celebrations and/or  
achievements. All gifts help  
provide care to those served  
by LSM.

**NANCY BRATCHER**

By: B.C. & Leslie Bennett, Clifton.

**JOYCE HECKMANN**

Jean & Bill Frazer, Houston.

**SCOTT & CINDY MCAFEE**

By: Mr. & Mrs. Steven Harr, Clifton.

# Sunset News

Official Publication of  
**Lutheran Sunset Ministries**  
P. O. Box 71  
Clifton, TX 76634  
254.675.8637  
[www.lutheransunset.org](http://www.lutheransunset.org)

## RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Lutheran Sunset Ministries is a not-for-profit organization sponsoring programs of skilled nursing care, assisted living, retirement living, hospice services and companion services. Sunset provides services to qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, national origin or other protected statuses according to applicable federal and state law.

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Clifton, Texas 76634  
Permit No. 27

## Around Campus

