

IMPACT REPORT

2015



From the Executive Director

Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Ephesians 3:20-21

It has been two years since Voice of Care reorganized. This ministry has move from primarily serving people with disability through chaplaincy to equipping and training churches and their volunteers to minister among people with disabilities with community-minded evangelism. This year, we have seen God answer our prayers for laborers in the field and the monetary resources to accomplish His plan. It is truly amazing what has been accomplished in such a short time.

As Executive Director, I have had the privilege to pull together an amazing team of dedicated Lutherans, each with particular knowledge and skills to enhance Voice of Care's ability to carry out its mission. My passion for people with disabilities led me to become a deaconess. In order to devote my efforts to raising my family, I worked part time in special education. When I joined Voice of Care it was because my previous volunteer roles had developed my ability to write grants and raise funds. I never dreamed that God would call me to lead this ministry of His. It gives me great joy to work with Voice of Care, helping excite His people with God's vision for including people with disabilities and their care-givers in the Kingdom of God.

Voice of Care still seeks a West Region Director. The three pastors who serve as Region Directors for North, South and East, each bring a level of expertise that has collectively enlarged our training programs.

continued inside





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“God has enabled Voice of Care to walk on solid ground.”

continued from front

God brought three talented men to Voice of Care:

- Rev. Paul Klopke specializes in senior care and special needs ministry with an emphasis on chaplaincy.
- Rev. Dean Pittelko has a doctorate in counseling, a daughter with a disability and a special heart for inclusion programs within a church setting.
- Rev. Phil Gruenbaum, also a father of children with special needs, came out of retirement after years of disability ministry with Bethesda Lutheran Communities.

We are thrilled to be able to train congregations and camp ministries to offer quality Christian special education, disability awareness programs, respite care and events, and other services to individuals and families with special needs.

We have made a concerted effort to upgrade our print and online communications. A little over two years ago Lori Solyom began consulting with Voice of Care. Her communications and marketing background has allowed her to help Voice of Care effectively share with churches the need to reach out to people with disabilities in their community. Lori is now moving onto our staff as Director of Development, continuing to seek out ways to connect Voice of Care to people with a passion for ministry among people with disabilities and soliciting generous support of their time and resources.

Dian Cracraft, Voice of Care’s office administrator, is the glue which has held this ministry together throughout all its transitions. More than just handling all our financial needs, she also undergirds each staff member with encouragement and prayer.

In 2015, God also answered our financial prayers far more abundantly than we ever expected. Knowing that in 2016 we would have no grant for operational funds, we prayed that we could raise an additional \$20,000. We were able to end our fiscal year with a surplus totaling over \$30,000! God has enabled Voice of Care to walk on solid ground with the accumulation of \$70,000 in reserve funding. Voice of Care can now we can look to the future, securing grants that will allow us to move this ministry beyond northern Illinois to equip churches throughout the United States to nurture people with disabilities and their caregivers in their walk with Christ!

In Christ,

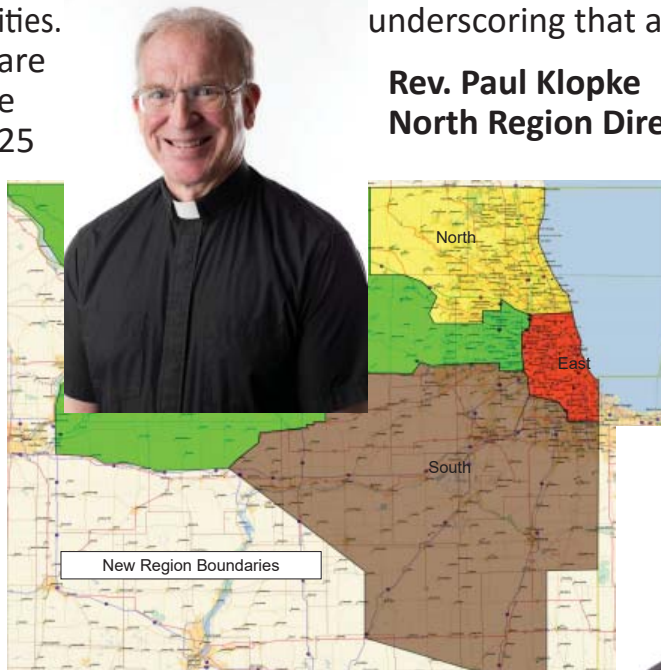
Deaconess Kris Blackwell

Deaconess Kris Blackwell
Execurive Director
Voice of Care



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Members of Crosspoint Lutheran Church (Lakewood, IL), Immanuel Lutheran Church (Crystal Lake, IL) and St. John Lutheran Church (Burlington, IL) work together with Pastor Paul, hosting Jesus Time chapel at this far northwest Chicago suburban assisted living community for adults with disabilities. Special Christmas Care Kits including a Bible were delivered to 125 residents.



Rev. Paul Klopke
North Region Director

Special Needs Camp Training

Walcamp Outdoor Ministry offers several weeks of camp designed for participants with disabilities. Voice of Care has moved from programming these camps to training those who lead them and serve as volunteer “camp buddies.” Pastor Paul and Pastor Phil have continued to take their turn as “pastor-of-the-week” but have also focused on plans to take the special needs camp training program to camps in Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana and beyond.

REST Program Training

This certified respite care training has been the impetus for several congregations, such as Calvary Lutheran Church in Wood Dale, Illinois, to launch their own short-term respite care and drop-in respite event programs. Voice of Care presented REST (Respite Education and Support Tools) sessions to “train the trainers” in October at St. Paul Lutheran Church (Chicago Heights, IL) and Immanuel Lutheran Church (Belvidere, IL).

Disability Awareness Days

Immanuel Lutheran School of Belvedere and St. Peter Lutheran School of Arlington Heights presented Disability Awareness Days in partnership with Voice of Care. At Immanuel, Principal Judy Schaefer worked with Pastor Phil to present children with experiences that mimic those of a person with disabilities: using sign language or braille, navigating a white cane obstacle course while blindfolded, participating in a wheelchair “rodeo,” dealing with dyslexia or having one’s manual dexterity compromised. Pastor Paul presented video and learning activities in chapel at St. Peter and led songs underscoring that all God’s children are special.

read more stories at
VoiceOfCare.org

Rev. Phil Gruenbaum
South Region Director



Lutherans For Life

Voice of Care believes that every individual, regardless of ability, is precious and important to God. That mission is in sync with the pro-life message of Lutherans For Life. Pastor Phil hit the road to share Voice of Care resources with attendees at the 2015 LFL national gathering in the Cincinnati airport area and at the Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky.



Rev. Dean Pittelko
East Region Director

Good Vibes for a Good Cause

The April 2015 benefit concert and dance provided a great return on investment in the fun column! Several facilities and families brought participants with disabilities to enjoy this musical good time. Attendees bought tickets, bid on silent auction items and ate Destiny's Delights mini cupcakes to the tune of more than \$7,000. These funds support Voice of Care's work in economically burdened neighborhoods with churches that are currently unable to sustain these ministries on their own.

Congregational Ministry Partnerships

Voice of Care helps churches to begin ministries that serve people with disabilities, but sometimes Voice of Care's task is to help promote, support and provide resources for an existing outreach. Voice of Care is pleased to promote - and provide requested resources - to congregation-based special needs programs around Illinois, including St. John's Lutheran Church in Lombard, Immanuel Lutheran Church in Elmhurst, Calvary Lutheran Church in Wood Dale and Mt. Greenwood Lutheran Church in Chicago.

Lutheran Women in Mission

This past summer, Voice of Care attended the Lutheran Women's Missionary League convention in Des Moines, Iowa, to talk to Women in Mission from across the United States about disability awareness in ministry. As a result of these discussions, networking opportunities have opened up between Voice of Care, LWML societies, congregations and district ministry workers.

Lori Solyom
Director of Development



Mile For Mileage

August 22, 2015 was a beautifully sunny and temperate day. Over 80 people and eight Lutheran Church Charity K9 Comfort dogs joined Voice of Care staff for a stroll along the walking path at Castaldo Park in Woodridge, Illinois. The pledges gathered in person and online by these walkers raised over \$9,000 to offset the costs incurred by Voice of Care's Region Directors as they travel across hundreds of miles each year to consult with churches and train volunteers for ministry to people with disabilities.

Voice of Care's mission is to equip the Church to nurture people with disabilities and their caregivers in their walk with Christ.



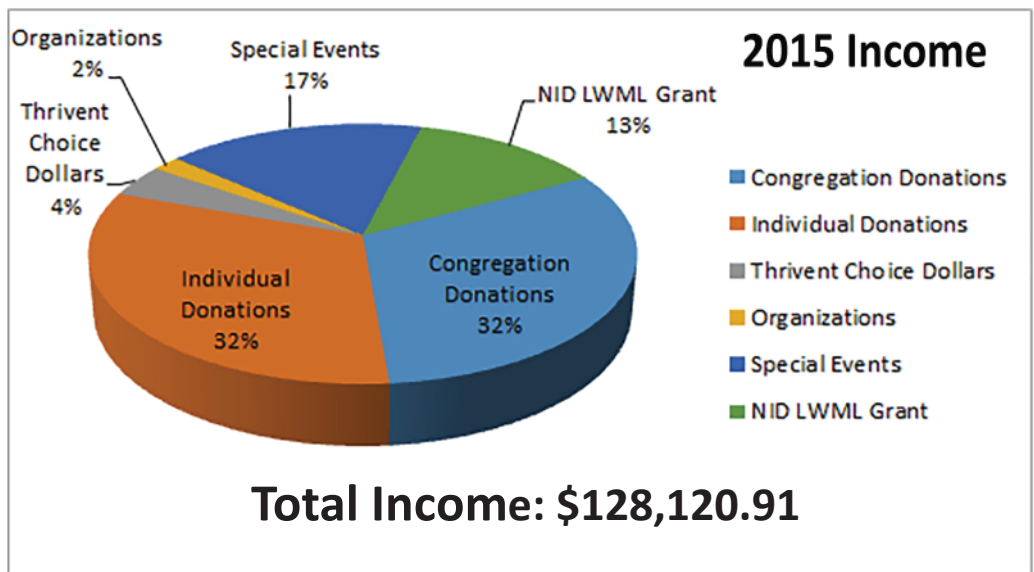
Dian Cracraft
Office Administrator

Online Giving

2015 was a year of developing online giving opportunities for Voice of Care. The #GivingTuesday campaign focussed on prompting gifts through email newsletters and social media and ramped up the real-time feel of end of the year contributions. It also turned out to be a way to increase pledges exponentially for the Mile For Mileage Challenge.

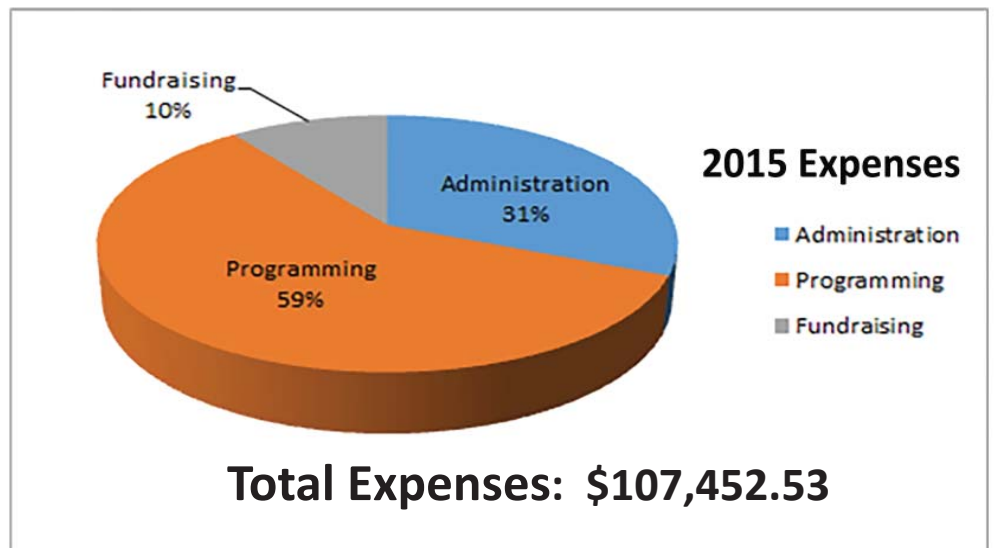
2015 Income

Congregation Donations	\$40,616.81
Individual Donations	\$40,901.80
Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$5,138.00
Organizations	\$2,423.82
Special Events	\$22,408.90
NID LWML Grant	\$16,631.58
TOTAL INCOME:	\$128,120.91



2015 Expenses

Administration	\$33,573.41
Programming	\$62,969.54
Fundraising	\$10,909.58
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$107,452.53



Voice of Care ended 2015 with a positive balance of \$20,668.38 (reserves toward 2016 commitments)

Voice of Care 2015 Financial Overview



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Voice of Care Volunteers

Jesus' Hands and Feet

Voice of Care is ministry but more than that it's people. Voice of Care could not do what it does without the selfless participation of volunteers of all ages and abilities. Volunteers help lead Jesus Time at facilities, work with special need events at churches, lend a hand at Voice of Care events or serve in other ways with Voice of Care projects, promotion and planning.

Voice of Care Board of Directors



Keeping it Going

Voice of Care's Board of Director and Voice of Care's Fundraising Committee are volunteers committed to doing all the behind the scenes work to keep the ministry on track and operating with the highest level of accountability.

2016 DATES TO NOTE

- April 8-10 Easter Special Needs Retreat at Walcamp, Kingston, IL
Walcamp.org, 815.784.5141
- April 16 Good Vibes for a Good Cause benefit concert at Hyatt, Lisle, IL
VoiceOfCare.org
- June 4 Special Needs Volunteer Training at Walcamp, Kingston, IL
Walcamp.org, 815.784.5141
- June, July & August Special Needs Camps at Walcamp, Kingston, IL
Walcamp.org, 815.784.5141
- August 20 Mile for Mileage Challenge I walk at Castaldo Park, Woodridge, IL
VoiceOfCare.org
- August 27 Mile for Mileage Challenge II walk at location TBA
VoiceOfCare.org

