



i. Executive Summary –include amount requested, brief summary of problem, objectives and plan (theory of change). Max 100 words.

At National Church Residences, we have realized in order to provide holistic healthcare to the seniors we serve, it is imperative to consider spirituality alongside other determinants of health and well-being. Unsurprisingly, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in unimaginable hardship for senior residents as they are more than ever in need of the comfort and connection from our Resident Spiritual Care Program. An additional \$19,957 investment from Friends Foundation for the Aging will enable us to continue the Resident Spiritual Care Program within Pennsylvania and measure the impact this spiritual care has on residents' spiritual needs, relationships and emotional outlook.

ii. Brief statement of the organization's history and competence for this effort. Max 100 words.

National Church Residences (N^{CC}) is a 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt organization that has become the nation's largest not-for profit developer and manager of affordable housing for seniors and other vulnerable populations. Individuals of all faiths, race, and national origins are served through an organizational approach that everyone deserves to be treated with compassion, equality, integrity, and respect. With over 27,000 housing units and 340+ properties in 25 states, N^{CC} provides affordable housing for seniors and modest-income families, supportive housing for the formerly homeless and veterans, hospice services, home health care, and assisted and independent living communities.

iii. Project details (max 5 pages):

1. What problem are you addressing? Evidence of needs, why this solution chosen/evidence, description of community and people to be served.

As we age, loss, grief, and change become a profound part of life. According to the article “Spirituality and Aging: A Guide for Seniors on Faith, Meaning, and Connection,” getting older tends to deepen a person’s longing for the very things that a spiritual life can provide – things like a sense of comfort, meaning, purpose, and connection. Many seniors feel unsure of how to navigate this new phase of life and are lost in knowing how to continue to live with meaning and purpose. Additionally, with age, feelings of loneliness and depression impact a large number of seniors and unfortunately, COVID-19 has increased this issue due to sheltering in place orders. According to The University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging, in June 2020 56% of older adults ages 50-80 reported feeling isolated from others compared to 27% in 2018. With over double the number of seniors reporting feelings of isolation in 2020, seniors are now more than ever in need of spiritual care, comfort and connection as they have experienced unimaginable hardship and continue to navigate feelings of grief, sadness and loss of independence and the life they once knew.

Providing spiritual care to address deep questions such as the meaning and purpose of life as well as feelings of loneliness and depression is essential to providing holistic health care. At National Church Residences, we have observed that while medical issues, emotional needs and social concerns are managed by clinicians and care coordinators, the need for spiritual care among seniors goes unmet. As a result, this vulnerable population deteriorates. As health and mobility issues begin to limit what seniors can do and make seniors lose the “gifts” and aspects of themselves they felt defined them, it is crucial that seniors discover ways in which their lives are still special and meaningful. Because of this, special attention to spiritual needs becomes of much greater significance. Research summarized by the Mayo Clinic Proceedings shows better health outcomes (less cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and lower blood pressure) for seniors when spirituality is at the core of their value system.

Believing that spiritual care is health care, we launched our Resident Spiritual Care Program in 2018 within central Ohio with the goal to expand and provide for the spiritual needs of all 30,000+ residents of our housing communities across the country by creating and implementing a model that offers a dignified view of humanity. As part of our growth plan, we were provided a grant from Friends Foundation for the Aging in 2020 to provide essential spiritual care to our seventeen communities in Pennsylvania. The 959 residents we serve in Pennsylvania are majority very low-income older adults who are aging and frail. The average age of residents is 77 years old. The number of residents ages 65 and older is approximately 94% of the total population while approximately 57% of residents are ages 75 and older. Data collected from our Pennsylvania residents highlight the vulnerability of this population and need for services that address the challenges facing the senior population. Of the seniors assessed at our Pennsylvania buildings, 63% have hypertension, 35% have chronic pain, 31% have diabetes, 16% have COPD, 15% have cancer, 10% have had a stroke, and 10% have congestive heart failure.

Although we have been able to provide a level of spiritual support in the past year despite the many challenges as described in our report, we continue to believe in person connection and support is essential to developing relationships with seniors and providing holistic care. With the hiring of a Regional Lead in October 2020, we have been able to establish a volunteer base to begin providing in person spiritual care and are in the midst of piloting a tablet initiative at 9 of our communities. By having the ability to interact with residents by helping them utilize the tablet to connect with family and friends, Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators can provide further critical connection during this time while building trust and getting to know the residents on a deeper level. Our Regional Lead continues to build the program and enrich the interactions and support with the momentum she created in her first 6 months. As the world adapts to COVID-19 and moves forward safely, our goal is to continue to provide Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators in every community and to evaluate the tablet pilot with an eye toward expanding this initiative at all 17 communities.

2. What action(s) will you do?

Since the hiring of the Regional Lead in October 2020, the program has gained considerable momentum and 12 Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators have been recruited and are in place at 5 communities. Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators are deemed essential staff who are permitted within our buildings during this time utilizing proper PPE and safety protocols. Our goal is to continue establishing partnerships with local faith communities and recruiting volunteers with various faith backgrounds to effectively care for residents with various belief systems. We plan to recruit an additional 18 Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators to establish a volunteer base of 30 individuals at all times to be utilized at all 17 communities to provide on-site spiritual care. We have creatively adjusted our program to support residents experiencing

isolation from social distancing measures through the use of technology. Through an approved program revision in 2020, we have purchased 9 Amazon Fire 7 tablets to be utilized by the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators and Regional Lead and plan to purchase an additional 8 tablets to be used at the remaining buildings as we roll out the tablet initiative (as long as we see that the tablet initiative has been impactful and effective for residents). Our newly commissioned volunteers and the volunteers we continue to recruit to the program will be trained how to utilize the tablet provided to each community to assist residents with connecting with family and friends. This will provide further connection for residents and enable the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators to have a greater opportunity to participate in people’s lives and understand each individual’s unique spiritual journey, enhancing the spiritual care and support that can be provided. Our rollout plan for the tablet initiative includes first implementing at our Erie, Pennsylvania communities in April – July 2021, our Pittsburgh communities August – December 2021, and then our outlying Pennsylvania communities January – April 2022. As the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators assist residents with the tablets, they will utilize sign in sheets to track interactions and take notes on the type of assistance provided to each resident.

We have learned through the last year how critical this program is to not only to our residents, but to the staff within our buildings as well. We plan to additionally have the Regional Lead and Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators available to provide spiritual support to our Pennsylvania staff, whether this be in person or through virtual means such as zoom meetings. Our frontline workers have put their health at risk every day to ensure our facilities are safe and sanitary and have experienced a dramatic increase in workload, job duties and expectations. They are essential to ensuring our seniors who are most vulnerable to serious illness from COVID-19 are cared for and have their needs met at their communities. This has created a large degree of stress in their lives and our Regional Lead has discovered the care from this program is greatly needed for our staff as well whether that be prayer, a listening ear, companionship or a helping hand.

3. What other organizations will you partner with on this project?

Our Regional Lead has reached out to numerous congregations and established partnerships with many of these including First Church Assembly of Erie, Mount Ararat Baptist Church, Valley View Presbyterian Church, Covenant Church of Pittsburgh, Tree of Life, Susquehanna Conference United Methodist Church, Central Baptist and 3 Rivers Praise and Worship. These partnerships have led to an array of volunteers to provide spiritual support through the Resident Spiritual Care Program. We continue to seek connections to additional congregations in close distance to our communities in order to recruit Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators to the program. Our goal is to seek relationships with various faith communities to ensure seniors have access to spiritual care that fits their belief system.

4. What outputs (measurable, specific) do you expect?

Resident Spiritual Care Program Outputs:
959 residents will have access to spiritual care through weekly devotionals, a hotline seniors can call at any time to talk to a chaplain available to offer nondenominational care and support and a daily message of inspiration and hope seniors can call in to listen to every day
959 residents will have access to on-site spiritual care and the Tablet initiative for enhanced spiritual care and support
A Regional Lead will continue to oversee the Resident Spiritual Care Program in Pennsylvania
Overall, 30 Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators will be trained in Pennsylvania
All staff at our Pennsylvania buildings will have access to connect with the Regional Lead and/or a Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinator for support

5. What outcomes do you expect—what change will occur, what impact will it have?

Resident Spiritual Care Program Outcomes:
60% of residents who participated in the Resident Spiritual Care program will indicate that their spiritual needs are being met
60% of residents who participated in the Resident Spiritual Care program will indicate that their emotional outlook on life enhanced through greater personal peace, hope and sense of purpose
60% of residents who participated within the Resident Spiritual Care Program’s Tablet Initiative will indicate their relationships increased through social interaction opportunities

6. How will you measure outputs and outcomes?

Success is measured through the number of residents served by the Resident Spiritual Care Program as well as through analyzing the degree to which the program positively impacts residents. Please find below the ways we will measure our proposed outputs and outcomes:

Outputs:

The Regional Lead will be responsible for recording and documenting all outputs and reporting these outputs to the Foundations team (where the Resident Spiritual Care Program is housed) and Program Lead.

Outcomes:

Outcomes will be determined through surveys of individuals served through the Resident Spiritual Care Program. We plan to survey residents who have received in person support at the one-year mark (April 2021) to see how this program has impacted these measures. Our program will continue to be enhanced in the next year as we are able to expand to provide more in person support to additional communities and we will continue to complete surveys to compare to our previous year's data.

Staff of the Pennsylvania communities will additionally be surveyed to assess the degree to which the program has assisted with creating a more positive work environment, eased tension amount residents, and supported staff members. We will also look to obtain feedback from faith partners to see the benefit this program is having on the members of their congregations that have been trained and are serving as Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators.

7. How will you sustain the project after the grant period?

We anticipate similar financial needs from year to year for the Regional Lead, mileage/travel for Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators, trainings, and events/materials. As we build relationships in Pennsylvania, we are cultivating prospective donors and will continue to seek corporate and foundation support.

8. How will your results be shared and replicated?

National Church Residences will compile success stories demonstrating the impact of the program along with output/outcome data to share annually with donors through mailings. We currently have the Resident Spiritual Care Program taking place within Ohio, Georgia and Pennsylvania and from these initiatives are learning strategies for replication. We are preparing to expand this program in Texas and Michigan building on lessons learned in our recent expansion in Pennsylvania. We will continue to share the impact of this program and the support of Friends Foundation for the Aging through our social media streams.

9. How does this project fit with Friends Foundation values (see below)?

The Resident Spiritual Care Program fits into the identified values of the Friends Foundation in the following ways:

Service to Diverse Populations: National Church Residences places great weight on cultural diversity, sensitivity, and understanding. The Resident Spiritual Care Program serves people from diverse races, ethnic backgrounds, genders, sexual orientation, spiritual beliefs, and cultural preferences, including those who speak different languages as we develop and deliver services. We also provide language interpretation from a number of service providers as needed. Since faith is an important yet personal aspect of an individual's life, we must demonstrate a respect and deference to all we serve, which we are committed to do. By requiring every Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinator to be properly trained to minister to people of all faiths or no faith, we can ensure access to quality spiritual care for every resident and staff member affiliated with National Church Residences. National Church Residences is committed to ensuring that all who wish to be served by National Church Residences and those who serve through National Church Residences feel a sense of belonging.

Potential to Create Change: We recognize that spiritual care is healthcare, and to provide our residents with the compassionate care they deserve is to support them in living with purpose in the healthiest way possible for them. Outcomes from our first few years in other regions show that our communities where this program has been implemented have less racial tension, residents accept changes such as renovations and moves more easily and the overall environment as reported by staff is more positive. In addition, the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators have assisted by visiting with residents who used to take much needed time from the work of the Property Managers and Service Coordinators.

Leveraging of Resources: National Church Residences continues to work to leverage many different resources in supporting the implementation of the Resident Spiritual Care Program with growing success as the programs take on momentum, such as in Ohio where the Resident Spiritual Care Program was first developed. We are actively promoting and engaging in crowdfunding and fundraising campaigns, highlighted the Resident Spiritual Care Program during our Holiday Annual Appeal mailings to our large network of donors, have earmarked funds for the program from our Annual Golf Classic, and have full board support of the program.

Collaboration: Collaboration among local faith communities, hospital systems, divinity schools and ministerial associations, donors, and supporters of the Resident Spiritual Care Program is essential in administering a successful program. The Program Lead and Regional Lead will make it a priority to establish relationships and partnerships to create a network of volunteers.

Engagement of Employees & Participants: Employees of our buildings where the Resident Spiritual Care Program is currently taking place are actively involved with the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators. The Property Manager and Service Coordinator assist in helping each Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinator feel welcomed in every community and introduced to all residents. It is our goal as an organization to have a Service Coordinator at each one of our buildings to assess the needs of residents through evidence based assessments and evaluation tools (in the groundbreaking electronic assessment and tracking tool we launched called Care Guide) and create individualized care plans to address these needs. When a need for spiritual assistance is determined, the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinator works closely with the Service Coordinator to provide this care for the resident, whether that is through a listening ear, encouragement, support etc. Additionally, the Service Coordinator's job responsibilities include bringing education/wellness and social activities to the building, in which the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinator can assist in developing and running. As the Volunteer Spiritual Care Program becomes an offering in each of one our buildings, the residents inform the delivery and support needed by the program for their particular community. Additionally, residents are encouraged to provide feedback through surveys on the Resident Spiritual Care Program that will enable the Regional Lead and Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators to make changes to thoroughly address each community's specific needs.

Continuing Engagement of Friends Foundation for the Aging: National Church Residences is excited to partner with the Friends Foundation for the Aging in assisting seniors to have the resources and supports needed to thrive in their communities. We will engage the Friends Foundation for the Aging by sharing continued results of our Resident Spiritual Care Program in mailings and emails annually. We also invite the Friends Foundation for the Aging staff to engage with our Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators, staff, and residents through site visits and education volunteer opportunities.

Integration of Services: Our Service Coordinators at our buildings work closely with the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators in providing wrap around services to the residents. As the Service Coordinator identifies resident needs and care concerns, the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinator often plays a role in the response and delivery. For example, residents in one of our buildings going through a renovation experienced sadness from being displaced from their homes during the renovation period. The Service Coordinator referred residents to the Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators who provided vital comfort and support to the residents during this transition period.

10. Project budget and timeline, including other sources of support, budget narrative.

For the Pennsylvania Resident Spiritual Care Program in 2021, the budget is \$30,000. As we currently have \$10,043 remaining to utilize from delays in program activities due to COVID-19, we are requesting \$19,957 from Friends Foundation for the Aging.

Pennsylvania Resident Spiritual Care Program Budget

Support & Revenue	
2020 Remaining Funds from Friends Foundation for the Aging	\$ 10,043
Friends Foundation for the Aging Request	\$ 19,957
Total	\$ 30,000

Expenses	
Program Lead Oversight	\$ 5,454.00
Regional Lead (.25 FTE)	\$ 12,520.00
Administrative Assistant	\$ 1,200
Other Program Expenses	
Annual Meetings for Regional Lead for Training/Support	\$ 1,000.00
Mileage/Travel for Regional Lead (mileage to and from communities, hospital visits, etc.)	\$ 3,000.00
Cell Phone Reimbursement for Regional Leads	\$480.00
Trainings (trainings for Regional Leads/Volunteer Spiritual Care Coordinators and specialized training for working with seniors)	\$1,800.00
Events/Supplies/Materials at Communities (celebration of life events, workbooks, songbooks, social activities, field trips, etc.)	\$3,986.00
8 Additional Amazon Fire 7 Tablets for remaining Pennsylvania communities (~\$70 each)	\$560.00
Total	\$ 30,000

Timeline

April 2021 – July 2021

Surveys will be disbursed and collected to demonstrate impact of the Resident Spiritual Care Program at communities who have received on site support in April 2021. The Regional Lead will focus efforts on establishing the on-site volunteers and tablet initiative within the Erie, Pennsylvania communities.

August 2021 – December 2021

The Regional Lead will focus on establishing the onsite volunteers and tablet initiative within the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania communities.

January 2022 – April 2022

The Regional Lead will focus on establishing the onsite volunteers and tablet initiative within the outlying communities in Pennsylvania. In April 2022, a follow up survey will be administered to residents who participated in the Resident Spiritual Care Program and tablet initiative determine program impact and outcomes.

***Please note our timeline is fluid based on where we have success with relationships and at some point, during the year the program will be happening simultaneously within the various communities.