



St. Luke Homes & Services, Inc.

"A Caring Community"

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 15, 2018

CONTACT: Rev. John Syvertson

Chaplain at St. Luke Homes & Services, Inc.

(712) 262-5931 or (701) 339-7750

Syvertson named a nationally board-certified chaplain

The Rev. John Syvertson, Chaplain of the St. Luke Homes & Services campus in Spencer, has earned a credential which stands to benefit the residents, tenants, homeowners, families and staff he serves as well as the region's faith community at large. Syvertson was recently named a board-certified chaplain with the Association of Professional Chaplains.

In 2004, the National Council of Churches in coordination with the Association of Professional Chaplains, National Association of Veterans Affairs Chaplains, Canadian Association for Spiritual Care, Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Neshama Association of Jewish Chaplains, and National Association of Catholic Chaplains began the process of ensuring all chaplains in healthcare were nationally credentialed through a standard certification process.

"We commend John for all of his hard work and dedication that went into achieving this high honor," said David West, CEO/Administrator of St. Luke Homes & Services.

Board certification is the process in which candidates demonstrate their competence, qualifications and ability to function as a professional chaplain. One purpose of board certification is to assure the public and the employing organization that the chaplain has met established national qualifications and competencies for professional chaplains, and is held to a code of ethics. A second purpose is to promote the continuing education and development of certified spiritual care providers.

The qualifications for certification include: Bachelor's degree plus theological education at the graduate level, four units of clinical pastoral education, 2,000 hours per year of full-time chaplaincy experience, endorsement or support by a recognized spiritual or faith group, and demonstrated competency in areas of chaplaincy care.

"By preparing for this certification, John had the opportunity to increase his knowledge and clinical skills, which we foresee as increased effectiveness in his practice of chaplaincy care for us on the St. Luke campus and beyond," West said.

-more-

1301 St. Luke Drive Spencer, Iowa 51301 Email: stlukelh@stlukelh.com

Phone: (712) 262-5931 FAX: (712) 262-4743 Iowa State Relay TDD: (800) 735-2942



St. Luke Homes & Services, Inc.

“A Caring Community”

The North Dakota native is a specialized minister in gerontology. Syvertson earned bachelor degrees in social work, religion and sociology from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota, with focuses on gerontology and working in home- and community-based settings.

After serving as a social worker in downtown Minneapolis and as a social work administrator for the North Dakota Department of Human Services, Syvertson entered Luther Seminary in St. Paul and graduated with a master's in geriatric spirituality and a second Master of Divinity.

Syvertson, who will mark his 15th anniversary as an ordained minister on August 24, served congregations in Jamestown, Milton and Osnabrock, as well as a pastor for three years in Kenmare and Bowbells, North Dakota, before being named Chaplain of the St. Luke Homes & Services campus.

Since his April 2013 start at the continuing care retirement community in Spencer, Syvertson has provided spiritual guidance for residents of the St. Luke Lutheran Home, Riverview Terrace Assisted Living, South Ridge Heights and The Highlands residences. He has also hosted worship services and engaged in Bible studies, devotions, grief support counseling and communion.

Syvertson began the intensive accreditation process with a preparatory course in 1999. Following a 10-year delay in which he served different congregations, he continued his educational and vocational pursuit and became a provisional board-certified chaplain with the Association of Professional Chaplains in October 2017.

As part of his board-certification process, Syvertson conducted over 200 interviews with individuals at St. Luke Lutheran Home and Riverview Terrace, two of the four residences on the St. Luke Homes & Services campus, to write a thesis that responded to 33 professional standards and ethics for chaplains. His 80-page thesis was geared toward pastoral care and long-term care, specifically ministering to two individuals and their families as they learned of health declines, were admitted to hospice and, later, as they drew their last breaths.

For his certification, Syvertson interviewed with a review board with the Association of Professional Chaplains on March 9 in Kansas City. With this credential, he can now serve on a certifying board to credential other chaplain candidates in the Midwest. To maintain his board certification, Syvertson must engage in 50 hours of continuing education annually to stay current with the knowledge, skills and best practices of his profession.

###

NOTES: Syvertson is pronounced SEE-vert-son

A photograph of Pastor John Syvertson is attached.

1301 St. Luke Drive Spencer, Iowa 51301 Email: stlukelh@stlukelh.com

Phone: (712) 262-5931 FAX: (712) 262-4743 Iowa State Relay TDD: (800) 735-2942