

### **Key Messaging**

- Wesley Woods a family of 10 communities that serves over 1,800 older adults across north Georgia through a variety of residential living options and services. 75% of these residents rely on the generosity of others to stay in what has become their home. All that Wesley Woods does is focused on helping older adults live independently – *and well* - for as long as possible.
- Some people are surprised to learn that half of Wesley Woods's communities are HUD-subsidized, Section 8 homes serving low income seniors. In fact, 40% of residents are living below the poverty level – on less than \$1,000 a month.
- The Foundation of Wesley Woods is where caring supporters give so everyone can age with grace, dignity and purpose. It serves as the connection point between our generous community and the life-changing work of Wesley Woods. Because of caring supporters like you, older adults enjoy a loving community where they can thrive and live independently.
- Some of the senior adults served at Wesley Woods may have the gift of a long life but have outlived their savings. Others are overwhelmed by medical bills or need higher levels of care to maintain their quality of life.
- The Mother's Day Offering is one of the most significant sources of funding that assures these beloved older adults will remain in their Wesley Woods homes, and receive all the care they need, no matter what challenges they face.
- The need for older adults to live in safety and independence increases each year as Georgia has the fastest growing older adult population in the country. In fact, by 2035, the number of older adults in the U.S. will be greater than the number of children! This means more people will need access to the quality care found at Wesley Woods.
- While churches responded generously in 2017, Wesley Woods did come up short in meeting the needs of our seniors, and had to defer moving some into higher levels of care. Now more than ever, the seniors who have cared for us need us to care for them. We pray that with your help in 2018, we can provide appropriate care for all in need.
- While Wesley Woods is an elder care ministry of the North Georgia Conference, and one of our communities is located on the Emory University campus, many people are surprised to learn that we are not funded in the budget of either source. In fact, the older adults served at Wesley Woods rely on gifts from caring individuals and churches to age with grace, dignity and purpose.

## Speaker Suggestions

- Pastor who is personally involved with Wesley Woods and shows his/her involvement through his/her messaging to the congregation.
- Laity leaders and members of the congregation speak to the importance of the Wesley Woods mission.
- Where possible, a personal connection is made from the pulpit. EX: Current / former resident or family members are part of the congregation.

## Suggested Talking Points

- Explain your connection to Wesley Woods, how the organization has impacted your life personally, and why.
- Share a story of how Wesley Woods has impacted the life of a resident by choosing a story below that's most relatable to the church, or tell your own personal story of the impact Wesley Woods has had.

Carolyn and Joan are two Wesley Woods residents who directly benefit from the Mother's Day Offering. Carolyn (left) suffered a bad fall while teaching and was forced to retire much earlier than she planned. Joan (right), a widow of 16 years, never dreamed she would live until her 90's and has now outlived her financial resources. Thankfully, the gifts received by caring United Methodists each year allows them to stay in their Wesley Woods home, and live lives full of purpose!



"Mrs. Smith" moved into a Wesley Woods community in her 80's where she instantly became involved. She started a knitting class, and became a new resident ambassador. She thought she had planned for her life at Wesley Woods well, never dreaming she would live into her 90's. But at 92, she realized she would not have the money to remain in her home. Due to the generosity of those who give each year to the Wesley Woods Mother's Day Offering, her administrator was able to set her mind at ease since she could draw upon benevolent care funds to allow Mrs. S to live

her life peacefully at her Wesley Woods home. She lived another three years and died peacefully at 94. The contributions of our congregation can be the difference for many other older adults just like Mrs.S, and bridge the gap between having a home and homelessness.



“Mrs. Jones” arrived at Wesley Woods Budd Terrace skilled nursing home with a chronic disease, which required rehab. While living there, she suffered an embolism which required additional care. Her son was very involved in her care and realized that she had exhausted her Medicare and private pay options. He came to her administrator and broke down, not knowing what else to do for the mother who had done so much for him throughout his life. Because of those who give to the Wesley Woods Mother's Day

Offering, the administrator could tell the son that his mother could stay as long as she needed to. Picture that moment, and what an impact it had – isn't that what we all want for our parents, grandparents, and neighbors? Please allow our congregation the opportunity to give the gift of purpose to an older adult this Mother's Day.

A Methodist minister and his wife, having served others all their lives and very active in the Atlanta community, moved in to a Wesley Woods community. One of them needed extra care, but wanted to live independently together and couldn't afford the cost of personal care. But because of the generous contributions of the Mother's Day Offering, Wesley Woods could bridge the financial gap and she received the care she needed, and they were able to live a longer life, together. The Mother's Day Offering keeps people with such needs in their homes.

