





Serving the Body of Christ as a Pro-Life Home of Formation For Pregnant Women and Their Children

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Photos: Manstrom Photography

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#### Saint Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home

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"Our moms are filled with joy because they know they are loved."

#### ND Tax Incentive

Full Credit Donation

In 2023, the State of North Dakota passed a special tax credit (House Bill 1176) for in-state ministries like the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home!

This tax credit means you can save up to \$2,500 on your state taxes by making a gift to our maternity home. Every dollar you give to us is a dollar you save on your ND income taxes – up to \$2,500 or half the total you owe (whichever is lower). Also available for businesses, trusts, and estates!

Take advantage of a 100% tax credit when you give to our Home!

## A Year of Grace

It's hard to believe our 20th anniversary year has come to a close. And what a year it's been!

So many memories . . . so many beautiful friends and families coming together to celebrate . . . so many moments of grace. The Lord is good!

I am humbled to see what God has done through the hands and feet and prayers and generosity of so many people like you who love life. We owe God so much gratitude for what He has accomplished, beginning with a simple conversation on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the Jubilee Year 2000. Who would have ever guessed what God would do!

I think if you asked most of our moms their first memories of the Home, they would say the stairs (there are many of them); the dishes (there are also many of them); and the limited phone times (not as much as they would like!).

But if you give our moms a few more moments, they would say that being at the Home is like living in a big family, and that they feel loved. These women come to us because they have no one and nowhere else to go. Many have not felt loved in years, and this is our mission here—to show them love.

Our moms are filled with joy because they know that they are loved. Slowly their lives change, and they grow, and flourish . . . and we are so proud of them! These women choose life in the middle of unexpected and difficult situations and circumstances, and God blesses that decision.

In the pages of this newsletter, you will find incredible stories that were shared at our 20th anniversary banquet—stories of our moms, their children, of many people whose lives have been touched by the Home and by the intercession of Saint Gianna.

Your generous support has helped make each of these life-changing encounters possible. I thank God every day for faithful friends like you. Here's to many more years of caring for one mother, one baby, and one family at a time!

Mary Pat Jahner

May Pat Jahren

# What the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home Means to Me



"When I think of the Saint Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home, I think of abundant joy. Joy was overflowing in the evenings when we shared a meal in community, danced around the living room, baked cookies while listening to our favorite music, or brought a massive fish Father Joseph had caught into the house just to give Mary Pat a little scare. Along with this abundant joy, I saw grace and strength in the women who bravely embraced motherhood and made great sacrifices out of love for their children."

—Anne Dunn, Former Housemother

"In preparation for this event, we had a lot of history to compile . . . we had to go through quite literally thousands of photos. The more we dug through the photos the more I realized how there are so many more moments that we don't always catch in a photo. Moments as simple as making a meal together or as life-changing as holding a mother's hand as she welcomes her beautiful, unrepeatable child into this world."

—Morgan Christensen, Assistant Director



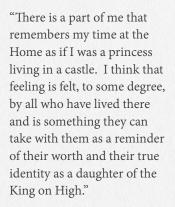
"I was just eleven years old when I started volunteering at the Home. It was through the people at the Home and their work that I encountered the person of Christ. Mary Pat, Father Hils, Father Joseph, the housemothers, mothers and their children, they were all vital in my faith formation."

—Jessica Knutson, Board Member



"We attended numerous events and volunteered at the Home, and my parents served as Board members. As a teenager, spending Sundays surrounded by people with such deep Catholic devotions—and people so committed to advancing the pro-life cause—strengthened my faith, and I know my sisters would say the same."

—John Shaft, husband of Board Member Sydney Shaft



—Ashley Morgan, Former Housemother







"In the spring of my junior year, my young mother was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer, and in the midst of her diagnosis also received the joyous news that she was expecting a baby. Mary Pat was there to share the story of Saint Gianna and news of hope amidst despair, even when the future is unknown. Through the next nine years, our mother's devotion to and love of the work of the Saint Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home grew, and because she was the mother and woman of faith that she was, that love radiated through our entire family."

—Sarah Effhauser, Board Member

# "More Than We Knew How to Pray For"

#### **An Adoption Story**

Over the years, we have been privileged to witness many beautiful adoptions here at the Home. Here's a very special story about one such adoption, shared at the Canticle of Praise Banquet. It illustrates a beautiful but often-forgotten truth: that adoption brings the birth mother and adoptive parents together in a profound, life-affirming relationship.





"The Saint
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y story with the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home began in 2014 when I found out I was pregnant, unplanned, with my daughter, Rylee. I was only 16 and my parents were not very happy. Since I was not willing to have an abortion, they found the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home for me to live during my pregnancy. During my time there, I met my daughter's now parents and almost instantly thought, "Wow, those are such nice people; I wonder if they have children?"

Talking to Mary Pat, I found out that they did not, but really wanted a family. I was able to talk to them, and I grew to really admire them. Eventually, I asked if they wanted to adopt my daughter when she was born. Fast forward ten years, and we remain connected and visit each other regularly; we even live in the same city. I am fortunate to be able to attend events and gatherings with Rylee and her family.

I have had two more children since Rylee: my daughter, Micaela, who had a terminal diagnosis during pregnancy and did not survive her birth at 31 weeks, and my son, Finley, who is a year and a half and thriving. It is so fun to be able to get together and watch our children laugh and play, just like family. The Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home has been and will always be a part of my family and my story.

—Devan Johnson



PICTURED HERE Robin and Ryan Wall with their daughter, Rylee

OPPOSITE PAGE Rylee's birth mother Devan Johnson

ur friends Grant and Jackie Shaft advised us to pray at the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home to conceive. We didn't really know what to expect but were welcomed with open arms by Mary Pat and Father Joseph. We talked; we cried; we prayed. After our prayers, Father encouraged us to walk around and see how beautiful and special a place the Home is.

As we were admiring the beautiful church across the street, standing on the front steps in the sunshine, a girl came walking up. We said hi to her and made a bit of small talk. The three of us walked back across the street together. We got into our car, and Devan walked up the stairs to go back inside the Home. She paused at the top of the stairs before entering and gave us a cute little wave: a wave that changed our lives forever.

As we drove away, we had a feeling, and both voiced it to each other: "We are going to adopt that girl's baby." It was crazy, as we did not even know if Devan was pregnant at the time. We had never given adoption a thought, until then.

Days later, we received a call from Mary Pat asking us if we had ever considered adoption, and if we would like to see

Devan again. The rest, as they say, is history. We formed an unbreakable bond with Devan. We visited her often at the Home: we went for dinners, attended doctor appointments, and met each other's families.

We were at the hospital when Rylee Jayde Wall was born. It's hard to put into words the feelings we had. We were excited and over the moon happy to be bringing this sweet, tiny baby home with us, but at the same time our hearts were breaking for Devan and the hurt we knew she was feeling. We would have loved to bring them both home.

Fast forward and we now have a nine-year-old girl, who will be receiving her First Holy Communion and Confirmation later this month. People ask us all the time how we deal with our adoption and the answer is always the same. Rylee knows that Devan gave birth to her and still loves her very much. She also knows that she has parents who love her equally as much. God did answer our prayers, in His timing, giving us more than we even knew how to pray for.

—Robyn and Ryan Wall

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## Meet the Moms Touched by Your Generosity

The Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home has had the honor of serving hundreds of women, from the ages of 12 to 39. Some of these moms share their memories of the Home.



#### **Emily Hildreth**

At the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home, I had the opportunity to work on my high school classes while getting support with my baby, Enya. I did not stay long after I gave birth, but the values from the Home stayed with me. I finished high school, went to college, finished my degree while parenting full-time, and have been working consistently as a social worker since then. I work in child welfare, and there is not a pregnant teenager that I meet that I don't want to introduce to Mary Pat and the Home. Maybe one day I will have the ability to start my own Home, but for the time being, I try to pass the grace that Mary Pat shared with me to every young and struggling mother that I encounter.



#### **Whitney Miller**

I entered the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home at 22 weeks pregnant. At that time, I was not happy, but reflecting back, there was truly no other place I needed more. Not only did I find the strength I needed to be a mother, but I also made tremendous friendships that I will hold dear forever. I left the Home when my son was eight months old, completed high school, and have graduated from UND with my bachelor's in social work. My son is now almost 10 years old. The Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home truly laid the foundation for my motherhood as a single and independent woman.



Kate Paskvan with her son, Dominic

#### **Kate Paskvan**

I came to the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home back in 2008 when I was about 3 1/2 months pregnant. I was eighteen and a total "know it all", so to say that I was less than thrilled to be there is an understatement. The first couple of weeks were kind of a blur, but as time went on, I felt total peace in my heart to be there. The Home created such a safe and loving environment for us women to have our babies and deepen our faith. The housemothers would even watch my baby while I went to massage therapy school in Grand Forks . . . I truly know in my heart that I wouldn't be the type of mom I am if it wasn't for the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home and my family's prayers.



#### **Colette Steinmetz**

On October 28, it will be fourteen years since I left New York. To say that the pressure was on to leave is an understatement. A family member handed me their phone and demanded that I make an appointment at Planned Parenthood in front of them. This was an appointment I never planned on going to. Less than forty-eight hours later, the Sisters of Life put me on a plane to Grand Forks. Because of Mary Pat and the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home, I was able to have my son without stigma or shame. I still live in North Dakota and am now married. In addition to my son Thomas, who is ten, we have three other kids.



#### **Mariana Behnam**

My time at the Saint Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home has changed me for the better! After arriving in April of 2022 at sixteen, I had an experience that was life-changing. I was loved and cared for immediately. When I say that this is my family, it truly is.

As a resident of Saint Gianna's, I became a part of a small community which I grew to love dearly. While there, I attended the local high school, I graduated this year. I made so many special memories and experiences and enjoyed spending time with my Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home family on vacations, special outings, speaking events, celebrations, Super Bowl parties, and more.

# The Power of Prayer

Saint Gianna's powerful intercession saves the lives of mothers and children and helps women conceive children they have longed for. Many members of our community come to our Shrine of Saint Gianna Beretta Molla to pray for healing, and we have witnessed many miracles over the years. A few families share their stories of healing:



Travis and Rachel Bushaw with their daughter, Gianna

#### A Miraculous Cure at 20 Weeks

We were pregnant with our fourth child, and as our week twenty ultrasound approached, we were nothing but excited. However, at the ultrasound, the techs continued to go in and out of the room taking turns doing all the measurements over and over again. No one told us anything or answered our questions, and we knew there was something wrong.

Our doctor told us that our baby had many problems. Her heart was abnormal with an extra vessel, and her chambers were not equal in size. She had many cysts on her brain. The doctor said it could be trisomy 18, which is a condition in which the baby has abnormal physical features, a congenital heart condition, and various abnormalities of other organs. He said there was no treatment for this and it's usually fatal before birth or within the first year. He also mentioned an abortion was an option. But for us, it was not.

Mary Pat gave us some relics of Saint Gianna and we asked everyone we knew to pray to Saint Gianna. Our prayers were answered so quickly! We had an appointment in the cities that we weren't supposed to get into for weeks. But before long we got a call, and the doctor could get us in by the end of the week. At our first appointment, we got the news that our baby's heart was completely normal and a few of the cysts on her brain had disappeared. We knew we were witnessing a miracle right before our eyes.

At our next appointment, our baby was down to one cyst. The doctor said we didn't need to worry, as it would disappear. We had a beautiful baby girl on June 18, 2009, and there was no name more fitting for her than Gianna Marie.



Jordan and Stephanie Carlson

#### A Healthy Birth after Many Heartbreaks

After getting married, we quickly found out we were pregnant. Unfortunately, we lost that baby at eight weeks. In the next year and a half, we went on to have three additional early pregnancy losses. Stephanie ended up having multiple surgeries for endometriosis, and we then conceived our daughter, Scarlett, just three months after the second surgery.

Mary Pat and Father Joseph never hesitated to approach us and offer their blessings, support, and prayers for a healthy pregnancy. They always knew the right words to say and supported us throughout our entire journey. We received

blessings from Father Joseph each step of the way: during our time of loss, before surgery, in the first trimester, and even in the week of Scarlett's delivery.

We know Saint Gianna interceded for us, and we found so much hope and healing in our time of suffering. We can bear witness to the intercessory work of the Saint Gianna and Pietro Molla Maternity Home. We have seen the power of prayer in our lives and thank God for Scarlett every day.



Brittany and Trevor Slominski with their daughter, Penelope

#### After Dire Predictions, a Beautiful Baby Girl

In the summer of 2013, after what was supposed to be a routine 20-week ultrasound, our baby was diagnosed with the most serious form of Spina Bifida, a condition in which the baby's spinal canal is open, exposing nerves and putting the spinal cord at risk of continued damage. Additional imaging also showed signs of microcephaly (an abnormally small head and brain), hydrocephalus (buildup of fluid in the ventricles), and bilateral clubbed feet.

Not knowing what to do or expect, we turned to our faith in God and contacted Father Joseph. He immediately invited us over to the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home to be prayed over. The comfort of his presence was something

we will never forget. The Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home gifted us a prayer card that contained a relic of Saint Gianna. Brittany held on to the relic through every second of the pregnancy, and we prayed to Saint Gianna several times a day.

On October 17, 2013, we welcomed a beautiful baby girl. Although the neural tube defect required surgery the following day, Penelope was born relatively healthy. She was not born with microcephaly and showed no symptoms of hydrocephalus at birth.

Penelope is now ten years old; she is an inspiration to others, a big sister, and role model to two siblings. Her condition will continue to require extra medical care, but we are confident God has an amazing, healthy future for her.



## God's Special Gifts

ll the babies who come to the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home are immense blessings. But there are three children who have a special connection with the Home.

Our late friend Bryan Grabinski used to say that, "If even one baby is saved from abortion, then it is all worth it." Geianna Emilee Faith was that one baby that everyone at the Home prayed for—the first child to be born while her mother lived at the Home.

Geianna's mom, Shanna, arrived when she was three months pregnant. Shanna also brought with her a little one-year-old girl— Kassity Kayleigh Hope, who brought so much happiness to the Home right away. Kassity was the first child to be baptized at the Home.

Both girls have grown up into beautiful young women of faith with bright futures ahead of them. Geianna is 19 and starting her college education this fall, pursuing radiology. Kassity just turned 21 and recently finished her degree in construction electricity. The sisters have also been working part-time for the Home, helping to fill the roles of housemothers.



"They are amazing, and I could not be prouder of them," says Mary Pat.

There is another child with a special link to the Home—Aubrey Rose Joy. Aubrey's mother, Hannah, arrived at the Home when she was six months pregnant. A few months after Aubrey was born, Hannah's social workers required her to go out of state for some additional programs. Mary Pat asked if Aubrey could stay a while. It was a Thursday, and Mary Pat hoped that maybe the Home could keep Aubrey until Monday. As it turned out, Aubrey never left!

Hannah came back to live at the Home for a couple of months before turning eighteen. During this time, she had Aubrey baptized and asked Father Joseph and Mary Pat to be Aubrey's godparents. Then she moved again to get ready to bring Aubrey home—but that never worked out.

When Aubrey was two-and-a-half, Mary Pat asked Hannah if she would consider letting her adopt her daughter. Hannah said yes, and so, a little over four years ago, Mary Pat officially adopted Aubrey. Aubrey is now in second grade; she loves to play and has a big imagination. She loves to be outside and is a great helper, especially with the children and babies. We thank God every day for the tremendous gifts of Geianna, Kassity, and Aubrey!

"I have been here for most of my life, and I am so grateful to have witnessed all the faith, hope, joy, and babies that have been brought to the world through the Saint Gianna and Pietro family. I am so grateful to be a part of something so beautiful, and proud to call everyone who's been a part of the Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home my family."

-Kassity Meade

### In Memoriam

You and your intentions will be remembered in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass offered each first Saturday of the month. These intentions are from May 1, 2024 to July 31, 2024.



#### In memory of...

- † CAROL ALFORD by Jerome Alford
- † ROSE MARIE ALTENDORF by Bernadette Borowicz, Betty Feltman
- † BILL BAUER, LEN VOSTRY'S by Dale & Mary Klein
- † HAZEL BERG, STEVE BERG, JOE CARIK, PATTY DURAND, ELAINE KALIS, GAIL KARTES, ALICE PUPPE, DIANE STEGMAN by Curt & Mary Ellen Kirking
- † BERTHA CAMPBELL by Lee & Linda Lessard
- † MARY CARIVEAU by Braun and Korczak families
- † JACK CARNEY by Bernadine Carney
- † FRANCIS CHARLES by Wade & Cindy Van Dover
- † LAVERNE MAHAR COSTELLO by Bernadette Borowicz, Ray & Linda Lutovsky, Don & Susan Barclay
- † IONE DESAUTEL by Wally Desautel
- † CHARLOTTE DRUAR by Pat & Rita Lauer
- † RON DUKART by Angie Marsh, Mary Ann Wanner, Bernard & Bernie Zastoupil
- † HARVEY EBBIGHAUSEN, VERNON & ALYSSA ROGALLA, ISADORE & AURELIA ROLCZYNSKI by Ron & Annette Ebbighausen
- † DONALD EBERTOWSKI by Father Joseph Christensen, FMI, Mary Pat Jahner, Morgan Christensen, Bernadette Borowicz
- † MARY JANE EISMANN, DAVID H. EISMANN by Wilbert Eismann
- † SYLVESTER ENDRES, DOROTHY ENDRES by Steve & Ellen Wallgren
- † JOSEPH & ALICE FELLERER by Marlene Johnson
- † ROGER FELTMAN by Tom & Judy Osowski

- † LEONARD GONSOROWSKI, MARCELLA GONSOROWSKI by Anonymous
- † DR. JERROLD HANSMEIER by Ray & Linda Lutovsky
- † MARIE HEILMAN by Glen & Tawnia Heilman
- † BRENT HERMANS by Vince & Valerie Ames
- † TIMOTHY HOLLAND by Anonymous
- † PETER JACOBS by John & Teresa Gorman
- † MATTHEW JAHNER by Angie Marsh
- † JUDY JISKRA by Sheri & Brian LeBlanc, Kevin & Jean Jiskra, Theresa & Terry Robertson and families, Don & Susan Barclay
- † LEROY KUDRNA, VICTOR & DOROTHY KUDRNA, KASPER & MARTHA JAHNER by Isabel Kudrna
- † LARRY LACOURSIERE by Brenda Borowicz
- † ANDREA LANGEBERG by Monica Winter
- † **PETE LATURNUS** by Donna Laturnus and family, George & Faye Moen
- † **LEO KAINZ, MONICA LUBBERS** by Deacon Tom & Mary Geffre
- † MARY ELLEN KANGAS, DARREL LILLQUIST
- † THERESA SCHUSTER LAMBERT by Ken Schuster, Betty Feltman
- † MARION LUNDE by Sheila Trontvet
- † TERRY MCKENNA by Dan Belzer
- † MARY MOE by Roger & Mary Sayler
- † LYLE MONDRY, JOHNNY RUDNIK, RAYMOND RUDNIK by Mary Mondry
- † ETHAN MONSHAUGEN by Brad & Nadine Schanilec
- † JERRY MUNCH by Maureen Munch
- † RICHARD & DOROTHY NARLOCK by Doreen Parkes

- † GRANDPARENTS, UNCLE RAYMOND by Steve Novak
- † VALOIE "VAL" OLSON by Arthur Olson
- † ANTHONY PASSALACQUA by Fredrick & Donna Passalacqua
- † TED & ROSALIE PAUR by Gail Confer
- † ROBERT "BOB" PLEMEL by Bruce & Mary
- † **JOE PIERCE** by David & Karen Kamrowski, Don & Susan Barclay
- † **GERALD RIVARD** by Myrna Rivard, Chris & Julie Kaspari, Randy & Lori Zimprich
- † GARY RUD by Mike & Michelle Such
- † J. WENDELL SANDS by Willie & Kathy Bayne
- † **DECEASED LOVED ONES** by Larry & Dixie Schulz
- † JUDITH R. SMITH by Theodore & Lorien Smith
- † KIRK SMITH by Delores Hackenberg
- † JOHANNA SOMSEN by Kay Tanata
- † ALICE STANCYK by Marci Franson
- † JUDY TORSTENSON by Angie Marsh
- † HELEN VARNER by Family: Earl, Renay & Larry Baker, Cyndi & Bob Bixler and Father Ricky Varner, Pauline Hansen, Terry & Connie Lynch, Beverly Przystas, Christopher & Penny Robbins, Lowell & Ann Tolly
- † GRACE A. VELK by Fred & Debbie Lanski
- † BECKY WALD by Jacob & Molly Rodenbiker
- † GEORGE WALLGREN, JEANETTE WALLGREN by Steve & Ellen Wallgren
- † MAYBELLE WALLOF by Dale & Mary Klein
- † NATALIE WAVRA by Tim & Jill Mack
- † JOHN WEBER by Cindy Weber

#### In honor...

- Sister Jean Louise Schafer, OSF, installation as Superior of her order by Frank & Susanne Argenziano
- Michelle Bianco by Sara Bleth
- Deacon Bill Schroeder by Bernadette Borowicz
- The children by Bernadine Carney
- Father Xavier Ilango by David & Donna Gehrls
- All staff at Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla
   Maternity Home by Chuck & Loretta Gerving
- Father James Gross' 25th year of Priestly Ordination by Tim & Laurine Hodny
- · All the mothers by Corrine Kaiser
- · Julie Kaspari by Ben Kaspari
- Lawrence Kepler and children by Marianne Kepler
- Tom & Jill Moraghan, Bryan & Paige Sims,
   Joe & Bev Miranowski by John & Jan Klocke
- Bev Ferderer by Angie Marsh
- Helen Christianson's 93rd birthday by Angie Marsh
- Mary Ann McKenna by Michael McKenna
- Father Troy Simonsen by Kairouan Moffet
- · My parents by Steve Novak
- Ralph Tucker by Brian & Jill Petersen
- Ethel Russell by Theodore & Lorien Smith
- Our 10 beautiful grandchildren on earth and three precious grandchildren in heaven by Steve & Annella Winger
- Margie Young by Donna Young

#### In celebration...

- Phyllis Wilkes birthday by Delores Hackenberg
- Father Cheney's birthday by Randy & Lori Zimprich
- Birth of Thomas Savageau by Chris & Emma Savageau
- By Pamela Birrenkott
- Don & Laura Thorson's 60th wedding anniversary by Dave & Audrey Myklebust
- Jill & Dan Van Winkle's 25th wedding anniversary by Dave & Audrey Myklebust
- Scott & Kathy Bryant's 50th wedding anniversary by Gregory & Maureen Potucek
- · A beautiful, rainy spring by Matt & Erin Ridder
- Chad & Marinna's marriage by Angie Marsh
- Irene Duray's 95th birthday by everybody at Saint Gianna & Pietro Molla Maternity Home
- Bev Ferderer, Helen Christianson's 93rd birthday by Angie Marsh

## Prayers / special intentions

- By Angie Marsh
- By Brian Beaton
- · By Michelle Snyder
- · By Rosemary Koenig
- Gretchen & Colin; healthy baby and delivery by Robert & Barbara Williamson

#### In thanksgiving...

- For the Sisters at Carmel of Mary, Wahpeton by Roger & Mary Sayler
- Grandchildren and great grandchildren by Mary Ann Wanner





Celebrating Irene Duray's 95th birthday



This summer, chaplain Father Joseph Christensen, FMI baptized Philip Grant Shaft and Georgio Francis Knutson, children of board members Sydney Shaft and Jessica Knutson, in our chapel. We thank God for these two new precious little ones.

