



Roots & Branches

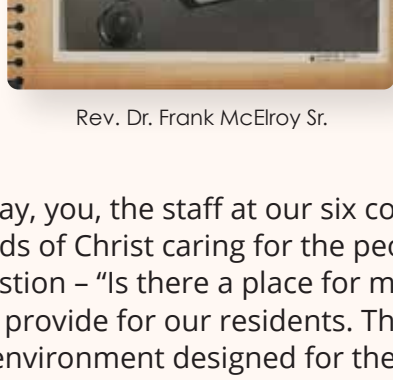
a newsletter from Presbyterian Homes of Georgia

Thankful for compassionate + caring staff

Alex Patterson

With Thanksgiving around the corner, I am thinking about the things I am grateful for here at Presbyterian Homes.

I am grateful that my grandfather, Frank McElroy Sr., heard the sense of desperation when a member of his congregation asked him if the church had a place for her as she faced the final years of her life. We don't know exactly what he said, but we know what he did: He worked with his church and the Presbyterian churches in the region and state to create just such a place, and on September 1, 1949, the first Presbyterian Home opened in Quitman with three female residents. My Grandfather told the small staff, "You are the hands of Christ, caring for the people of God."



Rev. Dr. Frank McElroy Sr.

“
You are the hands of Christ, caring for the people of God.
”

Today, you, the staff at our six communities around the state, are the hands of Christ caring for the people of God. You help us answer that question – “Is there a place for me?” – through the compassionate care you provide for our residents. They know they are safe, loved, and in an environment designed for their lifestyle.

But you also answered that question for yourself when you came on board as a member of our staff. For as much as we believe that Presbyterian Homes is the place for our residents, it is also the place for you in your career. You are not here by chance or because you took the first job you could; you are called to be here as part of this ministry.

I am grateful for each of you.

I am grateful for the people who contribute financially to the *Caring Hands Fund*. For decades, the *Caring Hands Fund* has allowed us to meet the needs of our residents so that they do not have to worry. No resident has ever been asked to leave because he or she has exhausted their financial resources; *Caring Hands* dollars are used to meet that need. The Fund also provides financial support for food needs, prescription, transportation, medical devices, wellness programs, and other amenities. Our chaplaincy program is fully funded by the *Caring Hands Fund* because we believe that the spiritual health of our residents is as important as their physical health.

Watch a video with some of our residents sharing stories of how *Caring Hands Fund* has helped them here:

Alex Patterson

Alex Patterson, CEO



Watch this video to hear how *Caring Hands* has helped our residents.

Caring Hands Fund provides support during government shutdown

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink...”

MATTHEW 25:35

The *Caring Hands Fund* provided financial support to residents at Calvin Court, Phillips Tower, and Swainsboro during the recent government shutdown. Many residents at these campuses receive both support for food purchases through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and rent subsidies.

SNAP benefits were not distributed on the usual schedule in November, meaning approximately 150 residents faced anxiety about their ability to buy food. The executive directors at these campuses were able to use *Caring Hands* funds to help residents meet those needs.

Calvin Court and Phillips Tower also use these funds to stock food pantries for residents. Generous and compassionate donors made these resources possible. We are deeply grateful for the support that allowed us to meet this critical need.



Ms. Mary Alice Griffin,

a 91-year-old resident at Quitman, baptized by Chaplain Bertrum Whitfield

A few months before her death, Mary Alice Griffin, a 91-year-old resident at the Presbyterian Home in Quitman, asked Chaplain Bertrum Whitfield a surprising question:

“Can I be baptized?”

“She told me she had never been baptized, and as the result of some negative experiences in her life, she was uncertain whether she could even be baptized,” Whitfield said. “I assured her that she could be baptized and that I would be honored to perform the sacrament.”

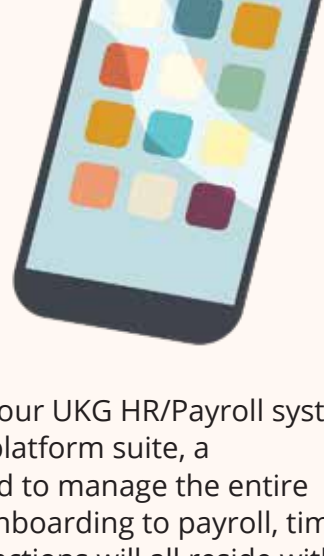
They gathered in the chapel at Quitman with her son and daughter-in-law. Also present, at the family's invitation, were two CNAs who were close to Ms. Griffin. The chaplain used a shofar – a ram's horn which holds significant meaning in Jewish tradition – to herald the baptismal water, which he sprinkled onto her forehead. The service opened with the playing of "Baptized" by Zach Williams. The chorus of that song echoes the words of the ceremony:

*“In the name of the Father
The name of the Son
The name of the Spirit
You're washed by the blood
Buried with Christ
Raised in new life
Baptized”*

“Ms. Griffin felt acceptance here and was comfortable asking to be baptized,” Whitfield recalled. “She knew what gave meaning and value to her life and wanted to express that in baptism. I think that expresses the care that we provide our residents as the hands of Christ.”

Mary Alice Griffin, 91, of Quitman, died on Friday, August 8, 2025, at Presbyterian Home in Quitman. She was born in Barney, Georgia on August 27, 1933, to the late William Derry Taylor and Haskel Bruce Taylor. Mrs. Griffin retired from Valdosta Drug Company where she was an inventory clerk. She was known for the beautiful quilts that she made and gave away to people and was also an excellent cook. Mrs. Griffin was of the Methodist faith.

HR Update PHGA to upgrade HR/Payroll System



We have begun the process of upgrading our UKG HR/Payroll system to the UKG Human Capital Management platform suite, a comprehensive, modern solution designed to manage the entire employee life cycle, from recruiting and onboarding to payroll, time, and performance management. These functions will all reside within a single user-friendly system that is compatible with our other core business platforms.

The new mobile app will give all employees 24/7 access to their information, including viewing pay stubs, schedules, and requesting time off, while enabling key benefits like simple shift swaps and streamlined communication across all teams.

Managers will gain real-time data and tools to manage department needs more effectively and support their staff better. This will ultimately help us improve the accuracy of our data and the overall efficiency across all of our campuses. The transition has begun, but we do not anticipate any disruption to everyday activities in the HR system. We will continue to share updates on the process, training schedules, and timelines as we move through this important transition.

Campus Updates

Presbyterian Village Cobb and Presbyterian Village Athens

“Is there a place for me?”

That question, asked more than 80 years ago, was the inspiration for Presbyterian Homes. The word “place” has both a physical and spiritual meaning. Having a place provides security and comfort for our residents, and it is our responsibility to make sure our communities are of the highest quality. The compassionate care you provide for our residents is an equally important part of the commitment we make to them and their families.

There are major campus expansions planned at our two largest campuses – Presbyterian Village Cobb and Presbyterian Village Athens.

What we have long called **Presbyterian Village Austell** is now **Presbyterian Village Cobb** to reflect its regional service area. We will add 45 new single-family cottage homes to the 60-acre Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary campus and introduce comprehensive upgrades to the dining and wellness facilities, which will complement the new Chapel that we dedicated last year. This project will allow us to meet the evolving needs of Cobb county's senior population while creating quality jobs and economic opportunity for the area. We're preserving the mission and values that have guided us for 75 years while building a next-generation senior living community that honors both independence and security.

In Athens, we are adding a separate independent living campus called **Presbyterian Village Oconee** with 75 residences that will share some services with the main campus along with an onsite community center. There is strong demand for the quality of senior living that we provide in both communities and we are proud to be able to meet that need. We anticipate breaking ground for both projects in early 2026. Construction of the new medical services building adjacent to Presbyterian Village Athens is proceeding. We are pleased that St. Mary's will be providing the medical staff for this facility.

The full renovation of **Calvin Court and Philips Towers**, our two rent-subsidized independent living apartment complexes in Atlanta, is well underway. Every resident room will be completely renovated, as will the common spaces. We are excited about the future for the 400 residents there once the project is complete.