



Taking Care of the Body and Soul of Cancer Patients

Hope of Christ for Cancer Patients Phil's Friends — \$70,000

2021–2023 Biennium
Mission Goal:

\$2,150,000

Mission Grant #6

\$70,000

And when did we see

you sick or in prison

and visit you?

And the King

will answer them,

'Truly, I say to you,

as you did it

to one of the least

of these my brothers,

you did it to me'

(Matthew 25: 39-40).

Phil Zielke started Phil's Friends after battling cancer twice while in his mid-twenties. His friends provided him care items that were specific for people who are going through cancer treatment. The notes of Christian encouragement from family and friends that accompanied these items gave him hope in the battle for his life. Phil had Christ in his heart, and he had Christian encouragement. However, in the hospital many patients did not have that hope. When he recovered, he made it his mission to give hope to cancer patients. Phil's Friends was established as a full-time ministry in 2009.

Phil's Friends is an LCMS Recognized Service Organization with a mission to introduce and strengthen relationships with Christ by providing faith-based hope to those with cancer. They provide practical, emotional, and spiritual support by providing a care package and encouraging cards, "Cards of Hope", for 12 consecutive months. After receiving their care package, the cancer patient can meet virtually with a trained Phil's Friends volunteer as part of the "Hope on Call" program. Phil's Friends support the person with cancer but also impact those individuals supporting the person going through cancer.

Care packages contain a Bible, fleece blanket, knit hat, fuzzy socks, Biotene gel, lip balm, toothpaste, toothbrush, unscented lotion, journal, pen, puzzle book, and playing cards. Most importantly, there is a letter that contains the message of the Gospel and an explanation of how our "hope" comes from our relationship with our Lord. When someone is battling cancer, it is so important to know of the unending love of Jesus. The Bible and the Gospel messages may introduce someone to the love of Christ or strengthen their relationship with the Lord.

Anyone can request a care package be sent to someone struggling with cancer at no charge. Cards of Encouragement are then sent for the next 12 months. The Hope on Call program, started in 2020, can virtually connect specially trained volunteers with someone who has received a care package. The volunteer is there to listen, provide encouraging words, and pray with the person.

The grant funds will be used to support 1,000 individuals with care packages, Cards of Hope, and Hope on Call. Phil's Friends will be able to provide the cancer patients with the hope and encouragement that only Jesus can bring.

Learn more about this mission grant at lwml.org/mission-grants

