Celebrating 40 Years of Excellence

1961 – 2001
Celebrating 40 years of excellence

Forty years ago, Christ Community Hospital opened its doors and our healing mission began. Since 1961, our name has changed a few times. We’re now Advocate Christ Medical Center – a name that more clearly reflects the comprehensive scope of services and the level of medical expertise available on our campus. We’ve also asked for better community partners and we look forward to celebrating our 50th and 100th anniversaries in Oak Lawn.

It’s not just the residents of Oak Lawn and the surrounding communities who rely on us to respond to their health care needs. Christ Medical Center has become the health care provider of choice for many in the metropolitan Chicago area – and beyond. Just last year at our medical center, more than 4,000 babies were born; inpatient admissions were over 36,000 and outpatient visits topped nearly 326,000. Some patients have come from as far away as Russia, South America and the Dominican Republic to benefit from the exceptional health care available at Christ Medical Center.

Our reputation as an outstanding health care provider has not gone unnoticed. For the third year in a row, Christ Medical Center has again been named to the prestigious "100 Top Hospitals – Benchmarks for Success" list of the nation’s leading hospitals. Of the more than 6,000 hospitals that were reviewed by the health data firm, HCIA-Sachs Institute, Christ Medical Center was one of the top 15 major teaching hospitals in the country and one of only four hospitals in Illinois recognized for high clinical quality, efficiency and consistent excellent performance.

This distinction and the many other awards that we have received are a reflection of the dedication of our very talented physicians, nurses and other health care professionals. We are proud and fortunate to have so many gifted associates who generously share their time and talents in the name of Christ Medical Center.

In addition to those who care for patients, there are many other associates, including the governing council, working behind the scenes who deserve our thanks and praise. Their contributions to the medical center are equally important. And we certainly owe many thanks to our volunteers and auxiliaries – their generosity and commitment inspire all of us.

As the current leaders of Christ Medical Center, we are honored to support the mission, values and philosophy of our faith-based organization. Our early leaders realized we had outgrown our predecessor, Evangelical Deaconess Hospital, established in 1911, at 54th and Morgan Street in Chicago. They had a dream to build a new hospital that could adequately meet the needs of the community. Many people devoted themselves to making the hospital a reality – and they certainly succeeded. We have much to celebrate on this 40th anniversary.

A TIME
FOR YOU!

Advocate Christ Medical Center’s Third Annual Generation To Generation Event.

At Advocate Christ Medical Center, women are telling us they’re busier than ever. Whether a homemaker, a career woman or both – it seems harder to juggle all your roles. That’s why we’ve responded by making this year’s event focused on helping you achieve a more satisfying, healthier lifestyle in this pressure-filled world.

After continental breakfast, participants will attend two different sessions of their choice featuring valuable health and wellness information. We’ll also have an entire health fair with ostetropos screening, breast health information and much more. Lunch will include a keynote presentation about different strategies women can use to better meet their daily demands – and thrive in today’s hectic world.

Gather your friends and family and join us for this important event. Registration is required. For more information or to register, call 708-346-3300 or visit us online at www.advocatehealth.com/christ.

Celebrating Excellence

Since 1961 – 2001

Advocate Christ Medical Center
Cardiovascular innovations
Cutting-edge technology offers important advancements in fight against heart disease

Nearly 60 million Americans have one or more types of heart disease.
Cardiovascular disease has been the number one killer in the United States for almost 100 years.

Cardiac surgeons at Advocate Christ Medical Center are recognized as leaders in cardiovascular surgery, performing more heart surgeries than any other hospital in Northern Illinois. They also were the first in the Chicago area to implant Thoratec, a revolutionary ventricular assist device. Thoratec can support patients waiting for a heart transplant or can be used to improve cardiac function after heart surgery.

"Devices like Thoratec show us the future in treating heart disease," said Marc Silver, M.D., director of Christ Medical Center's Heart Failure Institute and cardiology fellowship program. Given the prevalence of heart disease, in addition to a shortage of hearts available for transplant, devices like Thoratec offer important advancements in the fight against heart disease.

Thoratec's portable driver is a small, lightweight device that resembles a computer case on wheels. The driver powers the ventricular assist device, which pumps blood to the body.

Paula Ulatoski, 46, of Oak Lawn, was the first person in the United States to be discharged from a hospital with the portable Thoratec. She had suffered severe heart damage and heart failure, and routine bypass surgery was not enough to allow her heart to recover and grow stronger.

On Feb. 23, Ulatoski was discharged from Christ Medical Center, five months after being implanted with the Thoratec driver. She underwent heart transplant surgery March 9.

Ulatoski looks forward to resuming her day-to-day activities as a result of her life-saving care.

Ulatoski credited the doctors and nurses at Christ Medical Center, but singled out Mark Slaughter, M.D., the cardiovascular surgeon who performed her implant. Slaughter, who serves as director of the hospital's mechanical assist program, said since the ventricular assist device is portable, patients can enjoy a lot more mobility.

Patients afflicted with heart disease and heart defects benefit everyday from the exceptional health care at Christ Medical Center. Patients afflicted with heart disease and heart defects benefit everyday from the exceptional health care at Christ Medical Center. In addition, to cutting-edge technology, some patients can take advantage of innovations in heart care that include the Thoratec implant, the Aria coronary bypass graft, and a new closure procedure that has proven beneficial to children in need of heart repair.

The Aria coronary bypass graft is a synthetic implant that reduces the need to harvest blood vessels for use as bypass grafts. This reduces the pain, trauma and expense for patients. Christ Medical Center is one of six medical centers nationwide and the only Chicago area medical center testing the implants' effectiveness in patients who have too few or no suitable blood vessels of their own.

"The Aria implant is a synthetic graft that can be used in place of a blood vessel," said Slaughter, who has performed the procedure. "Obtaining blood vessels for use as bypass grafts involves significant trauma for the patient. The Aria represents a promising, easy-to-use, man-made solution for patients and surgeons.

Pediatric cardiologist Alexander Juwoski, M.D., of The Heart Institute for Children at Advocate Hope Children's Hospital, is using a new closure device for children and young adults that eliminates the need for open heart surgery to repair atrial septal defect.

Until just recently, open-heart surgery was the only way to correct the disorder. For children, this meant undergoing the risks associated with any major surgery as well as coping with post-operative pain and a scar on the chest.

But now, with the help of a specially designed catheter, a device can be guided toward the heart through a blood vessel in the thigh. Once it reaches the site of the defect, the device is positioned to plug the hole.

Apart from a needle prick, there is no pain at all, and the child can return home in a day or two. So far, three young patients have successfully undergone the procedure, which is performed in the catheterization lab under general anesthesia.
The day before Kathleen Smith was to deliver her second daughter on March 23, 1981, her doctor suggested that she and her husband, Martin, drive to the new hospital that had opened the day before in the 4400 block of West 95th Street in Oak Lawn.

"I was supposed to go to another hospital in the City," Kathleen said. "We ended up going to Christ Hospital the day after it opened. I was one of two or three expectant moms that day."

The prospect of having to deliver at a new hospital wasn't at all unsettling to Kathleen.

"I was just glad to give birth," she said. "I was so glad to get it over, I didn't care where I delivered by that point."

Arriving at Christ Hospital at 6 a.m., Kathleen gave birth four hours and 22 minutes later. Weighing 7 pounds, 11 ounces and measuring 20 inches, Patricia "Trish" Smith was the first baby born at the newly opened facility. According to Kathleen, the nurses were very kind and supportive throughout her stay at Christ Hospital. She fondly remembers all the nurses and other hospital staff being excited about the prospect of delivering the first baby at Christ Hospital.

"They were cheering for me," she said. "It was really neat."

"They tended to my needs and made my experience there a pleasant one," she said. "People were making a big fuss over me having the first baby. It was a special time. And I felt very comfortable there."

Kathleen spent four days in the hospital before bringing Trish home to meet her big sister, Kathy Ann, who was 14 months old.

Martin, who had anxiously awaited word on his new arrival, was told that his second daughter was born a short time later. But word of his daughter's birth came from an unlikely source.

"Dads weren't allowed in the birthing rooms back then," Kathleen said. "The cleaning lady was the one who told my husband he had another daughter."

Kathleen said she's amazed that 40 years have passed since Trish was born.

"I can't believe how fast the years have gone by," she said. "It's amazing that it's been that long."

Kathleen and Martin had their third daughter, Colleen, four years later when they were living in Chicago's Mount Greenwood neighborhood. They were living in an apartment in the 7800 block of South Green Avenue in Chicago when Trish was born.

Today, Trish is a married mother of two sons, Michael, 7, and Donnie, 9, and living in Glencoe with her husband, Don Manhard.

Trish said she's more surprised that 40 years have passed than she is of being the first baby born at Christ Hospital.

"I guess it's kind of a neat thing being the first baby born at a hospital, especially when you think of how many babies are born every year," she said. "But it's really incredible that it's been 40 years. Where has the time gone?"

Medical center's first baby is all grown up

The first baby born at Christ Medical Center has grown up into a young woman who is now expecting her first child at the hospital.

Kathleen, 40, said she was 19 when she gave birth to her daughter, Trish, at Christ Medical Center in 1981. She said she was surprised to learn that her daughter was born at the hospital.

Kathleen said she was happy to see her daughter, who is now 20, become pregnant and is looking forward to the birth of her first child.

"I was really excited," Kathleen said. "I'm glad she's going to have a healthy baby."

"I'm happy for her," she added. "I can't wait to be a grandmother."
Premature baby blossoms with stellar care

Each year, more than 4,000 babies are born at Advocate Christ Medical Center. And they arrive in varying shapes, sizes and colors. But one made quite an impression on the medical center staff — tiny Angelo David Ruiz Jr.

Born 14 weeks premature on January 3, 1999, Angelo weighed 14 ounces — two ounces more than a can of pop. He fit in the open palm of his father, Angelo Sr., whose wedding ring fit easily around his tiny son’s legs and arms.

Angelo Jr. is the smallest surviving baby ever born at Christ Medical Center. He spent his first three months at the medical center — the first six weeks in the intensive care unit where he needed a respirator to breathe — before going home to join his parents and two older sisters on Chicago’s southwest side.

Small tubes fed him intravenously while other equipment monitored his heart rate. Angelo Sr. and his wife, Marla, couldn’t hold little Angelo for the first two months of his life. Angelo Sr. remembers holding his son for the first time and comparing holding him to holding a “Nerf ball.” He said his tiny son felt so light that he couldn’t believe he was actually there.

Angelo Sr. said he and Marla know how lucky they are. “Angelo really is a gift from God,” Marla said. “We are very lucky that he is with us today.”

Babies born around 26 weeks, like Angelo, have a 20 percent chance of surviving, said neonatologist Gonzalez Hernandez-Angudin, M.D. “What Angelo’s birth really proves is that, among other things, technology has gotten to the point where we can make a difference,” Hernandez-Angudin said.

The more premature a baby is at birth, experts say, the more difficulty she may have breathing, maintaining body temperature and eating.

Two years after his birth, Angelo “has finally reached the growth chart,” Maria said.

“It’s taken a while, but Angelo is up to 25 pounds and is actually on the growth chart for kids his age,” she said. “He’s endured three surgeries, including two hernias and a collapsed lung, and he’s still on a feeding tube. We’re hoping that will be removed within the year.

“But he’s talking and walking and he’s a beautiful boy,” Marla said. “His mommy and daddy love him as do his two older sisters. He’s a lucky little boy.”

She said she thanks God and the staff at Christ Medical Center every day for her “little miracle.”

Maria credits the staff for helping Angelo make progress in his physical skills. “They keep me up-to-date on the various therapies he needs and he has greatly improved his physical capabilities,” she said.

“Everyone at Christ has been so good. We go back now for birthdays and other occasions.”

Angelo David Ruiz Jr. — born 14 weeks premature — celebrated his second birthday in June. Ruiz is the smallest surviving baby ever born at Christ Medical Center, weighing just 14 oz.

WOMEN

From page 4

for more women than ever before.

Christ Medical Center can help women maintain good breast health. First steps include a physician breast exam, monthly breast self-examinations and annual mammograms, depending on your age and family history.

Christ Medical Center’s breast health center is strongly committed to women’s health care needs. Appointments are available seven days a week, including evenings. The center has specially registered female mammographers, and board-certified radiologists, accredited and approved by the American College of Radiology.

“If a lump is detected, a woman has several options,” said general surgeon Barbara Krueger, M.D. “She can undergo traditional open surgical biopsy or she may be eligible for stereotactic biopsy, a newer, minimally invasive procedure.”

Performed on an outpatient basis, stereotactic biopsy uses a single needle insertion with local anesthesia. Patients are given their results within 24 hours.

If breast cancer is diagnosed, patients benefit from a team of medical experts. “Each new case of breast cancer is reviewed by a multidisciplinary team that includes surgeons, oncologists, radiologists, psychologists and others,” said Krueger.

In addition, the Christ Medical Center team includes a breast health specialist, a valuable resource for patients. “Patients need information right away. They need to know treatment options. We try to keep the focus on the patient’s health, and most importantly, on the patient. That’s where our focus is,” explained Patrice Stephens, R.N., who fulfills that role at the medical center.

Urology

Many women believe that incontinence is a natural and irreversible result of aging or having children. However, most women who experience incontinence or prolapse can be treated successfully through Christ Medical Center’s urogynecology services. A number of treatment options including medications, devices and behavior therapy, can help. When conservative treatments are not effective, other options, such as pelvic reconstructive or laparoscopic surgery, are available.

Gynecology

Christ Medical Center offers gynecologic oncology services to diagnose and treat precancerous and cancerous conditions of the genital tract. Each year, more than 14,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer in the United States. "But with screenings and education, women can better protect themselves," said Michael Ragan, M.D., a gynecologic oncologist on staff.

"Being diagnosed with cervical cancer can be very traumatic. Fortunately, when the cancer is caught early, a woman can live a long and healthy life."
From the beginning

Dale Raines, M.D.

Physicians on staff since 1961

The following are physicians who have been on staff as active or honorary members, since the medical center opened its doors in 1961:

David Cole, M.D.
George DeJong, M.D.
Mary Dochios, M.D.
Peter Drugas, M.D.
Robert Heck, M.D.
Richard Saavedra, M.D.
Maurice Tennant, M.D.
Karli Racho, M.D.
Emanuel Wilhelm, M.D.
Robert Wirtshafter, M.D.
Bernard Zelinger, M.D.

For Dolores Anderson, R.N., her journey into the nursing profession happened quite by accident. When she was a high school sophomore, Dolores accompanied her friend who was applying for a nurse's aide position. Dolores filled out an application too, and they were both hired.

After graduating from nursing school, she started as a nurse on the surgical floor. She described nursing as a profession that provides an incredible amount of personal satisfaction, but one that can also be "bittersweet."

"There are patients, who because of their personality or their illness, you just don't forget," Anderson said. "There are times when you go off and cry when something happens to that person."

Like the others, she finds it hard to believe that 40 years have passed.

"I just hope I've made some kind of difference in the lives of some of the patients I've cared for over the years."

A short time later, volunteers were asked to go help out in the emergency department. Forbes was unaware that a tornado had actually touched down.

"We were told that windows had blown out at a grocery store on Southwest Highway. I had gone downstairs and couldn't believe what I was seeing. People were being brought in by on doors and there were kids on roller skates. We had patients waiting in the chapel. It looked like a MASH unit, but everyone worked together doing whatever they could to help," she recalled.

Lois Flala, R.N., started at Christ Medical Center two weeks after it opened. She worked two days a week in the post-operative unit on the third floor.

"I can't believe it's been 40 years. It doesn't seem possible," said Flala, an Oak Lawn resident, who has three grown sons and two grandsons.

She knew when she was a senior in high school that she would enter the nursing profession. "I'm a Christian and I wanted to help people," she said. "The Lord led me into the nursing profession."

My patients are my primary focus."

Flala said the best part of her job is meeting new people. "I get to meet new patients, and I've met a number of great co-workers over the years," she said. "It's been a lot of fun."

Recently friends and colleagues gathered to honor family practice physician Delbert Nelson, M.D., for his 40 years of service to Christ Medical Center. Fellow physicians paid tribute to the man who has touched so many lives.

"Dr. Nelson is a dedicated and compassionate physician who has served as a mentor and a teacher to many over the years. He has been an active member of the medical staff, as well as a leader in his church, community and alma mater, Wheaton College," said Robert Steinh, M.D., vice president of Medical Management at Christ Medical Center.

An accomplished practitioner and surgeon, Nelson is the past president of the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians. He also is an active member of the Elim Baptist Church and Christian Medical Society. Nelson is the father of three children.
Generations of caregivers

One would never guess that the Payton sisters have nearly 75 years of combined experience at Advocate Christ Medical Center — but they do.

"If you would have told me 30 years ago that I would be with the same company this many years, I'd never believe you," said Silver Payton, a unit secretary who began her career in 1968. "But, I'd never think of leaving. They treat you very well here and encourage you to keep learning."

Like their sister, Gladys Sumler, a 21-year employee, and Ruby Payton, a 19-year employee, have no plans to change jobs either. For the past 15 years, these two sisters have worked together in the outpatient laboratory.

For the Kuenster family, their service to Christ Medical Center has been a combination of volunteerism and employment.

Bob Kuenster holds a special place in the medical center's auxiliary history as the first male president elected in 1998, following in his mother Betty's lead as a long-time supporter of the facility.

Over the past 40 years, the auxiliary has raised in excess of $8 million dollars for the expansion and improvement of Christ Medical Center and Hope Children's Hospital.

Bob's sisters, Lois O'Sullivan and Donna Lipira, work at the medical center. O'Sullivan is a long-time employee with more than 30 years of service, and Lipira currently works as an operating room nurse.

Growing up in Des Plaines, the Adair brothers didn't have to share a bedroom. But as adults, they find themselves sharing an office at Christ Medical Center. Both are rehabilitation medicine specialists, and each has served as chairman of their department over the years.

"Roy and I really complement each other. He is very interested in cutting-edge technology and runs our EMG lab. I'm interested in growing people and programs," explained older brother Bill Adair, M.D. "We have a great deal of respect for each other, both personally and professionally."

"Working together has allowed us to grow closer. We share similar spiritual views on patient care and we pray for each other," said Roy Adair, M.D.

Nursing supervisor Donna Bretzer began her career at Christ Medical Center 18 years ago while she was a nursing student.

"I wanted to work in a medical center where they had all the latest technology," said Bretzer. "I wanted to be part of that. I worked at other hospitals in the past, but this place has always felt like home."

The home-like atmosphere isn't just a coincidence — several of her family members are also employees at the medical center.

Her sister-in-law, Donna Marousek, works as a staffing assistant in the nursing office. In addition, her sister Roberta Seliga works in guest services in the emergency department, and Roberta's son, Mark Seliga, is a patient care technician in the emergency department.

Brothers George and Tom Madsen are among the many employees who have a strong family history at Christ Medical Center. Their grandmother is Maxine Deufel, R.N., who was appointed assistant administrator of nursing when Christ Medical Center opened in 1961.

George Madsen began his career at the medical center 24 years ago while still a student at Carl Sandburg High School in Orland Park.

Today, the Orland Park father of three works as a maintenance mechanic, tending to the medical center's plumbing and electrical needs.

George's brother Tom is a staff painter, and both of their wives, Chris and Ellen, work in the food and nutrition department.
Every year, The Heart Institute for Children hosts a picnic where families gather to have fun, but it's no ordinary day of clowns and games. It's a day where parents express their deep gratitude to the physicians who saved their children's lives.

"My greatest thrill is seeing mothers and fathers smile because their child has been transformed from a frail, weak and sickly child into a normal child," said pediatric cardiologist Rene Arcilla, M.D., director of The Heart Institute for Children. "The simple 'thank you' makes it all worthwhile."

Headquartered at Advocate Hope Children's Hospital, The Heart Institute For Children was founded in 1967 by a distinguished group of clinicians and academicians dedicated to providing high quality health care for children with heart disease. The Institute has earned international recognition for its exceptional physician staff that includes pediatric cardiologists, pediatric cardiovascular surgeons and a researcher.

Michel N. Ilhawi, M.D., is among the team members who have helped to bring worldwide acclaim to the team. A surgeon with more than 20 years of experience, Ilhawi performed the first pediatric open heart surgery broadcast on the Internet. True humanitarians, Ilhawi and other physicians from the Institute have donated their services to help children who do not have access to adequate health care.

The 40th anniversary of Advocate Christ Medical Center isn't the only birthday celebration in 2001. Advocate Hope Children's Hospital is also celebrating its 5th anniversary in November.

"It's amazing that five years have passed so quickly. In a short amount of time, Hope Children's Hospital has carved out a reputation as a leader in pediatric services," said Carol Schneider, chief executive of Hope Children's Hospital.

"When plans for the new hospital were being drafted, patients and their families were called upon to help. Their experiences and opinions proved invaluable in creating a facility where the care and comfort of patients and families came first," continued Schneider.

When Hope Children's Hospital opened in 1996, it was the first freestanding pediatric hospital built in the Chicago area in the last quarter century. The four-story, 64-bed children's hospital has 45 private inpatient rooms, a 12-bed pediatric intensive care unit and a seven-bed pediatric surgical heart unit. Private patient rooms offer sleeping and bath accommodations for parents, and intensive care rooms are designed to allow parents to remain at the bedside.

Beyond the special amenities that make one's hospital stay more comfortable, medical expertise and clinical excellence are the driving forces behind the children's hospital.

"We are widely recognized for our pediatric specialty programs, including cardiology, cancer care, surgical services, neonatology, critical care and pediatrics rehabilitation and development," said Terry Wheat, director of pediatric services.

"We also offer the newest technologies to diagnosis and treat the most serious childhood diseases. But throughout all levels of care, our philosophy of treatment is an unwavering respect for the child," said Wheat.

Cancer Care

With one of the largest pediatric oncology programs in the Midwest, Hope Children's Hospital has one goal - curing cancer. Although the hospital's pediatric cancer program has grown quickly over the last three years, the good news is that the survival rate has consistently increased during the last 30 years, according to pediatric cancer specialist Ammar Hayani, M.D.

The program is part of the Pediatric Oncology Group, which provides access to the most advanced treatment protocols developed by this international research organization. In addition, physicians are also performing peripheral blood stem cell transplants. This high-tech treatment replaces bone marrow stem cells with healthy peripheral blood stem cells, allowing patients to receive higher and potentially more effective doses of radiation and chemotherapy.

Plans are underway to add nearly 6,000 square feet to the hospital to better meet the needs of pediatric cancer patients and their families. A multi-million dollar fund-raising campaign has begun to raise money for this important project.

Rehabilitation & Development

With both inpatient and outpatient areas and a full staff of rehabilitation and developmental specialists, Hope Children's Hospital is able to begin rehabilitation services early in a child's recovery from severe injury or illness. Early intervention helps children regain their skills and abilities more quickly.

Outpatient Services

Hope Children's Hospital provides the full range of outpatient services, from wellness check-ups through specialty care. Children can benefit from visits to individual specialists or to outpatient clinics, staffed by teams of medical and support specialists. These clinics focus on the treatment of children with a cleft palate, asthma, diabetes, feeding and swallowing problems, spinal bifida, weight control problems or developmental delay.

Support For Parents & Children

"Many support services are in place to meet the needs of children and their families. Child life services is a program staffed by certified child life therapists and specially trained volunteers to help children cope with the emotional and psychological challenges of hospitalization and treatment," said Wheat.

The hospital's resource center provides computer access and educational materials to help patients and their parents research health issues. A broad range of activities and organized support groups for children with special needs and their parents are also available.
Celebrating 40 Years of Excellence

Our predecessor: Evangelical Deaconess Hospital, 54th and Morgan. Chicago.

Ground is broken for Christ Community Hospital.

Christ Community Hospital opens.

Graduates of the Evangelical School of Nursing.

Hospital becomes a "Class-A" regional trauma center.

Christ Community adds 7th, 8th and 9th floors.

Hospital evolves into Christ Hospital and Medical Center.

Construction on hospital's south wing.

New emergency department is constructed.

Hospital affiliates with University of Illinois Medical College.

Advocate Christ Medical Center celebrates 40th Anniversary. Recognized as one of the nation's "100 Top Hospitals" and "Top 15 Major Teaching Hospitals" for the third year in a row.
Emergency services specialize in critical, life-saving care

Sudden illness or an injury can be very frightening. You need help fast. You need to know that you're in capable hands and that life-saving care is immediately available if needed. Advocate Christ Medical Center provides this care, and more, 24 hours a day.

"We're designated as a Level I Trauma Center by the state of Illinois, and as a Level I Pediatric Trauma Center by the city of Chicago, both of which are the highest designations you can earn," explained Joyce Woytek, director of Emergency Services.

Staffed by physicians board certified in emergency medicine, Christ Medical Center's emergency department offers advanced diagnostic and treatment technology. In addition, a trauma surgery team is available on site, around-the-clock, as well as a dedicated inpatient trauma unit.

"Even if a patient doesn't require life-saving measures, our patients feel better knowing that they have access to the highest levels of expertise and capabilities. It's for these reasons and many others that we logged more than 72,000 patient visits in the emergency department last year," said Woytek.

"Although we're very busy, we have established different treatment centers to ensure that patients receive the personalized and attentive care they deserve. We have also enhanced our customer service through the addition of nurse liaisons and guest services personnel," said Woytek.

Working with the nurse liaisons are the guest services team members. These associates greet patients and their families and provide assistance, which may include providing refreshments, reading materials or comfort to make their wait less stressful.

"Guest services associates provide an endless range of tasks. Assistance can be as simple as pushing a wheelchair or providing directions, but they are also called upon to go above and beyond. Our emergency services team is based on our very successful guest services teams that are in place at the main hospital and the children's hospital," explained Kathy Stahl, manager of Hospitality Services.

Emergency Cardiac Center

Patients over the age of 30 who arrive at the medical center with chest pain or problems associated with congestive heart failure are seen in the Emergency Cardiac Center (ECC). The goal of the ECC is to have patients accurately diagnosed and prescribed treatment within 30 minutes of arriving at the medical center. "Patients are seen immediately so that appropriate treatment measures can be quickly initiated," explained cardiologist Paul Silverman, M.D.

Pediatric Emergency Center

Bumps and bruises — and sickness — are a part of childhood, but what if it's something more serious? If your child does require emergency treatment, Christ Medical Center's Pediatric Emergency Center is the answer. Visiting a hospital for emergency care can be a traumatic experience for a child. For this reason, the center has a separate waiting area for children featuring games, toys and a television.

Children are also protected from the activity in the main emergency department. The center's family-focused approach goes beyond its appearances. Experienced staff members specialize in caring for children.

"Patients are in good hands. The medical staff includes physicians who are board certified in emergency medicine or pediatrics. Some are even board certified in both, and the pediatric nurses are trained to care for children," said Stewart Reinhold, M.D., emergency medicine physician and medical director of the center.
Medical advancements are allowing people to live longer lives. But as the population ages, the demand for health care increases. With a medical staff of more than 900 physicians, Advocate Christ Medical Center is well-prepared to respond to the needs of adults. Primary care, surgical services, cancer care and rehabilitation are just some of the services available.

"Our physicians are very concerned with quality of life. It isn't just about patients living longer, but how they are living their lives that is more important," explained hematologist Robert Stein, M.D., vice president of Medical Management at Christ Medical Center.

The community has recognized Christ Medical Center's commitment to its patients. The Adult Medicine Center and the Family Practice Center, both of which offer primary care services for adults, saw a 30 percent increase in patients last year.

Besides primary care, the medical center offers a complete spectrum of medical specialists. In fact, it's the specialty services that distinguish the facility as a medical center — and not just a community hospital.

"People no longer have to go downtown or travel far for the latest treatments. The comprehensive care they want can be found here at Christ Medical Center," said Stein.

Cancer Care

More than 2,000 patients are diagnosed with cancer each year at Christ Medical Center. Physicians and staff members provide patients with high quality care to maximize the effectiveness of their treatment. Patients are supported every step on their journey to recovery. Affiliated with leading cancer research organizations, the medical center's oncology program has earned the Comprehensive Cancer Care Center designation, granted by the American College of Surgeons' Commission on Cancer. The expert staff treats all forms of cancer including breast, colon, lung and prostate. While a diagnosis of cancer can be frightening, patients can take comfort knowing they can benefit from the latest advances. The adult oncology research program assists patients who may be interested in participating in clinical trials, pioneering studies of potential cancer prevention and treatment therapies.

Surgical Services

With nearly 100 surgeons on staff, almost 20,000 surgical procedures are performed at Christ Medical Center annually. In fact, more adult open heart surgeries are performed at Christ Medical Center than any other hospital in northern Illinois.

"We have a very high success rate. We perform every surgery short of transplant in our department," said George Mesleh, M.D., chairman of the Department of Surgery.

According to Mesleh, the state-of-the-art surgery pavilion features the latest surgical and monitoring equipment to ensure excellent care. In addition, the orthopedic surgical program for joint replacement has been nationally recognized and laparoscopic techniques have been gaining in popularity as well. Laparoscopic surgery is where a camera is inserted into a small incision in the abdomen, allowing the doctor to perform multiple operations.

"We're very active in laparoscopic surgery here. This technique is a lot less invasive than regular surgeries, and it requires a lot less healing time and a shorter hospital stay," explained Mesleh.

Coordinator of volunteer services believes in the power of a positive attitude

Cindy Smith learned she had breast cancer during a routine exam back in 1993. In fact, it was Feb. 27, 1993 — a day she will never forget.

"I had checked myself but couldn't detect anything," said Smith, 59, of Oak Forest. "I'm so grateful I went for my yearly exam."

On March 4, doctors at Advocate Christ Medical Center removed the cancerous lump and started Smith on an aggressive radiation and chemotherapy treatment.

Smith admits she was scared after hearing the word "cancer," but she remained positive and continued to live a life steeped in tradition.

Cindy Smith, an eight-year breast cancer survivor, has been the coordinator of volunteer services at Christ Medical Center for the past five years.

The day of her surgery, Smith was offered the job of coordinator of volunteer services at Christ Medical Center, after serving as a volunteer for a year. She quit her job as a teacher and has been with the medical center for the last five years.

Smith was cancer-free for five years when she went back for another yearly exam. In October 1998, doctors found a cancerous lesion in her lung and removed it. She spent four more months on chemotherapy, once again enduring the loss of her hair.

Smith kept her sense of humor throughout the ordeal despite her fears.

"I maintained my faith and I was surrounded by family and friends," Smith said.

Then, during a bone scan in April 2000, doctors found a lesion on her skull and prescribed a new drug that so far has kept the cancer at bay.

"I've felt fine," she said. "I know my positive attitude has had a lot to do with me feeling good. I really believe your emotional state can make you sick, and it can heal you."
One of the Nation’s Top Hospitals is nearby.

Advocate Christ Medical Center has once again been named to the prestigious “100 Top Hospitals: Benchmarks For Success” list of the nation’s leading hospitals.

More than 6,000 hospitals were reviewed by the health data firm, HCIA-Sachs Institute. Christ Medical Center was one of 15 major teaching hospitals in the country and one of only four hospitals selected in Illinois to be recognized for high clinical quality, efficiency and consistent excellent performance.

We congratulate our doctors, nurses and staff who make us a top hospital every day. This award demonstrates that, at Christ Medical Center, we’re genuinely dedicated to listening and responding to our patients’ needs.

For information about Christ Medical Center and our award-winning care, or for a free physician referral, we invite you to call us at 1-800-3-ADVOCATE (1-800-323-8622) or visit online: www.advocatehealth.com/christ.

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