



## FAITH CONNECTIONS APRIL 2020

An Easter season message from Karen Kilgo, President & CEO  
Flat Rock Homes, Care Center, and Community Services.

*"May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed! On account of his vast mercy, he has given us new birth. You have been born anew into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."*

*1 Peter 1:3 CEB*

*This Easter, may the hope of the resurrection touch your heart in a new way and may you be blessed with God's peace.*

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### Donate to our emergency needs here:

<https://www.flatrockhomes.org/emergency-need-donations/>

### The Dick Parks Memorial Race at the Rock

Due to the uncertainty of how long the current situation will last with the effects of COVID-19, we are rescheduling The 2020 Dick Parks Memorial Race at the Rock. **There will be a race!** Just, not on May 2. We will announce when the new date will be as soon as we know.

All people who are currently registered will remain so and all friends and family sponsorships that have come in and will continue to come in will continue to be counted towards the person they are for.

**We appreciate everyone's understanding during this time and look forward to seeing you all at the race!**

### Spotlight: Jackie Merchant

Certified Education Specialist Professions (CESP) Jacqueline (Jackie) Merchant feels that raising a child with disabilities herself better prepared her for her work at Flat Rock Community Services. She wanted to share what she had personally learned and experienced to help "produce small miracles."

When Jackie's daughter Shannon was born 31 years ago, it only took three weeks for her tiny legs to be 'cast' in an attempt to correct an unknown problem. Over time, it was discovered her child could not verbally communicate, or walk, and was labeled "Failure to thrive" by her doctor. Tests revealed Shannon had a rare disability of the connective tissues.

During that time, Jackie had no previous experience with disabilities and felt isolated in her Florida home. Upon her move to northern Ohio, she discovered there were help and support for Shannon and herself. Jackie explored all avenues to enable her to better understand and connect with her child. After a surgical procedure

to correct an uncommon palate issue, young Shannon began to talk, and, "hasn't stopped since," laughs Jackie. Along the way, Jackie herself began to learn American Sign Language and to listen and sense her child's needs. It was her learning process that led her to Flat Rock Homes and Flat Rock Community Services.

"When I first entered Flat Rock, I felt I was home. There was such a wonderful spiritual sense here. The Christian values are apparent right away." In 2012, she started as a Direct Support Professional in one of the Community Homes and then moved into other positions. Now, as a Certified Employment Support Professional, she takes great pride and delight in the work she does. The best thing of all, she says, are the hugs she receives from those with whom she works.

Flat Rock Homes and Community Services is thrilled to have Jackie and other dedicated professionals on board! Thank you, Jackie!



### **Flat Rock Homes: Restoring Hope**

This is a new **Facebook group**. We especially ask you to share your prayer concerns and joys for your family, friends, and neighbors who work in the areas designated as *essential*. Do you know someone you would like us to pray for? Your requests may be anonymous, or open. If you wish them to be anonymous, please ask one of the moderators, and they will post for you. We hope to see you soon.

### **How Can You Help Support Staff and Individuals?**

We are accepting cards with words of encouragement for our staff or individuals. If they are for staff, mark them "Attn: Staff Cards." For Care Center individuals, mark them "Attn: FRCC Cards." For Community Services individuals, mark them "Attn: FRCS Cards." If you have a specific individual you're sending them to, you can address them to that person. PLEASE SEAL ENVELOPES WITH TAPE, GLUE, OR A SPONGE!



You can mail cards to:

**Flat Rock Homes**  
**Attn: (from above)**  
**PO Box 1**  
**Flat Rock, Ohio 44828**

THANK YOU!!! You will truly brighten someone's day!

### **Celebrating Easter While Social Distancing**

Congregations have recently taken to the internet for worship and to celebrate Resurrection Sunday. Numerous churches posted their messages via Facebook, YouTube, and other venues. Some congregations gathered in their vehicles in their church parking lot, while others sat around the computer or TV screen to celebrate. Still others, like a group of churches in downtown Canton, held an Easter parade: A parade of decorated cars, with a police escort that stopped to give thanks and offer prayers at local hospitals, and health care facilities.

