

Volume 16 No. 3

BRANCHING OUT

LIVING BRANCHES

Live & Grow – Together



THE **FUTURE** OF *Residential Living*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: GRANDFRIENDS BUILDS BONDS ACROSS GENERATIONS



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

AUTUMN IS NOT JUST A TIME OF HARVEST

and preparation – it's a reminder of the always-changing nature of our world. Colorful leaves and cooler air remind us that growth is a process that often begins quietly but can have dramatic and beautiful results. As I look through this issue, that theme of transformation is evident.

This issue's cover story is about The Laurels at Dock Woods, our newest investment in Residential Living. This carefully planned apartment building is part of Living Branches' commitment to prepare for the future while continuing to care for what we already have. In the coming years, we will also be upgrading the Dock Acres cottages with new windows and refreshed facades. Together these projects will ensure that the Dock Woods campus continues to reflect the quality and comfort that residents expect. At Living Branches, growth is never just for the sake of growth – it is about wisely preparing for generations to come.

That same sense of perseverance and renewal appears in other stories in this issue. One resident shares how she completed a quilt that she began more than twenty years ago, supported and encouraged by fellow quilters. Her story reminds us that long-held goals can be reached with help from friends, family, and our community.

In the Campus Happenings section you will find many moments of purpose and joy that celebrate the transformative beauty of this season. Tractor rides, apple dumplings, a trip to New York, and a morning spent with monarch butterflies all reflect the sense of vitality that defines Living Branches.

Together, these stories remind us that change, when nurtured with care and community, leads not only to growth but to lives filled with meaning and joy.

EDWARD D. BRUBAKER

President/CEO

BRANCHINGOUT

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Together we empower older adults and families to lead lives of purpose and joy, guided by the Mennonite tradition of care and service to others.

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Alexandra K. Metricarti, Editor-in-Chief

Emily Weber-Wood, Managing Editor

Contact Branching Out at 215-368-4438 or
BranchingOut@LivingBranches.org

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Living Branches is a member of:



Table of Contents

COVER STORY:

4 New Apartments Coming to Dock Woods

A new apartment building is coming to Dock Woods. The new building will offer spacious two-bedroom apartments within walking distance of the campus center.

8 The Grandfriends Program

A unique partnership between Souderton Mennonite Homes and Indian Creek Foundation gives residents and local children a chance to connect.

10 The Final Stitch

After keeping a quilting project in storage for two decades, a Souderton Mennonite Homes resident finished the job – with help from the community.



12 Campus Happenings

Residents and team members enjoyed a busy fall of travel, music, nature, and community fun.

17 Annual Report

Living Branches' financial performance for fiscal year 2025.



BEHIND THE LENS



“If You Can’t Do the Time...”

Dock Woods welcomed a few Towamencin Township law enforcement officers to campus for an annual appreciation event in early October.

Residents and team members were invited to stop by for coffee and muffins with police officers. After an invitation from one of the officers, fitness and aquatic coordinator Tina Cook volunteered to sit in the back of the car.

“It was surprisingly roomy back there!” she says.

After Tina was released from custody, children from the day care that operates from Dock Woods’ campus joined in the fun. “The kids had no fear,” Tina says. “They all piled into the car laughing and giggling!”



A LOOK INSIDE THE LAURELS AT DOCK WOODS:

THE NEXT



CHAPTER

in Residential Living —

Plans for a new community are taking shape at Dock Woods. In 2026 Living Branches will break ground on The Laurels at Dock Woods, a thoughtfully designed two and three-story apartment building that will bring modern comfort and style to campus.

With 17 spacious residences, large terraces, garage parking, and an architectural design that blends seamlessly with the Dock Woods campus, The Laurels

us in the years ahead. The goal is to honor what gives Dock Woods its good standing in the community while continuing to plan for its future.”

A NATURAL FIT FOR DOCK WOODS

The building’s placement and design were chosen with intention. Located beside existing Dock Acres cottages, The Laurels will be within walking distance of the main campus center and Dock Gardens apartments.

Its two and three-story height, landscaping, and façade will help it align with the surrounding buildings rather than stand apart.

“This will not look like the massive apartment complexes being built all over the county,” Brubaker says. “We worked hard to arrive at a façade that is attractive and timeless. It’s something current residents can appreciate because it fits nicely with the rest of campus while still appealing to prospective residents.”

PRESERVING WHAT MATTERS

The Laurels is part of a larger plan to strengthen Residential Living offerings at Dock Woods. While new construction naturally attracts attention, Dock Woods is equally focused on the needs of current residents.

In spring 2026 work will begin replacing windows throughout the existing Dock Acres cottages, followed later by updates to building façades. Together these improvements will revitalize the entire neighborhood.

“Our goal is to make sure every part of Dock Acres continues to reflect the quality residents expect,” Brubaker says. “We want to balance immediate needs while positioning Living Branches for the future.”

That future includes ensuring that Dock Woods remains a place where generations of residents can enjoy beautiful surroundings, safe and efficient homes, and access to the full continuum of care. The Laurels, alongside planned cottage upgrades, reflects that balanced approach to stewardship: steady progress without forgetting what has always made the community strong.

“Every decision we make is guided by the same goal: to help our residents lead lives of purpose and joy today, while ensuring Living Branches continues to thrive for the generations that follow.”

will expand the options available for Residential Living at Living Branches.

“This is an exciting and natural next step for Dock Woods,” said Edward Brubaker, President/CEO of Living Branches. “The Laurels reflects how we’re planning for today’s residents and those who will join



MEETING THE NEEDS OF TOMORROW'S RESIDENTS

The Laurels also represents a thoughtful response to changing expectations in independent living. Many people exploring senior living today are coming from larger homes and want modern amenities, open floor plans, and the flexibility to personalize their space.

Prospective residents are seeking a home that feels both personalized and right-sized: a place to simplify their lifestyle without sacrificing the comforts they enjoy.

"Our newest Residential Living homes were built more than 20 years ago," explains chief advancement officer Alex Metricarti. "The market has evolved since then, and so have people's preferences. We hear from many future residents who love the community but want a bit more space and a few more modern touches. The Laurels at Dock Woods will offer that."

By offering a residence type that appeals to those entering the independent living market in 2026 and beyond, Living Branches ensures it remains competitive with other communities in the region.

"We're not building something trendy," Metricarti adds. "The Laurels will help prospective residents choose Dock Woods with confidence because they can see themselves living here for years to come."

Interest in The Laurels is already strong among individuals on the waiting list who see it as an opportunity to enjoy a new, customized residence without the long wait. Presales will open in early 2026.

"After we shared a sneak peek at the new building in the previous issue of Branching Out, I received an overwhelming response from future residents who wanted more information," says Nicole Boucher, director of sales for Living Branches. "From the renderings I've seen, these new residences really reflect our commitment to providing vibrant, engaging accommodations."

LOOKING AHEAD

The Laurels represents an investment in the future of Dock Woods. With its combination of modern design, quality materials, and connection to nature, it will bring new energy while preserving the warmth and character that have defined the neighborhood for decades.

"Living Branches is growing, but we're growing thoughtfully," Brubaker says. "Every decision we make is guided by the same goal: to help our residents lead lives of purpose and joy today, while ensuring Living Branches continues to thrive for the generations that follow."

INSIDE THE LAURELS

RESIDENCES INCLUDE

- › Two spacious bedrooms, each with ensuite bathrooms
- › Walk-in closets in both bedrooms
- › Separate den area in some floor plans
- › Chef's kitchen with wall oven, microwave, and separate cooktop
- › Screened-in patio or balcony large enough for entertaining
- › Nine-foot ceilings and abundant natural light
- › Luxury vinyl plank flooring in the kitchen, living, and dining rooms
- › Garage parking plus nearby guest spaces
- › Steps from wooded walking paths
- › Close to the main campus center

OPTIONAL AMENITIES

- › Gourmet kitchen with double wall ovens and/or induction cooktop
- › Balcony from primary bedroom in some floor plans
- › Heated bathroom floors
- › Hardwood flooring
- › Spacious, private rooftop patios with sweeping views



GRANDFRIENDS:

Building Bonds Across Generations

THERE'S NO AGE LIMIT ON FRIENDSHIP AT SOUDERTON MENNONITE HOMES!

Every few weeks, a small group of children from Indian Creek Foundation's Therapeutic After School Program make their way "up the hill and past the pool" to visit their Grandfriends.

These are residents of Souderton Mennonite Homes who are ready with warm smiles, gentle guidance, and a listening ear.

The Grandfriends program, launched in 2019, pairs children who receive services from Indian Creek Foundation with residents who are eager to share conversation, crafts, and kindness.

A VISIT FULL OF SMILES AND PURPOSE

Each Grandfriends visit begins with a check-in where the children and residents preview the day's activities and enjoy a snack together. The children take pride in serving their older friends first. It's a small act of thoughtfulness that sets the tone for the day.

"There's so much joy and excitement," says clinician Emily DePaul of Indian Creek Foundation. "You can feel the room light up."

Then come the conversations, the crafts, and often a lively tour through the main building. The children love to explore the Corner Store, Apple Orchard Café, and the Summit View Auditorium, while the residents enjoy the energy their young friends bring to familiar spaces.

Behind the laughter and fun, important therapeutic learning takes place. The children practice using their voices clearly, moving carefully around walkers and wheelchairs, and showing empathy through listening and conversation.

For residents, the visits bring purpose, energy, and a reminder that they have bountiful wisdom and kindness to share.

"The children in my social skills group get the unique opportunity to practice their skills in an environment where they are met with unconditional acceptance and enthusiasm," Emily says. "I know that they feel seen, valued, and understood, which is invaluable to them and to me."

FRIENDSHIP THAT WORKS BOTH WAYS

Heather Scattergood, Residential Living life enrichment coordinator at Souderton Mennonite

Homes, has watched the Grandfriends program grow and deepen over the years.

"This is one of my favorite programs we've developed," Heather says. "What makes Grandfriends special is how intentionally it meets both the children and residents where they are. The residents have so much to share, and the children give it back tenfold."

Before the school year begins, Emily leads an education session for interested residents about autism and ADHD.

"The residents love learning about the children's needs and strengths," Heather explains.

"Many of them have grandchildren or great-grandchildren with autism, so they find it personally meaningful."



Some residents have even deepened their family connections through what they've learned. One woman whose great-grandchild is in the program initially chose not to participate, but after hearing her family's experiences, she decided to join.

"Now she's one of our most enthusiastic participants," Heather says.

GROWING THE CIRCLE

As Indian Creek Foundation expands its programs, plans are in motion to extend Grandfriends to preschool-age children through the First Friends Preschool Social Skills Program.

Emily and Heather both see endless possibilities for connection. "Everyone has something to share," Heather says. "And everyone, no matter their age or ability, has something to learn."



A Stitch in Time *(And Love)*

WE all have half-finished projects that never quite came together. A puzzle we lost interest in, a sketchbook with empty pages, a garage of tools we no longer have time to use.

For Souderton Mennonite Homes resident Darlene, that discarded project was a quilt. But it's not half-finished anymore!

Hailing from a family of quilt makers, Darlene has sewed her whole life and enjoys working in the campus Quilting Room on projects for the Mennonite Central Committee. Back in the spring she decided to finish a quilt she started – but had not finished – 20 years ago.

“I had seen a quilt in a quilt shop and bought the material and pattern to make it,” Darlene explains. “I put it in storage shortly after the first bit was cut. When my husband and I first moved to Souderton Mennonite Homes, it lived in storage while I lived in my apartment.”

Even with a head start, she had months of work ahead thanks to the 12 patterns in the quilt. With help from fellow residents and her trusty sewing machine, Darlene worked on the quilt nearly every day from April through September.

Toward the end of the process, Darlene's son helped her cut the layers of material needed for the borders.

“It's not a feminine quilt,” Darlene says. “So when it was finished, I asked my son, ‘Do you think this would fit on your bed?’ He smiled and said he thought it would.”

Darlene is hard at work on a second quilt now. “Same story!” she says. “It spent 20 years in storage and I'm working on finishing it. This one is more feminine, so it's going to be for my daughter.”

Darlene says she could not have completed these projects without the support of her family and the Souderton Mennonite Homes community.

“It was a labor of love for a lot of people,” she says. “I was encouraged to bring my sewing machine to the Quilting Room even though everything is hand sewn

here, and the ladies helped and encouraged me to keep going.”

She adds that even with health challenges that make some aspects of quilting more difficult, it's been a benefit to her health. “My doctor said this is good for me,” she explains. “Working on these quilts gives me a different outlook on life.”





FALLS WELL THAT ENDS WELL

Autumn is one of the most beautiful times of the year at Living Branches! This fall residents celebrated the changing trees and cooling weather with butterflies, zoo animals, tractor rides, apple dumplings, and a visit to New York.

A TRIP TO THE EMPIRE STATE

Living Branches residents enjoyed a three-day trip to New York from September 16-19. Stopping points included the Capitol building in Albany, Prospect Mountain, a lunch cruise on Lake George, a tour of Fort William Henry, a retirement home for racehorses called Old Friends at Cabin Creek, and a tour of the Museum at Bethel Woods, built on the site of the Woodstock concert.



APPLE DAY

You know what they say about an apple a day! In October, Souderton Mennonite Homes residents rolled up their sleeves and turned fresh fall apples into applesauce and apple dumplings.



A TRIP TO THE ZOO

Dock Woods residents enjoyed a fall trip to the Elmwood Park Zoo. There they observed leopards and eagles and sloths, oh my!

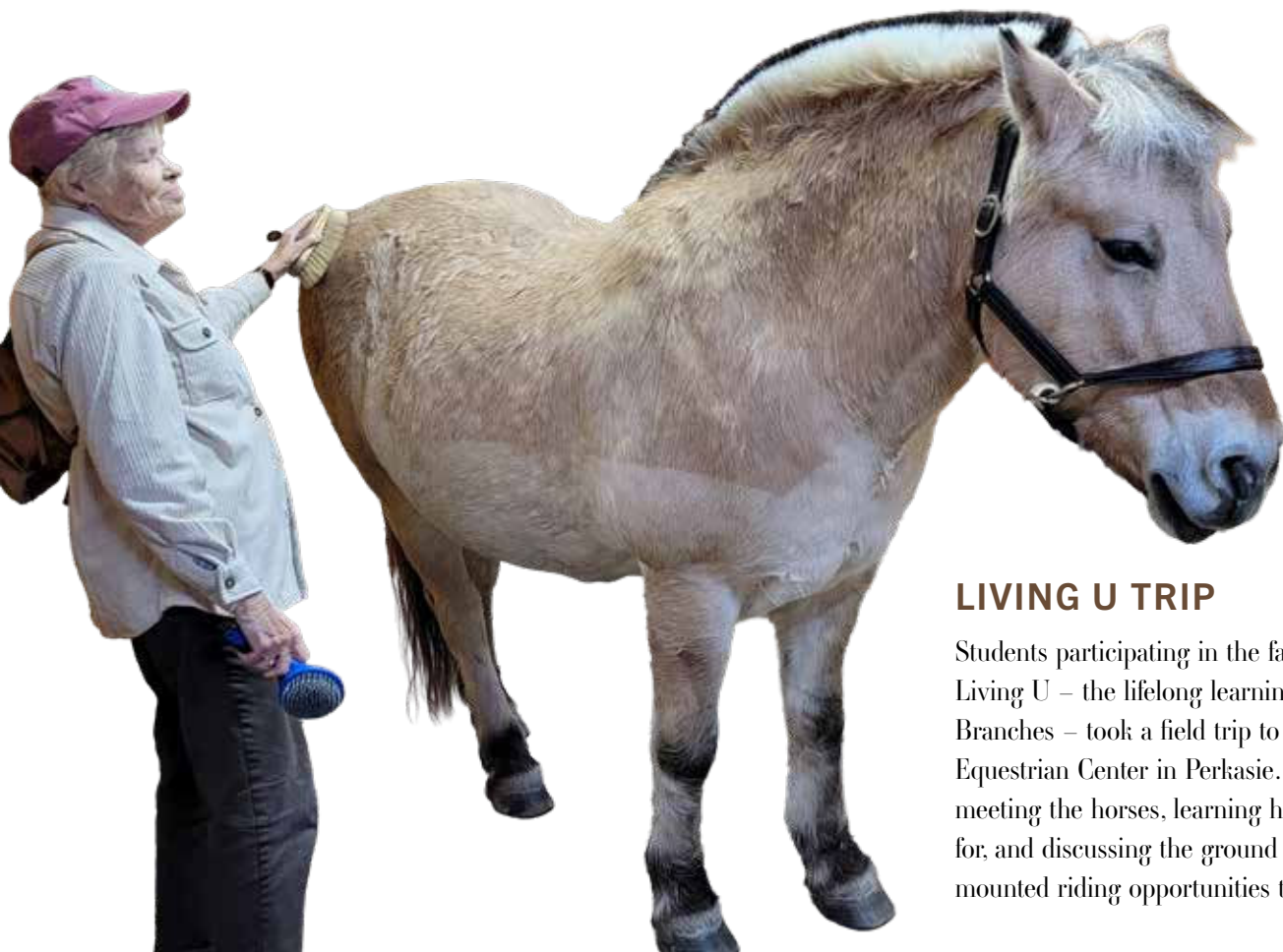
CARDIO DRUMMING

Cardio drumming is one of the hottest activities here at Living Branches! Residents at The Willows enjoy drumming along to the music – it's a wonderful way to get some exercise without being on your feet.



TOWAMENCIN POLICE VISIT

Dock Woods hosted guests from the Towamencin Police Department in September. Children in the day care at Dock Woods were treated to a close look at one of the police cars while team members and residents shared refreshments with officers.



LIVING U TRIP

Students participating in the fall semester of Living U – the lifelong learning institute of Living Branches – took a field trip to Ivy Hill Therapeutic Equestrian Center in Perkasi. They enjoyed meeting the horses, learning how they are cared for, and discussing the ground horsemanship and mounted riding opportunities they provide.





TRACTOR RIDES

The Bux-Mont Two Cylinder Club brought some of their antique tractors to Souderton Mennonite Homes and Dock Woods. Residents enjoyed seeing these tractors up-close and even took tractor rides around campus.





DOCK WOODS RECITAL

In celebration of Halloween, residents from several neighborhoods enjoyed a music and dance recital in the Derstine Chapel of Dock Woods. The program was a joint effort between life enrichment and creative arts therapy to showcase some of the creativity that abounds at Living Branches.



ETHEL TURNS 104

In July, Souderton Mennonite Homes resident Ethel Metz celebrated her 104th birthday with her neighbors, family, and friends. A representative from state senator Maria Collett's office joined the fun and awarded Metz a citation on behalf of the Pennsylvania State Senate.



BUTTERFLY DAY

Residents at The Willows of Living Branches were treated to a morning with monarch butterflies inside a traveling butterfly tent. Did you know? Brightly colored clothing can help butterflies see where you are so they can come say hello!



Annual Report

Letter from Chair / CEO



Dear Partners in Mission:

Thank you for your partnership in empowering older adults and families to lead lives of purpose and joy. With your support, this past fiscal year has been one of steady progress and renewed optimism at Living Branches. The trends we are seeing, both within our organization and across the senior living industry, reflect a welcome return to stability after years of uncertainty.

Cash flow and our underlying financial strength remain positive, as Living Branches performed above budgeted projections for the last fiscal year ending June 30, 2025. Occupancy has increased across all three campuses, surpassing even the strong gains seen across the industry. This was a central goal for the year; achieving it strengthens the foundation on which our mission rests.

This year we were pleased to reopen Health Care rooms in Dock Terrace following significant renovations. These beautiful, updated spaces filled more quickly than anticipated – an affirmation of the quality of care and warm environment we build together.

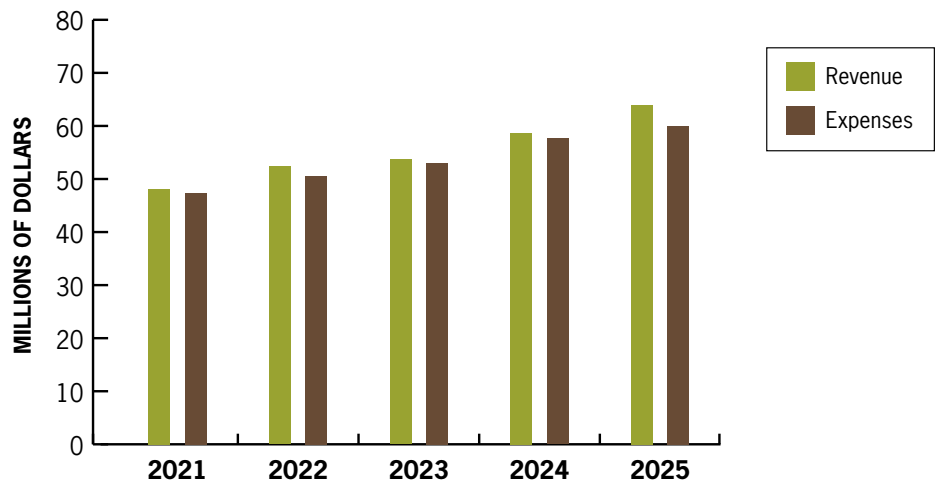
Looking ahead, we are excited to turn our attention to revitalizing Residential Living. We look forward to breaking ground soon on a new apartment building at Dock Woods. Planning is also underway for a new Residential Living option at Souderton Mennonite Homes, one that will offer residences unlike anything at Living Branches now. Renewed focus on Residential Living will strengthen Living Branches' financial outlook for generations to come.

On behalf of our residents, team members, and the Board of Directors, thank you for being a vital member of the Living Branches community. Together we look forward to another year of living our mission with purpose and joy.

EDWARD D. BRUBAKER
President/CEO

JOHN W. DUERSEN
Chair of the Board of Directors

REVENUE AND EXPENSES



LIVING BRANCHES CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET JUNE 30, 2025 AND 2024

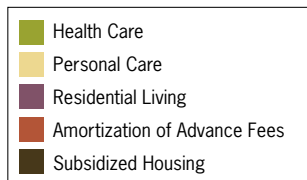
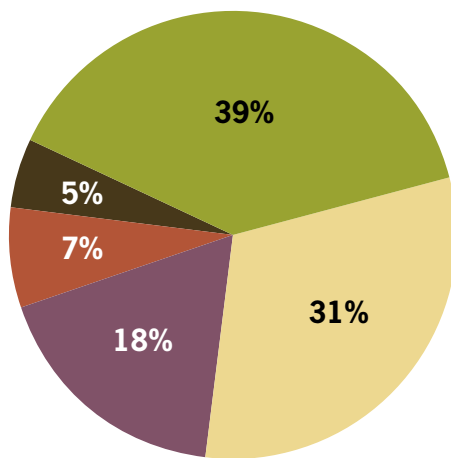
ASSETS	2025	2024
Current Assets	\$17,341,378	\$9,586,062
Assets – Use is Limited	158,345,758	147,990,921
Property and Equipment (Net)	118,141,557	103,748,931
Other Assets	812,474	1,158,077
TOTAL	\$294,641,167	\$262,483,991

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	2025	2024
Current Liabilities	\$9,897,058	\$11,616,607
Long-Term Debt	37,915,126	21,137,970
Refundable Fees and Deposits	27,516,156	26,900,661
Deferred Revenues from Entrance Fees	27,073,062	26,213,602
Other Liabilities	3,342,517	9,084,799
Net Assets	\$188,897,248	\$167,530,352
TOTAL	\$294,641,167	\$262,483,991





2025 RESIDENT SERVICES REVENUE SOURCES



BENEVOLENT AND UNREIMBURSED CARE

	2025	2024
Health Care	\$3,426,511	\$3,673,243
Personal Care and Residential Living	1,351,627	1,645,728
TOTAL	\$4,778,138	\$5,318,971

NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS	2025	2024
Health Care	66	65
Personal Care	33	36
Residential Living	0	0
TOTAL	99	101

Benevolent and unreimbursed care is provided to residents when their savings, income, insurance, and public assistance benefits are not sufficient to fully pay for the cost of care provided by the organization.

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242 W. Reliance Road • Souderton, PA 18946
livingbranches.org

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**The Willows
of Living Branches**
2343 Bethlehem Pike
Hatfield, PA 19440
215-822-0688

**Souderton
Mennonite Homes**
207 W. Summit Street
Souderton, PA 18964
215-723-9881

Dock Woods
275 Dock Drive
Lansdale, PA 19446
215-368-4438

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DISCOVER LIVING BRANCHES

Discovery Tours are designed for first-time visitors to Souderton Mennonite Homes and Dock Woods interested in learning more about the opportunities available in Residential Living. Each event begins with light refreshments and a brief presentation to explain the communities and help you become better acquainted with Living Branches. Then take a walking tour of the community center and driving tour of the campus, stopping to visit a residence.

**THERE IS NO FEE
FOR THIS EVENT, BUT
REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**
Please call **Crystal Kratz** to register

Crystal Kratz
215-723-9881 ext. 42319

