



# COMFORT DOG MINISTRY



2021

October is the time of the year we think of Fall festivals, the State Fair, Reformation, and hopefully cooler weather. It's been another year of maneuvering and the challenges of gathering due to cancellations, but God continues to open doors for visits and events, and we are grateful to be able to serve where we can along with our favorite Golden fella, Triton!



**THANK YOU CAROLYN!** I want to take this opportunity to recognize Carolyn Nussman who is the Top Dog/leader of the Triton Comfort Dog ministry. Carolyn is an amazing "Top dog!" She began serving in this ministry way before any of the rest of the team. Pastor Otte invited her to consider the position of Top Dog and after the necessary vetting from Lutheran Church Charities, Carolyn was officially the leader of the ministry. Without Carolyn, there would not have been a Comfort Dog team. LCC requires that the leader be selected and then equipped by them to begin to build the Comfort Dog ministry within their congregation or organization. I'm sure God would have found another leader had she made a different choice, but I want to highlight her willing service to a ministry that was completely uncharted here at Messiah. After the rest of us came on board, she did not sit back and let us do all the work. Not only was she the leader of this new ministry built around a dog, the dog wasn't even here yet! When she attended Top Dog training in May of 2017, she had no way of knowing she was embarking (Ha, get it, em**BARKing!**) on a wild journey. She stepped out in faith and has done a wonderful job despite the personal and ministerial challenges she has faced along the way. The responsibilities she is tasked with is a long list, which aside from the obvious role of leading our team and all that involves, she serves as point person to Lutheran Church Charities and to our SW Region leader. To itemize everything she does would require an entire page, so to be succinct; evaluations, emails, phone calls, scheduling, conferences, training, overseeing, and of course serving as a handler

herself. The essence of ministry is the possibility that most people will never fully know what is done behind the scenes to make everything come together, but I thought it was way overdue to give this lady the recognition she has earned! I also think it is important to acknowledge that the first year Triton was here, Carolyn along with Caregiver/Handler Marti Matz did the Lion's share of visits. She continues to work in the background (and foreground) juggling this ministry, her business, family, serving as caregiver for her mother, health issues, and other trials. Carolyn is a kind, generous, intelligent, hardworking, and conscientious leader. She is an inspiration to us and we are so grateful that God led her to Messiah and to this ministry. Please continue to lift her and the rest of our team in prayer as we serve the Lord along with Triton bringing compassion, mercy, and the love of Jesus Christ to our community. -Kathy Mardis

**OKLAHOMA CITY DEPLOYMENT-**On August 26-28, Team Triton traveled to Oklahoma City to meet up with 3 of our new teams to make visits in the community. Usually, a deployment is connected to a tragedy, but this one was more about showing our support in a more calm situation. The places they visited were the annual Animal Conference, the Oklahoma Children's Hospital, the OKC bombing memorial, and KIPP OKC and Harding Fine Arts Academy. Not only was this a great learning experience for Mary Jo Cuny and Katherine Wolfe, who were the handlers who went on this deployment, but a great opportunity to meet our new Comfort Dog teams and offer them encouragement and lead by example.



**NETWORK OF COMMUNITY MINISTRIES-**Triton was invited to Network of Community Ministries in Richardson. Triton met the seniors for a session on photography using their phones and served as the model! Visiting Network will be a recurring event that Team Triton is adding to their schedule.

For more information about the Comfort Dog Ministry, contact our "Top Dog" Carolyn Nussman, email: [messiahk9comfort@gmail.com](mailto:messiahk9comfort@gmail.com) Triton's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/TritonComfortDog> Triton's Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/lcc9triton/>