

ReflectionsNewsletter

Spring 2022

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In this Issue...

Lasonya Mott was five months pregnant when she found out her baby girl had a heart abnormality. The ultrasound technician hovered over the baby's heart and then called in the doctor, who told her the devastating news. The heart condition was terminal. "Everything stopped in that moment," recalled Lasonya. All she could do was pray. Read Lasonya's heart-touching journey with Gilchrist Kids.

Also in this issue: Elder Medical Care restores independence for seniors, saluting a proud veteran, self-discovery through grief, the healing impact of music therapy and more.

Above: Latreya Renee Mott, held by her brother, Malcolm, with mother, Lasonya, and Gilchrist Kids Nurse Kristi Choyce

Gilchrist Kids: Bringing Their Baby Girl Home



Gilchrist Kids provided the care and support a family needed to bring their baby home.

Latreya Renee Mott was born on April 7, 2021, and spent her first 33 days in the hospital. Lasonya's 14-year-old son, Malcolm, had been praying for years for a baby sister. He finally got his wish, but because of COVID visiting restrictions, he could not visit his sister in the hospital.

Doctors gave Lasonya and her husband two options: surgeons could try to repair Latreya's heart, which would require three surgeries and months in the hospital with little chance of prolonging her life. Or, they could take Latreya home and spend their remaining time together as a family. "When a social worker came in and presented the idea of Gilchrist Kids, I had the answer," said Lasonya. In May, she took Latreya home.

SUPPORT FROM A COMPASSIONATE TEAM

Gilchrist Kids provided everything they needed to care for their daughter at home. A Gilchrist physician visited their home to assess Latreya, and a hospice nurse came at least once a week. A social worker offered emotional support for the family, and a chaplain visited and prayed over Latreya. A Gilchrist volunteer even visited to take photographs for them.

The nurse, Kristi Choyce, helped secure all the supplies for Latreya's complex medical needs, such as oxygen, feeding tubes and medication. She answered the family's questions and coordinated with specialists on Latreya's care team, including her pediatrician, cardiologist and gastroenterologist.

For families like Latreya's, having one person communicate with all the specialists on their behalf allows parents to focus on spending precious time with their child rather than coordinating medical care. It also allows them to avoid doctors' visits because they receive all of their care at home.

"The most important thing was helping me to navigate this situation," recalled Lasonya. "They gave me a sense of hope when normally people have such a fear of death."

CONTINUED SUPPORT

When Lasonya went back to work, Kristi made nursing visits to Latreya at her daycare. Gilchrist Kids teams will care for children wherever they go, whether at home, daycare, school or the hospital. The family could call the nurse helpline any time, day or night. "Kristi was a lifesaver for me," said Lasonya. "In situations when we didn't have anyone else, Gilchrist stepped up to the plate."

FEELING BLESSED FOR THEIR TIME TOGETHER

For the two months Latreya was home, she brought joy to her family and everyone who met her. Big brother Malcolm spent every free moment bonding with his baby sister. On July 24, Latreya passed away peacefully. Lasonya held her precious baby girl until the hospice nurse arrived.

Lasonya feels blessed for the time she spent with her daughter and is grateful that Gilchrist was there to help her through. Her deep faith has allowed her to cope and find purpose in her loss. She plans to draw on her experience to minister to others who have lost a child.

"I want others to know there is life after death for the living," she said. "Just keep going and try to find purpose for your loved one. There is hope."

To learn more about Gilchrist Kids, visit gilchristcares.org/gilchrist-kids.

Gilchrist Events Are Back in Person in 2022!

After two years of virtual celebrations, planning is underway for in-person events this year. Each provides invaluable philanthropic support to our programs and services. Many sponsorship opportunities are still available. We hope to see you there!



6th Annual Spring Jazz Brunch

Join us **Sunday, June 12 at 11 a.m.** at The Accelerator Space in Baltimore City for a delicious brunch and jazz concert featuring acclaimed pianist Lafayette Gilchrist. Proceeds benefit patient care at our new William L. and Victorine Q. Adams Gilchrist Center Baltimore—located on East 33rd Street at the former site of Memorial Stadium.

gilchristcares.org/jazzbrunch



4th Annual All You Need is Love and Music Therapy

Our remarkable team of music therapists who bring healing and emotional well-being to Gilchrist hospice families will come together in song on **Sunday, May 15 at 2 p.m.** at St. Joseph's Monastery Parish for an afternoon of inspiring songs and patient stories. Ticket sales support Gilchrist's Music Therapy Program.

gilchristcares.org/allyouneedislove



37th Annual Taste of Howard County

This iconic event will take place on **Sunday, October 16 at 5 p.m.** at Turf Valley Resort, bringing together over 25 top Howard County restaurants to raise vital funds for the county's only inpatient hospice center. The evening includes an incredible silent and live auction as well as a roaring '20s theme.

gilchristcares.org/taste



The Gilchrist Ball

On **Saturday, December 3 at 7 p.m.**, the community will come together to raise a glass and dance the night away to benefit the care Gilchrist provides to over 26,000 patients and families across Maryland every year. A new location will host this year's much-anticipated event.

Visit gilchristcares.org/gilchristball to learn about exclusive sponsorship opportunities.



A Special Veteran Salute

It was a Salute to Service to remember, as Gilchrist volunteers and military veterans Rick Sullivan and Virgil Wright honored Marine Dominic Naples, who served in Korea. When his son brought him into the room, Dominic did not appear to be awake. As the family tried to engage him, he remained quiet. But, when Rick whispered "Semper Paratus" in his ear, he barked out a loud "Ooh-rah"—making everyone smile. Dominic's granddaughter, who is in law enforcement, joined the salute with the others. Upon hearing "Present Arms," Dominic immediately saluted back. We were honored to pay tribute to this proud veteran.

Gilchrist's We Honor Veterans Program Earns Level 5 Status

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) has designated Gilchrist's We Honor Veterans program as a Level 5 partner. Level 5 is the highest status possible and signifies that we are national leaders in caring for veterans in hospice and palliative care. Thank you to all of our dedicated staff and volunteers for always supporting the veterans and families we serve. We could not have achieved this honor without you!

Learn more about our We Honor Veterans program at gilchristcares.org/whv.



The Wonderful Gift Gilchrist Gave My Friend

At Gilchrist, we often receive letters expressing gratitude for the care we provided to a loved one. Every one of these letters is meaningful, but we recently received an exceptionally heartfelt one. The writer described the extraordinary impact of our care on her dear friend—a 90-year-old woman with a disability, whom we cared for through our Elder Medical Care and Hospice programs.

Read this beautiful letter at gilchristcares.org/the-wonderful-gift.



Thankful for Our Healthcare Heroes

Governor Larry Hogan proclaimed February 7 to 13 Maryland's Healthcare Heroes Appreciation Week—a time to celebrate and thank the state's frontline medical workers. We celebrated with heartfelt thanks to all our Gilchrist teams who continue to show up and go above and beyond for the patients and families in our community. They continue to inspire us with their love, compassion, and dedication to the families we serve.

Elder Medical Care: *"It has been a blessing for me"*

Before Pat Richardson began Gilchrist's Elder Medical Care at Home program, she was in and out of hospitals, ERs and rehabilitation. But with the help of her Gilchrist nurse practitioner, Jennifer Castello, she regained her independence and received all the care she needed at home. Pat was passionate about sharing her experience with other seniors who might not know about this program.

Read more about what Elder Medical Care meant to this inspiring, kind and incredibly positive person at gilchristcares.org/a-blessing-for-pat.





The Healing Impact of Music Therapy

"With each patient, I ask myself, How can I use music to bring as much quality to this person's life as possible? How can I use music to help them live this chapter of their life to the fullest?" Gilchrist music therapist and clinical counselor Emily Mahoney shares her unique perspective on the end of life and the impact she makes through music therapy.

Read her story at gilchristcares.org/living-at-the-end-of-life.

Volunteer Spotlight

Gilchrist could not do our work without wonderful volunteers like Loraine Dillon. Loraine has been volunteering with Gilchrist for eight years, and her roles have varied between offering in-home respite visits to support patients' family members, providing in-home doula visits with patients near death, and co-leading a grief support group for adult children who have lost a parent. Most recently, Loraine has played a key role in Gilchrist's Pantry to Porch Program—where she delivers donated food from the Towson Food Bank to homebound patients. For Loraine and so many others, being a Gilchrist volunteer is personally fulfilling and a great way to give back to the community.

If you would like to learn more about our volunteer program and ways you can make a difference, visit gilchristcares.org/volunteer.



Loraine Dillon
Volunteer since 2014

"For me, being a Gilchrist volunteer is very personally fulfilling. I feel that helping people in our community get through a very difficult time in their lives is one of the best things I can do."



Self-Discovery in Grief

The death of a loved one can change our lives forever. It's not uncommon to feel like you're not the same person you used to be, and to not know who you'll become in the future. Gilchrist grief counselor Laurel Freeman observes that losing a loved one can often set a person on the path of self-discovery. "Our sense of self is intertwined with our relationship to the significant person in our life, and when they're no longer here, it leaves us reeling—feeling lost, adrift. The questions about our identity may not show up in the early months, but they'll surface in time."

Read Laurel's blog on discovering a new sense of self in grief at gilchristcares.org/self-discovery-in-grief.

Rollover

Your IRA for Good

- Reduce your income tax
- Build your charitable legacy
- Use your IRA in the way you want
- Help support your community

YOU CAN
DIRECT UP TO
\$100,000

70½
OR OLDER

By taking a distribution from your IRA this year, you will likely pay more in taxes and may even reach a higher tax bracket. Rolling over part of your IRA's required minimum distribution to Gilchrist can help reduce your tax bill while supporting our mission to provide quality compassionate care, counseling and support to people at every stage of serious illness, so they may live life to the fullest.

If you are 70½ or older, you can make a charitable contribution up to \$100,000 this year. Contact your IRA administrator to get started with your gift. You will not pay taxes on any distributions made to us. Please also inform us of your plans so that we use your gift for the causes that mean the most to you.

For more information, please contact Jamie Lynch at 443.849.8241 or jlynch@gilchristcares.org.





gilchristcares.org

1.888.823.8880

11311 McCormick Road, Suite 350
Hunt Valley, Maryland 21031

For referrals call: 443.849.8300

HOWARD COUNTY
6336 Cedar Lane
Columbia, Maryland 21044
410.730.5072

TTY Maryland Relay Service: 1.800.735.2258

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ORGANIZATION

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7th Annual

Steps of Hope

A Tribute Walk

Sunday, June 12, 2022, at 2:00 p.m.

Cromwell Valley Park | Parkville, Maryland



Come join us to remember loved ones with an afternoon of healing in nature. Honor them as we walk together in reflection. This event will be held rain or shine.

REGISTRATION: By June 3, 2022, visit:

gilchristcares.org/StepsOfHope (preferred)

OR contact Christy Broderick at 443.849.8251.

