



CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES OF SOUTHERN NEBRASKA

Hope in the Good Life

September 2022

St. Matthew/Elaine Wagener

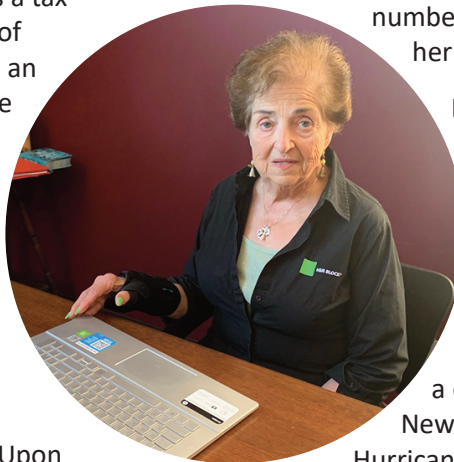
Lord, wherever You send me I will go

Even as a writer of one of the four Gospels, little is actually known about the life of St. Matthew. We do know that he was a tax collector in Capernaum, the likely place of his birth. We also know that as a tax collector in the time of Christ, Matthew held an occupation that made him hated by his fellow Jews. After his calling, St. Matthew gave a feast in Christ's honor that was attended by fellow tax collectors and others labeled as "sinners" by society. Upon hearing the Pharisees objecting to Jesus eating with sinners and outcasts, Christ responded with His message of salvation: "I have not come to call the just, but sinners."

After the Ascension of our Lord, it is believed that St. Matthew preached the Gospel to the Hebrews for about 15 years. He then answered the call of God to go and evangelize in Syria, Media, Persia, Parthia, finishing in

Ethiopia where he was martyred for the Faith.

Like St. Matthew- the patron saint of accountants and bookkeepers, Elaine Wagener loves working with numbers. But she loves living her Faith even more.



Elaine has worked for H&R Block for 35 years, helping scores of people prepare their tax returns. For most of her life, she lived in New Orleans. She and a daughter stayed in New Orleans and survived Hurricane Katrina. But then

Hurricanes Gustave and Issac hit back-to-back, sending a 100 foot pine tree through the front of the house Elaine was living in. Her daughter said, "Mom, Hurricane Katrina came and God sent you a boat, and you didn't take it. Then He sent you the helicopter, and I think we'd better take it." So they decided to move to Lincoln, where another daughter of Elaine's was living. Having worked for H&R Block for so many

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**In the second
quarter of this
year, our
dedicated
volunteers
provided
4,483 hours
of service at all
four of our sites
across southern
Nebraska
#HopeintheGoodLife**



PO Box 30425
Lincoln NE 68503-0425



#HopeintheGoodLife

Lord, wherever You send me I will go (continued)

years, Elaine had no trouble getting a job.

For years Elaine did volunteer work in New Orleans. The Lincoln location of H&R Block where she found work is just a couple of blocks from the Catholic Social Services location on O Street. When she saw the CSS sign she said to herself, "Alright God, You hit me on the head twice now, we got this!" So she walked down the street to ask about volunteering and was told CSS is always looking for volunteers so she signed up.

She began at St. Louise Gift & Thrift, sorting and cleaning donated items. Soon Bill Meduna, Vice President of Finances, learned of Elaine's accounting background and recruited her to help in his department. With her love for accounting, she jumped at the offer.

Recently, Elaine has volunteered in the CSS Food Market, assisting families and individuals select food and personal care items. "It's so rewarding working with clients," Elaine says. "So often they say they can't get over how much help we give them and they didn't know where their next meal was coming from. Holy cow, that's what we're all about- helping people!" Elaine encourages everyone to consider volunteering, even if just for a couple of hours a week. "I feel like I'm cheating because I'm getting back so much more than what I give."

Thank you, Elaine, for being open to God's call and for helping us bring Hope in the Good Life for 13 years!

For volunteer opportunities at all four of our regional locations, visit www.csshope.org/volunteer.

Bringing Hope in the Good Life

7th annual Coats for Kids set for October 8th

On Saturday, October 8th, Catholic Social Services of Southern Nebraska (CSS) and the Knights of Columbus will team up for the 7th Annual "Coats for Kids". This year's event will take place at Sacred Heart Church at 3128 S Street in Lincoln starting at 9:00 AM and will go until all items are distributed. Families can come and pick out winter coats for their kids, as well as hats, gloves and mittens to stay warm this winter. Last year, over 60 Knights of Columbus and CSS volunteers distributed over 450 winter coats.



Listen to our Hope in the Good Life Podcasts, including our latest podcast featuring Elaine Wagener at csshope.org/podcast or just scan the QR code at the right!

