



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services



January 2022

GENACROSS AT HOME

“Jane” has been a Genacross at Home client for several months due to ongoing medical issues that require home health services. Jane and her nurses have gotten to know each other very well. Over time, she felt comfortable enough to share that all of her family members had passed, and she has only a few local friends to visit and help her. As the holidays approached, staff members asked Jane about her plans. She shared that her friends were getting together to celebrate before the holidays, but she would be at home alone on the holidays themselves. As Jane continued her care, the nurses began to plan for holiday visits with Jane so she would have some company. They also baked her cookies and treats. These were small gestures, but team members knew they were important. Jane’s home care treatments have been progressing, and she is very appreciative of the staff’s thoughtfulness.

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

“Olivia” was 9 years old when she was placed at the Genacross Maumee Youth Center. She came to Genacross after being removed from her biological home due to abuse and experiencing several failed foster home placements. Because of aggression issues, Olivia could not be placed with her three sisters and had no contact with her family. At first, while living at the Maumee Youth Center, this continued since no family members were on her contact list. However, Olivia’s therapist worked with her Job & Family Services caseworker to initiate contact between Olivia and her sisters. It began with phone calls between Olivia and each of her three sisters who remained in foster care. Then, a visit was planned for just before Christmas. During the few days leading up to the visit, Olivia was nervous and anxious that it would be cancelled for one reason or another. The caseworker brought the three sisters and an already prepared meal, so the siblings could have a small holiday celebration together. The visit went well, and everyone was thankful for the time together. Olivia reported to her therapist that it was wonderful to see her sisters after so long. Olivia’s therapist and caseworker are pleased that the initial visit was successful and are now planning to have visits every other month so the sisters can continue to re-establish their relationships.



HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

Residents of Luther Ridge and Luther Hills senior communities in Oregon, Ohio, received a special treat during the month of December. Coordinated by the Genacross Service Coordinator who covers both of these sites, residents received Christmas baskets from Oregon Health and Welfare, a local nonprofit organization. The baskets were filled with food and personal care items for the residents. The Service Coordinator, with the help of other staff members dressed festively as elves, delivered over 100 baskets. “They were amazing and worked so hard helping me get all the baskets out to Luther Hills and Luther Ridge residents,” said the Service Coordinator about her co-workers. “I cannot thank them enough for their time and complete joy. A huge shout out for being team players, amazing co-workers, and super fun people to be with!” Residents benefit tremendously when team members work together like this. It can be hard for many residents who do not have much or families with whom to spend time over the holidays. Spreading a little cheer to residents reflects the Genacross values and makes everyone’s holidays a little more special.

Although pseudonyms are used in the above ministry stories, Genacross follows HIPAA guidelines and has either obtained permission from our residents, patients, or clients, or has sufficiently concealed their identities, thereby enabling us to use their stories of God’s grace.

GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

Working with residents of the skilled nursing care wing on the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus is always a challenging yet rewarding task for team members. Every resident has a goal, or many goals, that the therapists and nurses hope to help them achieve. Residents need patience, compassion, and encouragement, and these traits are evident in the staff working at the Napoleon Campus. One resident, “Edith,” wanted to return home, and she worked very hard toward that goal. She would attempt to complete any task asked of her by therapy. Edith would feel stronger and then try to be independent faster than her body was ready, and, as a result, she experienced a couple of falls. Accepting and practicing patience on her journey was something the team worked on diligently with Edith, so she could heal, get stronger, and return home. It took a little bit longer than Edith wanted, but she reached her goal. Staff members share in the victories and setbacks, such as those experienced by Edith, with each resident. They know how hard it can be to recover. The therapy and nursing team members helped Edith deal with change and remain positive on her healing journey. Now she sings their praises. Seeing the difference they can make in the lives of residents keeps staff members going through the tough times.

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

“Ben’s” back problems had worsened steadily over the past several years, leading to the difficult decision to have surgery. Ben knew the recovery would be long and painful, but the chance of a more normal life was worth it. After surgery, he came to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus. When he arrived, he could hardly move. He was on two pain medications, and rehab looked like an unending road. Each day, however, it got better. Ben recognized that his pain differed from the chronic pain that had plagued him – and that gave him hope. The milestones passed by one at a time. Ben got up. He walked. His wife and friends visited regularly, and they helped him celebrate his progress. Slowly, Ben recovered – shedding his pain medications and walking farther each day. “I really got things in gear when I got a discharge date,” Ben said. “I walked up two flights of stairs in therapy – that’s more than I have in my home.” One date Ben could not outpace was his 50th wedding anniversary. He had talked about taking his wife on a road trip and out for a steak dinner. The road trip could wait, but their friends made the steak dinner happen. With the support of Wolf Creek staff, a special table was set up for them in the dining room, and the couple renewed their vows in the chapel.



FOUNDATION

With the end of the school year fast approaching for graduating seniors, thoughts of how to pay for college are not far behind. Each year, the Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation awards the Lawrence and Adele Youngbauer Scholarship to a qualifying senior at each of four area high schools, as a way of “paying it forward” through a generous donor. For a period of time in her youth, Adele Laramie lived in the Lutheran Orphans’ Home. As an adult, she and her husband, Lawrence Youngbauer, donated a generous gift to the organization, specifying that the funds be used to further the education of students in service-oriented fields. One of the 2021 recipients later told Genacross staff: “Thank you so much for your investment in my future. I was in an orphanage myself and was adopted when I was 9 months old. I can relate to the story behind this scholarship.” A wonderful gift from one orphanage resident to another, separated by about 100 years. Interested students at Anthony Wayne, Clay and Liberty Center high schools, as well as Cardinal Stritch Catholic High School & Academy should contact their guidance counselors for more information on the Lawrence and Adele Youngbauer Scholarship.