



# God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society  
December 2014



On a daily basis, Lutheran Homes Society impacts hundreds of residents, clients and families. The stories told here reflect the mission of Lutheran Homes Society to care for needy youth and elderly with compassion. Sharing these stories lets you know your support is truly making a difference in people's lives.

## NAPOLEON CAMPUS

"Elsa" resided in a Lutheran Home at Napoleon independent living condominium for several years; recently, however, her children began noticing a decline in their mom. Unfortunately, before something could be done, she fell and was hospitalized with a pelvic fracture. Since she needed several weeks of bed rest to heal, Elsa was unable to return home. She reluctantly came to Napoleon's care center for therapy. Many staff members knew her and noticed there were changes in her overall ability to care for herself and to follow directions in her therapy sessions. These concerns were shared with family members, who initially did not want to accept these observations but acknowledged that they had also noticed changes. As time progressed, Elsa adapted to the care center and was able to transition to a wheelchair for mobility. However, she still had difficulty following directions and completing general tasks. A care conference was arranged to discuss these issues with her children, who now realized Elsa could not safely return to her condominium to live independently. Family members expressed concern about their mother's reaction to the news, but, to their surprise, Elsa agreed, saying that she liked where she was and that there was always something happening. Her children were relieved that she was in agreement and believe it was because the staff had created a warm, welcoming feeling for their mother throughout her recovery.

## SANDUSKY CAMPUS

"Randall," a hardworking man who regularly worked over 40 hours a week, shared that, in the blink of an eye, life as he knew it had been snatched away from him. One day he was driving to work and singing his favorite song, and the next he was lying in ICU hooked up to monitors and tubes. When he was discharged from the hospital, Randall was relieved to arrive at Lutheran Memorial Home, where he was greeted by smiling faces. Randall had doubts about whether he would be able to return home, but with hard work and the caring support of the staff, he did! Randall said having activities to do and fellow participants with whom he could converse really got him through the rough days and helped him meet his goals. He was glad to be able to receive his rehabilitation at Lutheran Memorial Home, and he was especially grateful to spend time with great people, including his new fishing buddy!



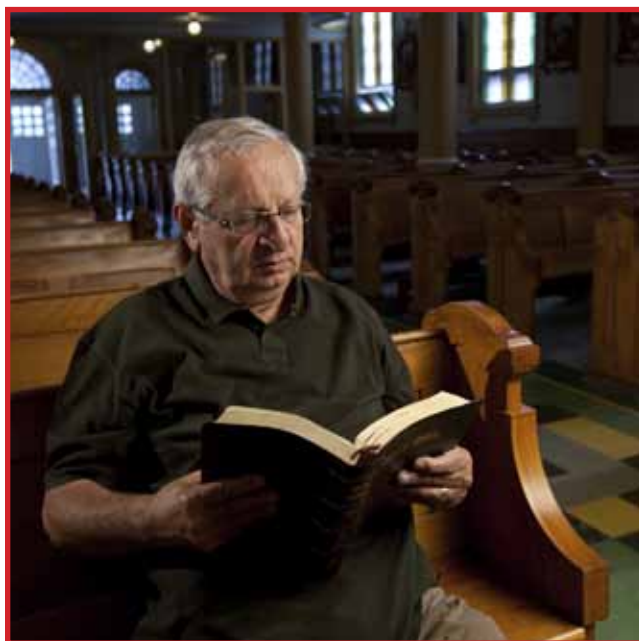
## HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

"Sophie" came to the Service Coordinator's office requesting assistance in understanding a letter she had received from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). After reviewing the letter, the Service Coordinator explained that someone had filed two tax returns with Sophie's social security number. The letter also contained instructions on what to do about this situation. Together, Sophie and the coordinator called the IRS. The IRS informed them that Sophie had been a victim of identity theft and that they should follow the letter's instructions. As a result, they requested that a fraud alert be put on Sophie's credit report, they checked Sophie's credit report, and they also filed an official complaint. In reviewing the report, it did not appear that anyone had interfered with Sophie's credit. She was grateful for the assistance and relieved to know that her credit was undamaged. Unfortunately, identity theft and scams are a major issue today for anyone, and seniors often seem to be the most vulnerable targets for such crimes. Sophie was blessed to have the support of the LHS Service Coordinator to help her through this upsetting experience.

## FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

About a year ago, “Kathleen” came to LHS Family and Youth Services from another state. Her parents had divorced years earlier, and she had lived with her mother, who had moved them around numerous times. Several of her mother’s boyfriends had molested Kathleen, and her mother lost interest in raising her. Kathleen then went to live with her father, who also abused her over an extended period. Eventually, her father was charged, convicted, and sent to prison. All the abuse Kathleen had endured had a profound and negative effect on her, and she ended up in a psychiatric hospital for juveniles. Her case worker had called in desperation. Kathleen needed a home in which to continue her treatment. She could come to Family and Youth Services only if no other suitable in-state placement was found. The only agency in the entire state that would accept her was a facility housing the elderly. The caseworker had urged state officials not to send 14-year-old Kathleen there and listed all the services that LHS could provide to her. Finally, state officials acquiesced, and Kathleen came to the Maumee Youth Center.

Before Kathleen arrived, her assigned therapist and staff members planned for her care and treatment. Upon her arrival, Kathleen appeared bewildered and trusted no one. The staff was patient with her and provided a safe and structured environment. They showed her that they truly cared about her well-being and invested themselves in making her whole again. Kathleen came to trust those who spent time with her, and she opened up to her therapist about her past neglect and abuse. During therapy, Kathleen came to realize that what had happened to her was not her fault. She learned how to build and maintain proper relationships. Prior to coming to LHS, Kathleen had little interest in academics and often refused to go to school. She now thrives in school and has missed only one day due to illness. Kathleen has bonded with her teachers and takes pride in her school work. She is blossoming and her future looks bright.



## TOLEDO CAMPUS

“Peter” came to Lutheran Home at Toledo almost totally bedridden and in need of rehabilitation. When asked why he had chosen to come to The Labuhn Center, he said that his sister-in-law worked there and that he had heard that it was “new, with good food.” While he found that to be true, Peter also discovered much more. He credits the nurses with lifting his spirits when he was down and the therapy department with helping him with his pain and addressing his needs on bad days. Peter healed very quickly and could often be heard whistling in the hall. He was even able to go shopping for furniture and groceries prior to his return home. Upon discharge to his apartment, Peter was using a walker to move about independently. However, the physical healing was not the only type of healing that took place. Peter admitted that, during his stay, he started to pray again. What a blessing to be able to meet not just the physical, but also the spiritual, needs of residents. Glory be to God!

## WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

“Clara” lived alone and was very independent. Early in 2014, she suffered a debilitating stroke that affected her mobility, speech, and cognition. Her condition completely wiped out her independence, and Clara thought she was going to go crazy. Her entire world had changed with no warning. Unfortunately, Clara was left handed and that was the side affected by the stroke. She came to Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek for rehabilitation. She didn’t know what her outcome would be after rehab, but she realized she probably would not be able to live alone again. She had family in San Diego, so there was discussion about Clara moving to an assisted living site there. After many weeks of therapy, Clara has made substantial gains in the use of her left side. She walks to and from the dining room, her cognition is slowly improving, and she performs all activities of daily living on her own. Clara is getting stronger by the week, and her upbeat attitude plays an important role in her progress. Throughout her recovery, Clara has maintained her sense of humor. Humor and laughter have certainly helped Clara during her therapy, and she is looking forward to moving to San Diego to be closer to her son and granddaughter.