



God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society
July 2016



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.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

"Rachel" is a HOME Choice Client, who was in a nursing facility for about a year. She had a back injury that caused her to have numerous complications and limitations. When Rachel was physically ready to leave the nursing facility, her daughter offered to take care of Rachel in her home. The LHS Service Coordinator assigned to work with Rachel was able to help her safely transition back into the community. The coordinator helped Rachel arrange for home modifications that fit her needs, such as grab bars in the bathroom, and extra steps and hand rails to enter the home. The coordinator also was able to purchase such items as start-up groceries, support pillows for her back, and furniture. On Rachel's discharge day, she was surrounded by her supportive family and care team. She was very happy with the help she received from the HOME Choice program, the LHS Service Coordinator, and her family. Rachel also expressed gratitude for all the hard work and help she received during this transition.

TOLEDO CAMPUS

"Edie" came to The Labuhn Center for rehabilitation. She worked hard in physical therapy and, before long, was able to walk to the gift shop and back. However, when asked what stood out in her mind about her stay, Edie said it was all the nice people and the chance to socialize. She enjoyed playing Bunco, bingo and 10,000. She liked the conversation and laughter that accompanied the games. Edie also looked forward to going to the dining room for meals. Not only was the food "too good," but the interaction with other residents was something she really enjoyed. During one conversation, she recognized another resident. As it turns out, both ladies had worked downtown some 60+ years ago; one in Woolworth's and the other in a nearby store. For many patients, the chance to socialize and share common memories and interests is a favorite part of their experience in The Labuhn Center. They return home with a standing invitation to come back anytime and participate in an afternoon activity. Last November, the center held an alumni bingo game, and several former patients came to visit, some even bringing friends. Edie recently returned home, although wishing she could have stayed for Bunco the next day. However, Edie knows that anytime she is in the mood for a game and some laughs, staff will be here to welcome her back for a visit.



WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

"David" was admitted to the hospital with pneumonia. He spent three weeks in bed. After being discharged from the hospital, he was admitted to Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek for rehabilitation. He came to the Wolf Creek campus not wanting to eat or even to live. He needed to regain strength in his legs, since he could not stand or walk. A lift was used to put David in bed or in a chair. All David wanted was to be able to walk again. He began making excellent progress in therapy with the support of his therapists. He commented that they would not take "no" for an answer and they did a great job. Although his progress is slow, David is making good headway toward his goals of standing up, walking, and eventually driving himself home. He receives respiratory, physical, occupational, and speech therapy. He has worked extensively with the respiratory therapist, who has been instrumental in eliminating David's need for supplemental oxygen. David stated that the help has been tremendous, and everyone is very accommodating. None of his needs have gone unmet; however, he jokingly has said that some of his wants go unmet – like asking for a rib eye steak for dinner! David is now excited and motivated to work harder to meet his therapy goals.

SANDUSKY CAMPUS

“Roger” came to Lutheran Memorial Home for therapy services after a lengthy hospital stay. He had been experiencing the worsening of a chronic condition and had required more and more help from outside agencies to remain living at home. He eventually ended up in the hospital. While there, it was recommended that he go to a long-term care facility, because he was unable to care for himself at home anymore, even with extra help and services. After Roger received therapy services for several weeks, staff determined that he would not need to remain in long-term care. He had improved to the point where he could safely return home with home health services. Roger said the best thing about Lutheran Memorial Home was the therapy services. “Therapy has made me stronger,” he explained. “I can walk better and care for myself with less help.” He is happy that once his therapy has ended he will be able to return home safely. Roger also commented how he enjoyed the caring staff who served him throughout his stay.

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

“Josiah’s” parents had signed a voluntary agreement for care by their local Children Services organization, giving up custody so that he could get the treatment he needed. Josiah had been diagnosed with epilepsy at age seven. Subsequent brain surgeries had left him impulsive, unable to regulate emotions, and with cognitive delays. His parents separated, but continued arguing, which caused stress for Josiah. This stress compounded Josiah’s problems. He became aggressive and burned down the family home after becoming angry with his mother. His aggression was not limited to home, and he often attacked school personnel and classmates, as well. He had failed two placements and was in detention several times before being placed at LHS Family & Youth Services.



Josiah received care and treatment for 17 months. During that time, he continued seeing a neurologist for his epilepsy. He also saw a therapist one to two times per week and met with the psychiatrist monthly. He attended the Blackmon Alternate Learning Center. He also participated in the Partners in Treatment weekends, where he received family and group therapy. He made a great deal of progress and was successfully reunited with his family. Months after he left LHS care, his mother sent an email describing some of Josiah’s accomplishments. He was a counselor’s assistant at a YMCA day camp, where he was often the one called if one of his campers needed behavioral support. Josiah did not take a day off during the entire summer, and he was asked to join their leadership program. He started taking guitar lessons. He was a scorekeeper for the varsity basketball team at his high school, where he is doing well academically and has had no behavioral problems. While he still struggles with impulsivity, he manages to keep his impulses under control, which his mother credits to the work of the dedicated LHS staff.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Agnes” is 83 years old and has a diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease. Recently, she was admitted to Lutheran Home at Napoleon with some calling out and tearful behaviors. These behaviors are not uncommon in someone with Alzheimer’s or other forms of dementia, especially when suddenly surrounded by people and environments that are unfamiliar. However, the behaviors caused her family to become concerned, since they were increasingly more intense. Staff members attempted different interventions to help Agnes feel more comfortable. They sat with her in one of the sunrooms so she could eat in a quiet place with little interruption. They played her favorite music, listened to her concerns, held her hand, and prayed with her. Nothing seemed to work, and the family felt like she was slipping away. The behaviors could have easily been attributed to the Alzheimer’s diagnosis, but the diligent staff took the concerns to Agnes’s doctor. It was discovered that she had an infection, and she received treatment. After that, Agnes became the person that her family knew and recognized. She now enjoys her favorite activities and embraces life on the Napoleon campus.