



God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society
July 2014



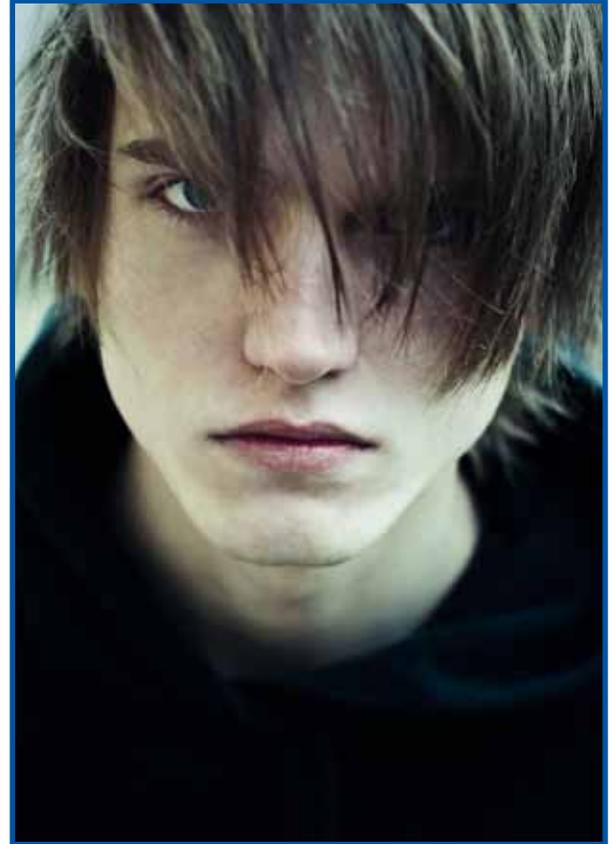
On a daily basis, Lutheran Homes Society impacts hundreds of residents, clients and families. The stories told here reflect the mission of Lutheran Homes Society to care for needy youth and elderly with compassion. Sharing these stories lets you know your support is truly making a difference in people's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

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

"Brendon" came into care at LHS Family & Youth Services, at the age of 16, from an inner city group home. Both his parents were in prison. No other relative wanted to take care of him because of his severe behavioral problems; for all practical purposes, he was an orphan. Brendon was involved in drug trafficking, convinced that he was doing the right thing to get money to feed his siblings. He was frustrated and angry about his situation, though, and felt abandoned and betrayed by his parents. These feelings fueled a rebellious attitude towards authority figures and adults in general. His attendance at school was very sporadic.

When Brendon arrived at LHS, he said that he would not follow any rules and that he didn't need any help from anybody. He arrived with two cell phones, intending to run his drug trafficking operation from a distance. Staff convinced Brendon to give up the cell phones. They talked with him about exploring a new path in life. Initially, Brendon refused, but staff began reinforcing the idea that he had excellent skills that he could put to use in a positive way. Brendon started opening up and trusting staff more, once he realized he could speak his mind without getting judged or punished. He started viewing staff as a support system. He moved from the LHS alternate learning center to a less restrictive classroom setting and got involved through school in helping at a local food bank.

Eventually, Brendon got a part-time job, and he recently took on a new position that requires him to handle more responsibility. He has now become a leader in group sessions with therapists, family council and house meetings. Brendon has displayed continued improvement in his ability to express feelings and is developing effective coping skills to manage his anger. Brendon has come a long way; he is very goal-minded and has consistently raised his bar of expectation for himself.



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

After "Robert" received a terminal diagnosis, the doctors explained to his family that, although he was doing well now, his illness would be progressive. The family decided to look into alternate living arrangements for Robert, since they still had their own families to care for as well. At first, Robert was not happy with his children, but, after much thought, he agreed to visit area care facilities. After his visits, he chose to come to Lutheran Home at Napoleon. When staff inquired about his choice, Robert explained that everyone had said "Hello" to him during the tour and took the time to talk with him. While he was not happy with having to move, the friendly people made his decision easier. As time went on, Robert's disease progressed, and he grew more dependent on the staff for his care. It was difficult for everyone to see their vibrant, independent father, grandfather, and friend change so dramatically. Staff guided the family every step of the way through the daunting medical and insurance processes. Robert's son was extremely grateful for the support his family received throughout this difficult time. He felt that his father received the best care and believed his dad had made the best decision to come to the Napoleon campus for his last days.

SANDUSKY CAMPUS

Lutheran Memorial Home received a call from a former resident, who was trying to help his neighbor find a place for his wife to stay while he had surgery. The husband had delayed his surgery several times, because he could not find a facility that would admit his wife for a 30-day respite stay. “Claire” was admitted to the Sandusky campus less than two hours after the initial call. Because of the 24-hour care and observant nursing staff, the clinical team was able to identify several new health conditions of which her family and primary care physician were not aware. Claire was able to receive treatment for these conditions, and therapists were able to assist her husband with his post-surgical care when they returned home.



TOLEDO CAMPUS

“Margo” came to The Labuhn Center after bowel surgery, during which doctors discovered that she had cancer. She received skilled nursing care and therapies at the Toledo campus, while she was undergoing chemotherapy at a local facility. This was a scary and challenging time for Margo, but the team at The Labuhn Center was there to help her through it. While her therapies were completed successfully and she was thrilled with her progress, her needs went beyond the clinical care that was provided. The team worked with her to enlist a doctor to follow her in the community and made sure that her clinical needs were met so she could return home. The Director of Social Services helped her navigate through the difficult Medicaid process and assisted Margo in overcoming the barriers that she faced as she prepared to return home. She has expressed her appreciation for all the support. Margo was discharged recently and is now thrilled to be living independently in the community.

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

Last spring, “Marilyn” came to Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek in a catatonic state. She could not talk, eat, or move her body. The only thing she could do was blink her eyes. Prior to her admission to the Wolf Creek campus, she was at six different hospitals. The reasons for her catatonic state and the underlying medical problems were undiagnosed. She had perplexed all the doctors. Fortunately for Marilyn, she does not remember any of this. When she arrived on campus, she received physical and occupational therapy. Initially, she screamed because of excruciating pain when anyone touched her. After six months of working hard in therapy, Marilyn now routinely moves around with a walker and sometimes even walks unassisted. In fact, she is doing nearly everything on her own. Recently, Marilyn returned to her home, where her husband resides. There, she will continue with outpatient therapy. “I have a ways to go still, but I’ve come a long way,” says Marilyn, who is grateful for the care she received at the Wolf Creek campus.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

LHS Housing & Community Services received a referral from HOME Choice for transition coordination services for a consumer who required immediate assistance. LHS was informed that the client, “Betty,” needed to move from a nursing home within a week. As a result, the Service Coordinator assigned to Betty met with her immediately to review her housing and other needs. As it turned out, Betty had already made housing arrangements with a family member, which enabled the coordinator to move her quickly. She was with Betty every step of the way to ensure that her transition was successful and assisted her with obtaining items, such as clothing and food, that she needed. The Service Coordinator also reviewed other service needs and determined that Betty required help in applying for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). After much work and communication with the local Department of Job and Family Services, Betty’s SNAP benefits were authorized. Betty has expressed her gratitude for the support provided by LHS through the HOME Choice program.