



God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society
March 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.

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

"Tilly" is a 30-something-year-old woman who was in a traumatic car accident. After the accident, Tilly was in a coma and was not expected to wake up. She did, however, and she shared that she had spent time with Jesus. "I was actually dead, not in my coma, when I was with Jesus. They say paramedics had to revive me two or three times when I was in Life Flight." This experience changed Tilly's life, making her faith in God stronger than it ever was before. Another challenge for Tilly was that she knew her family looked familiar, but she did not remember who they were or anything about them. The LHS Service Coordinator and student intern are working with her to regain the ability to live on her own. With her traumatic brain injury, it has been hard for Tilly to complete tasks that other individuals may consider simple, such as making a sandwich or knowing what to do in case of a fire. With the help of LHS, Tilly has been able to access needed services. She is now attending a support group for brain injuries, going to the YMCA to regain use of her right side, working at becoming a volunteer, and trying to get a service animal. Recently, she also succeeded in gaining guardianship over herself and is slowly making changes to increase her self-confidence. The LHS intern has even given her a binder that is a step-by-step picture book of recipes, as a reminder of how to make the foods she used to enjoy. Tilly has been making positive changes in her life. Her demeanor and attitude have completely changed from "I can't" to "when I can." She is a true inspiration and an amazingly strong-willed individual.



SANDUSKY CAMPUS

It is very difficult for "Richard" to trust anyone who is not family with the care of his wife of 60 years. Richard said he heard many good things in the community about Lutheran Memorial Home before he placed his wife there, but "when it comes to your soul mate you are hesitant to trust just the word of others." Richard comes twice a day to visit his wife and tries to keep the love alive. That is one reason he was so pleased with the Sandusky campus' Valentine's Day Spaghetti Dinner. He said it was the first "date night" he had shared with his wife in two years. Richard also said his wife commented several times on how pleasant it was to share a nice meal with him and that it felt as if they had not been apart at all.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

"Anna" had been a resident for several years. She resided in the same room with the same roommate since her initial admission. She and "Helen" formed a strong friendship, as did their families. If one of the ladies went for an outing with family, the families took them both. They shared their meals and attended church and activities together. Although they had not known one another prior to coming to Lutheran Home at Napoleon, it has been a great friendship for all. Unfortunately, Anna had a sudden change in her health that left her very ill. Helen knew Anna was not doing well. As the nursing staff attended to her, Anna asked to be by Helen's side. The two close friends smiled at each other, communicating how dearly they would miss each other. Staff standing nearby had tears in their eyes, as they knew these two ladies did everything together. Upon Anna's passing, Helen's family felt the same emotions, as if she was their "mom, grandmother or great grandmother." The friendship Anna and Helen developed over the years gave the families peace of mind, knowing that they had one another for love and support.

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

Cecile and Everett Worley came to Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek just a few short months ago, relocating from Florida. Their children had requested that Cecile and Everett move to northwest Ohio to be closer to them, so they could monitor their mother's health and ensure their father would get the care he needed. When the Worleys made the decision to move, Everett stated that Cecile did not even recognize him, would not speak often, and had major behavior issues due to her severe dementia. Once the Worleys arrived at the Wolf Creek campus, Everett moved into assisted living, while Cecile moved into long-term nursing care next door. Each day, Everett would walk to the care center to visit Cecile and help her with her daily tasks. Doctors at Wolf Creek examined Cecile, adjusted her medications, and made other changes they felt were necessary. Everett said that he was skeptical of the med changes at first, but is amazed at the difference they have made in Cecile. Today, she is living in the assisted living apartment with Everett. While Cecile still has memory care issues, her progress has been astounding and brings tears to her husband's eyes. Cecile's children are comforted knowing that their parents are together and happy at Wolf Creek, and that their mother is again at a functioning level. In February 2014, Everett and Cecile were crowned King and Queen of Hearts at the Valentine's Day party, as they celebrate over 65 years of marriage.

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

"Sharon" came to the Oregon Treatment Facility in September 2004, when she was 11 years old. She was the setting's first autistic, non-verbal resident. She had a difficult time communicating needs and wants – frustrating herself and staff. A plan was created using sign language and picture cards to help Sharon communicate. Each afternoon, a staff member would work with her, reviewing the cards until she had memorized a vocabulary of words used in daily living. Staff worked carefully with Sharon to teach her such life skills as eating with utensils, making her bed, and packing her school lunch. A staff member was one-on-one with Sharon throughout her waking hours to assist her in functioning within the setting, to encourage social behavior, as well as to redirect her when necessary. She attended school at the Maumee Youth Center, where she participated in a functional curriculum that focused on skills needed for daily living.

Sharon enjoyed running errands with staff, particularly grocery shopping. She liked to color, watch her favorite Disney movies, look at books, and put together puzzles, which she did with great skill. While at the Oregon setting, she swam at the YMCA. On several occasions, she also helped make cookies to deliver to the Oregon police and fire departments. In February 2014, Sharon graduated from high school and moved to a home closer to her grandparents in southern Ohio. After nearly a decade of meticulous care and loving nurture, Sharon "graduated" from Oregon Treatment Facility. She will be missed!



TOLEDO CAMPUS

"Audrey" has had various roles at Lutheran Home at Toledo. She is a former resident, an outpatient therapy patient, and a current volunteer, who helps out two days per week. Recently, Audrey became ill and needed to go into the hospital. Once she was discharged, she came to The Labuhn Center for her recovery. Audrey told the Executive Director that she felt a profound sense of relief when she came through the doors. She does not like hospitals, never has for that matter, but Audrey said she feels a sense of calm when she comes to The Labuhn Center. When asked to explain, Audrey stated that the sense of compassion and competency that she gets from her caregivers and therapists, along with the cheerfulness of the support staff, make her feel safe and among friends. This helps to speed up her healing process.