



God at Work in Our Midst

Stories of the Called Ministries of Lutheran Homes Society
March 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.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

"Marcia" and "David" have been married for 45 years. Marcia has Alzheimer's disease, and her husband has been caring for her as her memory slips away. Recently, David became ill and was no longer able to care for his wife. The family toured several area facilities and chose Lutheran Home at Napoleon for Marcia's care. When Marcia came to the Napoleon campus, she struggled to settle into life at the care center. She became agitated and combative, and cried to go home. Marcia's memory was failing her more, and it appeared as though her cognitive decline was accelerating. Family became concerned that their mother was in the wrong place. During a morning meeting, one of the prayer requests was for Marcia, her family, and the interdisciplinary team who would be meeting with Marcia's family that afternoon. When everyone gathered, Marcia's family was prepared with questions and concerns. One of the team members spoke up with wisdom. The team member tapped into "the why" behind Marcia's anger and confusion, and explained the natural decline in the disease process. She addressed the family's fears and worries. Then, the team began speaking from the heart, expressing their support for Marcia and each member of the family as they move through this new, difficult chapter in life. The team understood that part of their jobs were to empathize, provide guidance, and even share the burden a little bit for the family. As caregivers, these responsibilities can help family members better cope with the situations at hand.



FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

"Anna" was born to a drug addict. She was exposed to abuse and neglect and was malnourished when Children Services removed her from her biological home. She had many issues in her Severe Emotionally Disturbed (SED) classroom, including stabbing peers with pencils. She disrupted her home of seven years by physically acting out and becoming violent against her foster mom and siblings. Anna was placed at the Oregon Treatment Facility with the goal of eventual adoption. She was diagnosed with numerous behavioral and emotional disorders, and was enrolled in Lutheran Homes Society's Blackmon Alternate Learning Center. She met with a psychiatrist monthly. She also met with her therapist twice a week for individual therapy and participated in group therapy four times a week. Through the structure of the residential programming and her therapeutic services, Anna began to flourish. She began to attend church services weekly. She occasionally attended Bible study at Luther Hills senior community, as well. Her grades and behavior improved in school. With her most recent grade card, she was able to proudly display her 3.0 GPA. As Anna began to grow, she also began giving back. She enjoyed volunteering at the local humane society, and she volunteered at Luther Grove senior community to help prepare the Thanksgiving meal. She helped bake pies, set up the social room, and serve dinner to the residents. In January, Anna was able to make the next step toward her adoption goal by transitioning to a foster home in her home county.

TOLEDO CAMPUS

When “Macy” found out that she needed hip replacement surgery, she did her homework. She talked to friends and neighbors about their rehab experiences. Then, she made a list of facilities and narrowed it down to four possibilities. Macy and a friend then toured the facilities, including The Labuhn Center. “My first impression was of good customer service,” Macy said. “It was the cleanest of the four and well kept.” She appreciated that the person giving them the tour “took her time with us, and we were made to feel welcome.” She was also impressed by all the available activities and summed up her impressions by saying, “I felt I would belong here.” When Macy arrived at The Labuhn Center, she was experiencing a great deal of pain. She was unable to get in or out of bed or get dressed by herself. With nobody at home to help her, it was important that Macy become as independent as possible. She is almost there. Macy is pleased with the quality of her therapy and care. “They make me feel important; like it was important to help me,” she explained. She is impressed with the staff’s personable and professional attitudes. Soon Macy will be heading back to her independent living apartment. Thanks to her hard work and the care she received, she is confident that she will be successful.

SANDUSKY CAMPUS

“Juanita” was admitted to Lutheran Memorial Home after a stay at a local hospital. She arrived with several leg wounds and needed dialysis twice a week. Prior to her hospital stay, Juanita was a fun-loving, energetic woman who worked at a local deli. Coming to Lutheran Memorial Home, Juanita knew she would get the therapy she needed to regain her strength and help with transportation to and from dialysis treatments. During Juanita’s stay, she worked hard with her therapists. When she became discouraged and wanted to give up, the therapy staff encouraged her efforts. “Therapy deserves five stars,” Juanita said. “They knew when to push me, even though I didn’t want to do it.” Juanita also truly admired the floor staff, commenting that they responded in a timely manner and treated her with compassion. Juanita recently discharged home, returning to her independent life. Although she has to go to dialysis twice a week, Juanita plans on going back to work and knows Lutheran Memorial Home is there to welcome her back if she needs rehabilitation in the future.



WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

“Nancy” fell one morning in her home after getting up too quickly from a deep sleep. She passed out and, in the process of falling, hit her jaw on the bathroom sink. She also suffered a collapsed lung and damaged her eye to the point where she could no longer see out of it. She came to Lutheran Village at Wolf Creek for physical and occupational therapy and to get her weight up from a frail 88 pounds. Over the past year, the Wolf Creek campus has been Nancy’s home. During this time, therapy has built up her strength and helped her walk again, and dietary has helped her gain weight. Staff also played a role in Nancy getting a prosthetic eye. Her life has turned around. Nancy has participated in many activities while living at Wolf Creek. As her recovery progressed, she was a hard person to find. She was out and about, navigating the halls in her wheelchair or putting puzzles together in a common area. Because of the care she has received and her hard work in therapy, Nancy has recovered enough to leave the campus. With the help of Wolf Creek’s social worker, Nancy was able to access a program to help her obtain her own apartment. She will be moving five minutes away from the Wolf Creek campus, and her goal is to ride her bicycle to the campus and visit her friends again. The staff wishes Nancy all the best!

HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

“Tommy” was a client dealing with various issues as he transitioned back into community living. When an LHS Service Coordinator began working with Tommy, it was very difficult to connect with him. He was struggling with many problems, including behavioral health issues, and he found it very hard to adjust to new people and situations. Tommy began to back away from the services that he really needed to be successful. Finally, the Service Coordinator was able to help him understand her role and the various tasks with which she could assist him. Tommy shared that he was overwhelmed trying to cope with his health, emotional issues and finances. The Service Coordinator was able to connect Tommy with a person who would help manage his finances, so that he did not have to worry each month and deal with the stresses of paying his bills on top of managing his health. Now, Tommy feels much better and is able to focus on other tasks to improve his life.