



# GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

*Stories of the Called Ministries of  
Genacross Lutheran Services*



March 2021

## FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

Sometimes God's work is simply bringing normalcy to a very abnormal time. The past year undoubtedly was uncertain and often chaotic. Recently, the staff at the Maumee Youth Center spent an evening bringing normalcy to several youth, who were invited to a "Frozen"-themed prom. Staff members helped prepare the youth for the prom. The girls spent the better part of the day having their hair styled in updos, straightened or braided. Two staff members helped the girls apply make-up and nail polish. Another staff member brought in chairs, chair covers and decorations, and she coordinated getting formal dresses donated for each girl. The staff prepared a pre-prom dinner with chocolate cake for dessert. After dinner, everyone went to the library, where music played and everyone danced. One young lady was crowned Prom Queen and the only young man in attendance was crowned Prom King. The night ended after everyone had their picture taken in front of the balloon arch and themed background. Staff members put in a great deal of hard work and creativity to organize this special night, making the youth feel like typical teenagers in a time when no one really feels typical. Their caring work demonstrated the core values of Genacross.

## TOLEDO CAMPUS

"Kate" lives with her son in a two-story home. While she was generally independent and mobile, a fall resulted in generalized weakness and back pain that made it impossible to climb the stairs to get to her bedroom or bathroom on the second floor. Her son purchased her a bedside commode, and she slept downstairs in her recliner each night. Eventually, Kate came to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Toledo Campus for rehabilitation, staying in The Labuhn Center for almost eight weeks. At the time of admission, it was necessary to transfer her with a Total Mechanical Lift, but weeks later she walked proudly out the door using a four-wheel walker. During her stay, she focused on building up her strength and stamina. Kate said that the nursing staff and therapists did a wonderful job, and she gives all the credit in the world to them. The first thing she did when she got home was schedule a hair appointment, and she walked right into the salon using her rolling cart, of course. At home, she is taking her own baths, making her own meals, and being spoiled by her son. Kate is ecstatic to be back on her feet again.



## GENACROSS AT HOME

Genacross at Home has partnered with Genacross Family & Youth Services to provide health services for youth in their care settings. For instance, Genacross at Home team members routinely draw blood for lab work so the youth do not have to travel. The Family & Youth ministry serves severely troubled youth and transporting them can present significant disruptions and challenges. In addition, during the pandemic, Genacross at Home team members have provided on-site COVID-19 testing for youth, so transportation would not be a barrier. This partnership helps decrease the disruptions for the young people served by Family & Youth caregivers and is also a source of great pride for the Genacross at Home team members, who are grateful to be providing the needed services.

Although pseudonyms are used in the above ministry stories, Genacross follows HIPAA guidelines and has either obtained permission from our residents, patients, or clients, or has sufficiently concealed their identities, thereby enabling us to use their stories of God's grace.



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## HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

During February, the service coordinators at Luther Crest, Luther Woods, Luther Pines, Luther Hills, Luther Grove, and Luther Ridge senior communities helped coordinate COVID-19 vaccination clinics held by the state of Ohio at these sites. Genacross partnered with the Ohio National Guard, Neighborhood Health Association, and the local Area Office on Aging to help over 200 older adults receive the first dose of the vaccine. “Sue,” a 91-year-old Luther Hills resident who has not physically left the building in a year, received her first dose of the vaccine. “It was just marvelous!” she said. Sue is eagerly looking forward to the day when she receives her second shot and will be able to go for a drive in the car with her son. Several other residents commented that they were very thankful that the National Guard and Genacross worked together to provide the vaccine clinic at their home. Many of these residents are unable to travel easily because of physical challenges. Additionally, numerous residents commented on the organized and well-run clinic and expressed amazement at how quickly it went. Another resident, “David,” stated that this was a gift, because he has lived in fear of getting the virus and has been scared to go anywhere. The clinics provided hope and a positive step for the residents.

## NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Joan” and her husband have resided in the Napoleon community their entire lives. They have raised 10 children and remain heavily active in a local church. Joan’s oldest daughter reached out to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus, after lengthy discussions with her other siblings, about a possible placement of their parents in Alpine Village assisted living. With housekeeping and laundry services, three meals a day, Bible studies, and other activities and services available, the family agreed that an assisted living environment would be a perfect next step for the couple. Prior to moving into assisted living, however, Joan needed to strengthen her body more as she recovered from COVID-19. The Napoleon Campus team was able to coordinate moving Joan to the Health Center for a short-term rehabilitation stay, while simultaneously moving her husband to Alpine Village to await her arrival in their new home. After 10 days of rehab, which included physical therapy and nursing care, the couple was reunited in their assisted living apartment. The occasion was a joyous one, and the family was able to watch their parents’ reunion by video conference.



## WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

As with many others over the past year, “doing what’s possible” has been the informal motto of the spiritual care department of the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus. When COVID-19 precautions shut down group activities in March of last year, worship services on campus were paused. As central as the chapel is to the ministry’s identity, gathering residents closely together on Sunday mornings was just not wise. The Wolf Creek chaplain adapted by producing written, large-print devotions to be distributed each Sunday. As regulations and good judgement allowed, chapel services popped up in various forms throughout the pandemic. Worship occurred in hallways with residents in doorways, and later in the dining rooms. Space to socially distance became essential, as were exercises to help residents who might be forgetful with proper mask placement. The chapel, with its exterior doorways and smaller space, was not practical for worship, but it made a great space for visitations. As vaccinations came to the campus this winter and COVID-19 cases began to drop in the community, more options became possible. On Ash Wednesday, for the first time since the pandemic began, all units of the Wolf Creek Campus (long-term care/rehab, assisted living and independent living) experienced in-person worship services. The pianist and organist remain unable to visit the campus, but they both play remotely for worship using the chaplain’s cell phone and a portable Bluetooth speaker. Most weeks now, the chaplain reports that more residents attend a chapel service than did prior to the pandemic. Many residents are grateful to gather safely again.