



GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of
Genacross Lutheran Services



January 2023

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

Almost two decades ago, “Mindy” had a life-changing stroke. She had to start from square one and endured many setbacks, but recovered sufficiently to live independently. Unfortunately, stroke recovery is never static. Last summer, two falls in one day brought Mindy to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus for rehabilitation. While she regained some strength, Mindy knew she would need assistance with her daily living needs. As it happened, Mindy’s sister had recently toured Wolf Creek’s assisted living and was impressed. “She didn’t realize I’d need it right away,” Mindy quipped. In assisted living, Mindy is able to do the things that give her life flavor – like shopping trips. She has a social life with the other residents, practices beading, surfs the net, and naps as much as she needs. She has resident aides on-call if she needs help, housekeeping to keep her apartment clean, and nurses managing her medications. Medication management and consultation is important to Mindy. She attributes some of her setbacks over the years to prescribed medications not being the right fit for her. With clinical staff to talk with daily, Mindy has trusted partners managing her meds and watching for any adverse effects. “I can have assistance, but it isn’t overpowering,” Mindy said. “I have it when I need it, and I am grateful.”

FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

Christmastime at Genacross Family & Youth Services was full of both excitement and anxiety. For some, it was the first Christmas where they woke up and had gifts under the tree. For others, it was their first Christmas not at home with their families. Some of the youth had visits with their loved ones filled with gift giving and laughter, while others awaited the excitement of Christmas morning when they were given gifts by Genacross staff and other generous benefactors. This year was especially bountiful for the youth in care. There were many donations of blankets, pajamas, hoodies, shoes, puzzles, games, books, movies, and more toys than could be counted. The conference room was filled with boxes and bags dropped off and shipped by donors wanting to share Christmas joy with the youth. The First Federal Delta bank branch in Whitehouse, Ohio, set up a giving tree, and between its caring employees and generous community members, donated so many gifts that it took two vans to transport them all. Family & Youth Services is beyond blessed to have so many truly caring people who want to support the youth served each day and make their Christmas extra special. Every child felt the love of the community around them and, as one of them stated, had an “awesome Christmas.”



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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GENACROSS AT HOME

“Sarah” has complex medical issues and has received home health services from Genacross at Home several times over the past few years. Recently, she developed an infection and needed IV antibiotics in her home, so she contacted Genacross at Home for her IV care. Sarah has never received IV antibiotics at home and was experiencing a great deal of anxiety about the process. A Genacross at Home nurse met her at home the same day she discharged from the hospital, along with a representative from the infusion company. The nurse worked with Sarah and the infusion company to set up her IV equipment and medications so Sarah was most comfortable. The nurse showed her how to administer the IV meds and how to flush and clean the line, but Sarah was still anxious about how she was going to manage on her own. For the first three days Sarah was home, a nurse came to teach and train her on her care. On the fourth day, Sarah was able to manage her IV medications mostly on her own. For the next week, the nurse concentrated on building Sarah’s confidence. Within a week and a half, Sarah was managing her IV meds and care on her own, with the Genacross at Home nurse visiting her once a week to check on her and answer any questions.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

Holidays can be especially difficult for residents and family members. Often, they feel separated from their loved ones or unable to celebrate in the usual manner or tradition. At the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus, staff members have been waiting for family members and loved ones to be able to come to the campus to celebrate the holidays. Over the past couple of years, COVID-19 precautions have made gatherings difficult. Finally, this year staff was able to share the joy of Christmas with an open house for families that included a visit from Santa. Alpine Village assisted living and the Health Center had separate dates where there were photos with Santa and goodies to share in fellowship. Santa asked each resident what they would like for Christmas, and the overwhelming responses were to be with family and for good health. The residents, who enjoyed the visit from Santa and time spent with loved ones, talked about the events for days after they happened.



HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

“Frank” lives at the Luther Oaks senior community in Norwalk, Ohio. During a recent visit with Frank, a Genacross staff member noticed that he was experiencing an increased hardness of hearing. The on-site service coordinator spoke with Frank about getting an appointment with an audiologist for a screening. She helped him access an in-network provider and checked with his insurance company about coverage for hearing aids. Meanwhile, a maintenance staff member installed fire alarm strobe lights in Frank’s apartment so he would be able to see all alarms if he did not hear them. These actions by caring Genacross staff members represent just one way they help to ensure the safety and wellness of residents.

FOUNDATION

Over the organization’s more than 162-year history, there has been one constant in the fabric of Genacross Lutheran Services – our member congregations. From our inception, the Lutheran churches in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan have helped weave the story of Genacross. From supporting our ministries to donating time, talents and treasures to our mission, they have been a steadfast partner in all we do. Recently, Genacross was asked to present at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Pemberville, and share the story of what Genacross is doing today and how member congregations can help into the next century. During the presentation, the congregation learned about the Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation’s role in ensuring that member congregations’ wishes are honored with how their gifts are designated. They also learned of the impact gifts have made and the changes experienced in the lives of so many of our residents. Genacross is appreciative of the support of local congregations, the Northwestern Ohio Synod (ELCA), and the Ohio District (LCMS), and we look forward to many more years of working together.