

GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of Genacross Lutheran Services

JANUARY 2026



HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

“Ellis,” a resident living at the Genacross Luther Meadow senior community in Gibsonburg, Ohio, needed help with her Medicare Advantage insurance plan. She had received a notice in the mail saying that she had voluntarily disenrolled herself from the plan. Ellis came to the Luther Meadow service coordinator for help, because she had not opted out of the affordable medical plan that worked very well for her. Part of the service coordinators’ job at each of the Genacross senior housing communities is to help residents connect with resources that benefit them, whether that is helping with Medicare, connecting with local doctors, or applying for SNAP benefits. The service coordinator looked over the paperwork Ellis had received and called the number provided so Ellis could speak with a representative. What they discovered is that the specific plan Ellis was using had been discontinued in her county. This news upset Ellis greatly, because she could not afford more than what she was currently paying. In response, the coordinator pulled up Ellis’ Medicare profile on the website and looked over the best plan options for the county. Together, they chose a new plan that was only \$8 more per month; however, it had the added feature of a benefits card that Ellis gets to use quarterly for over-the-counter medication and healthy food purchases. Ellis is happy with the new plan and is grateful for the coordinator’s assistance in solving her insurance dilemma, which seemed overwhelming at the onset.

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

“Walter’s” back problems had worsened steadily over the past several years, leading to the difficult decision to have surgery. Walter knew the recovery would be long and painful, but the chance of a more normal life was worth it. After surgery, he came to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus. When he arrived, he could hardly move. He was on two pain medications, and rehab looked like an unending road. Each day, however, it got better. Walter recognized that his pain differed from the chronic pain that had plagued him — and that gave him hope. The milestones passed by one at a time. Walter got up. He walked. His wife and friends visited regularly, and they helped him celebrate his progress. Slowly, Walter recovered — shedding his pain medications and walking farther each day. “I really got things in gear when I got a discharge date,” Walter said. “I walked up two flights of stairs in therapy — that’s more than I have in my home.” One date Walter could not outpace was his 50th wedding anniversary. He had talked about taking his wife on a road trip and out for a steak dinner. The road trip could wait, but their friends made the steak dinner happen. With the support of Wolf Creek staff, a special table was set up for the couple in the dining room, and they renewed their vows in the chapel. A couple of weeks later, Walter was grateful to return home after a successful recovery.

NAPOLEON CAMPUS

Celebrating holidays with family can be challenging when residing in a long-term care facility. At the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon campus, family is always important in the holiday celebrations. In December, the Napoleon Campus hosted a Christmas celebration with music, desserts, crafts, and visits with Santa. "Rachel" was able to invite her daughter and her family to the celebration. Rachel's eyes lit up when she saw her daughter walking down the hall toward her, and then Rachel had a huge smile when she saw her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The family was able to enjoy listening to Christmas carols, decorating Christmas ornaments to hang on their trees, eating Christmas cookies, and ultimately seeing Santa. They even had the opportunity to get an unforgettable family Christmas picture of four generations with Santa and Mrs. Claus. The time was not only special to Rachel, but also to the family members who came to visit her. Through such activities as the Christmas celebration, the Napoleon Campus provides opportunities for intergenerational memories to continue in the lives of its residents.



FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

"Faith" came to Genacross Family & Youth Services when she was 9 years old because her family was unable to meet her high-need demands. Faith was born with a cognitive impairment that made it difficult for her to understand the world she was living in. She had significant behavioral issues that included being unable to walk or talk (except only a few baby words) and acting like an animal. Once placed at Genacross, Faith was able to learn to manage her behaviors through the support and understanding of the team members who worked with her. After adjustments were made to her medication, she was able to learn to speak and walk normally. Staff worked with her on accepting direction and managing her emotions. They helped Faith learn to avoid negativity, minimize the influence of peers, and use coping skills to keep herself emotionally stable and make good choices. With the support of team members, she learned how to communicate her world to those around her, so others could understand how she thinks and then help her learn and grow in appropriate ways.

What was discovered about Faith was that she speaks through art and compassion. Faith is blessed with an artistic ability for drawing that takes many people's breath away. Her love for animals (both real and stuffed) reflects Faith's soulful compassion for all beings. Faith will be transitioning from her Genacross home this year as she is approaching her 18th birthday. Throughout her time with Genacross, she has made tremendous gains in her ability to navigate through the world. Faith's pleasant disposition makes a positive impression on all who meet her. Genacross is helping Faith prepare for the transition to an appropriate adult care setting, and team members feel blessed to have served Faith.

FOUNDATION

RE/MAX Preferred Associates of Toledo, Ohio, was proud to spread holiday cheer this Christmas by purchasing gifts for the children living in group homes operated by Genacross Family & Youth Services. The RE/MAX team came together to ensure each child felt remembered and celebrated during the holiday season, providing thoughtful presents to brighten their day. In addition to the individual gifts, a flat-screen TV was also donated for one of the group homes, creating a shared source of entertainment and comfort for the children to enjoy together. This effort reflects the company's ongoing commitment to giving back to the community and supporting local youth in meaningful ways.