

GOD AT WORK IN OUR MIDST

Stories of the Called Ministries of Genacross Lutheran Services

WOLF CREEK CAMPUS

“Phillip” was admitted to the Genacross Lutheran Services-Wolf Creek Campus for therapy following a stroke. One side of his body was completely limp, but more than that, his spirit was broken. He had faced many challenges in his life, but this seemed one too many. He did not want to do therapy. In fact, he did not want to do anything. As is often the case, when change came it had many sources. Phillip cites conversations with his son, a renewed spirituality, seeing how limited his life would be without progress, and the encouragement of many that helped him move forward. He really came out of his shell and began to flourish. Therapists used advanced techniques to increase Phillip’s function. He became the first resident in the gym each morning, waiting at the door. But Phillip faced another challenge: insurance benefits cuts that would send him home short of his goals. A team led by the campus’ social worker appealed each cut and advocated for Phillip to receive more intensive therapy at a rehabilitation hospital. These efforts worked, and Phillip was recently discharged to a rehab hospital. He continues to gain mobility and function, and his eventual goal is to return home. “I’ll be back,” Phillip declared. “When you see me, I’ll be walking. I want to show what God has done.”



FAMILY & YOUTH SERVICES

“Brody,” a resilient 10 year old with cystic fibrosis, entered Genacross Family & Youth Services in 2024 after experiencing significant trauma, medical challenges, and behavioral struggles. When Brody first arrived, he often expressed his fears and frustrations through yelling, screaming, inappropriate language, threatening remarks, and physical aggression. With staff guidance and support, Brody gradually developed the ability to pause, consider his choices, and think through the consequences of his actions before reacting. The more he learned to understand his anxiety, especially surrounding family connections and uncertainty about the future, the more he was able to manage his emotions with intention rather than impulse. A turning point came in September 2025 when Brody was introduced to his maternal cousins, Larry and Christine Franklin. Over the months that followed, the Franklins and their two children spent time with Brody. Through regular phone calls, on-site visits, off-ground outings, and eventually overnight stays, they built a supportive connection grounded in trust and love. By December, Brody was officially placed in the Franklin home and they became his legal guardians. Today, Brody is thriving. He is doing well in school, forming positive relationships at home, and enjoying such activities as wrestling and community baseball. His medical needs are well managed, and he continues to grow in confidence and stability. Adoption plans by the Franklins are in the works, marking a hopeful new chapter in Brody’s life.



NAPOLEON CAMPUS

“Carl” is 70 years young and has been living at Alpine Village assisted living on the Genacross Lutheran Services-Napoleon Campus for almost five years. His life has quietly been shaped by beauty, rhythm and faith. To him, art is not just something

beautiful to view. Carl can paint and draw for hours at a time, as if his work holds stories only patience can reveal. He particularly loves to paint the Rocky Mountains. Often, he gives away his artwork, which usually include Bible verses and words of encouragement, to other residents and staff members. His pictures are always hanging throughout Alpine Village. Music engages Carl’s spirit as well. Whether it is through a soft hymn, a classic record, or a melody drifting through the room, he listens deeply, letting each note settle into his spirit like an old friend. He is the king of karaoke and even writes songs. At the center of who he is, however, is his love for God. His faith isn’t loud or showy. It’s steady, rooted, and woven into everything he does. Carl comes early to Sunday services and helps set up the chapel and pass out the programs. He also writes a song each week and plays and sings the song before the service. From his paintings to his song writing, the Lord is always his center point. People can see it in his kindness; in the way he speaks gently to others and finds meaning during times of both joy and hardship. To know him is to feel a sense of peace — like sitting in a quiet room filled with soft music, meaningful conversation, and a deep understanding that life, in all its forms, is something sacred. It is an honor to care for Carl and have him as part of the Genacross family.

HOME & COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES

“Beth” is a resident at Genacross’ Luther Oaks senior community in Norwalk, Ohio. She has numerous medical issues that were creating complications.

The Luther Oaks’ service coordinator was very concerned about Beth’s deteriorating health and encouraged her to go to the emergency room. When Beth did, she was immediately admitted and diagnosed with congestive heart failure. While in the hospital, Beth expressed concern about her care and medications. The service coordinator was able to speak on Beth’s behalf with hospital contacts and resolve the issues. Beth began to improve and was eventually able to return to her apartment with home health services that included skilled nursing care, physical therapy, and occupational therapy. The service coordinator played an important part in Beth’s recovery, advocating on behalf of her needs. Service coordination, which is offered at all Genacross senior housing locations, plays an essential role in helping residents maintain their independence to the fullest extent possible.

FOUNDATION

For the past several years, on Good Friday before Easter and the day before Thanksgiving, youth in care at Genacross Family & Youth Services have been treated to fun-filled visits to Urban Air Adventure Park in Toledo. A generous donor rents out the entire Urban Air facility as a private event for two hours of fun. Youth jump on the trampolines, complete the obstacle courses, ride the zip line, drive the go-karts, play on the equipment, climb the rock walls, and so much more. They also enjoy free pizza and drinks courtesy of the donors, and Genacross team members and youth experience joy and laughter together. For many of the children, this is a first-time experience that reminds them what a more normal life can look like for them. Each time this event happens, everyone leaves exhausted, happy, and with big smiles on their faces. The Genacross Lutheran Services Foundation is pleased to play a role in facilitating the Urban Air events for our youth in care.