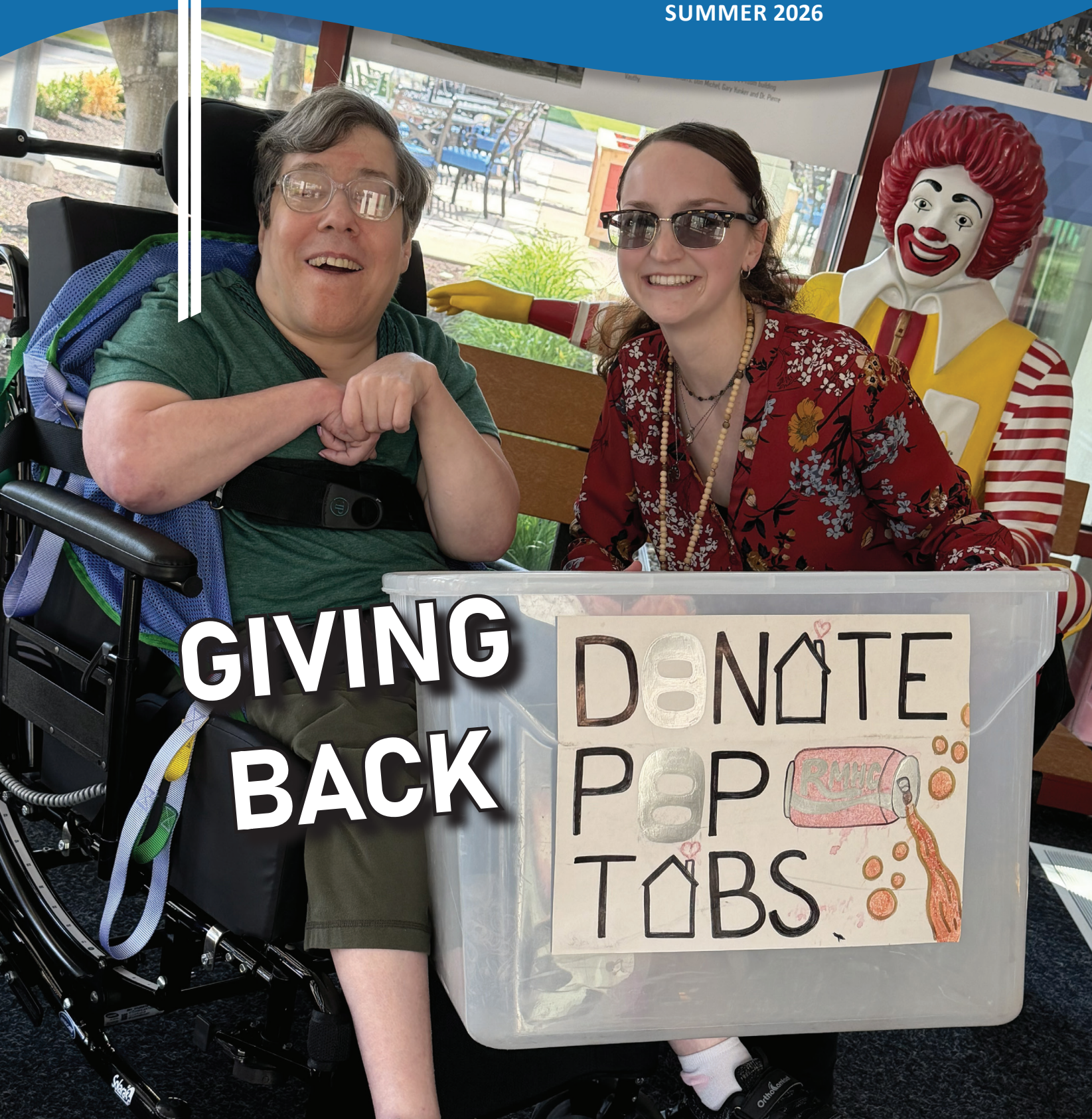




Echoes of Mercy

A PUBLICATION OF LUTHER HOME OF MERCY • WILLISTON, OHIO

SUMMER 2026



**GIVING
BACK**

DONATE
POP
TABS

Lutheran Ministries of Mercy

THE JOY YOU HELP CREATE

Dear Friends, Families, and Supporters,

Summer is one of the most joyful seasons at our ministries. As the days grow longer and the sunshine invites us outdoors, our programs come alive with picnics, community outings, gardening, games, and seasonal celebrations. These experiences help the individuals we serve build friendships, discover new interests, and simply enjoy being together. More than just fun, they foster confidence, independence, and a sense of belonging that reflects God's love for every person.

While summer brings excitement, our mission continues every day. Adults with developmental disabilities participate in meaningful programs that encourage personal growth and community involvement. Our mental health counseling services provide compassionate care and hope to individuals and families facing life's challenges, and our food pantry remains a vital resource for neighbors in need. Even as many people take vacations, the need for these services never pauses, and neither does our commitment to serving others.

As we celebrate this vibrant season, we are grateful for the generous supporters, volunteers, and prayer partners who make our ministry possible. Whether you're donating needed items, volunteering at a summer event, making a financial gift, or lifting our staff and participants in prayer, you are helping share God's love in tangible ways. Thank you for walking alongside us as we continue bringing hope, encouragement, and joy to our community.

In gratitude,



Terri Rodriguez
President and CEO
Lutheran Ministries of Mercy



TOGETHER TOWARD TOMORROW

Your gifts, service, and prayers help Lutheran Ministries of Mercy provide innovative programs for children, adults, seniors, and families throughout our communities.

Through our annual **Together Toward Tomorrow** campaign, you can help provide hope, dignity, and compassionate care every day. Every gift—large or small—helps strengthen our mission.

If now isn't the right time to give, we encourage you to save the enclosed donation envelope and use it when you're able. Your generosity moves our mission forward.

Visit lutheranministriesofmercy.org or contact Jeanette Hrovatich, Director of Planned Giving, at **419-972-4373** or jhrovatich@luthmin.org.

WAYS TO GIVE

Together, we can make a difference for those in our care.

- One-time gifts
- Monthly giving
- Stock
- Life insurance
- IRA distributions
- Thrivent Choice®
- Thrivent Action Teams

I Think Chris Was Happy Here

by Megan O'Brien, Vice President

In our 98th year of ministry, saying goodbye to residents when they pass away has not gotten any easier and that is true for the recent passing of Chris. At his memorial service, Chris' mother pointed to a photo collage, "Do you see all of those pictures over there? All of them were taken here. And he is smiling in every one. I think Chris was happy here."



There is no greater compliment we can receive than a parent feeling that their child is happy in our care. And Chris' happiness was not effortless or accidental. During his time on our campus Chris had:

- A beautiful bedroom of his own with clean clothes
- Comfortable living spaces
- Nutritious food that accommodated his needs and preferences
- An Individual Service Plan that put his desires into daily action
- Accessible transportation that took him to the places he wanted to go
- Countless staff who took the time to know and care for Chris and invest in what was important to him
- Paid bills, working technologies and up to date licensures that keep our facility running

Behind each act of love is a faithful member of our team, devoting their gifts and talents in service to others. In this issue of Echoes, we celebrate our over 400 employees and the daily difference they make. It is through their faithful compassion and dedication that we are able to carry out this vital mission so all those in our care can live full and happy lives.

Reconnecting at the Retiree Luncheon

Former co-workers came together recently for our annual Retiree Luncheon, a cherished tradition that provides an opportunity for staff, who retired from Luther Home, to reconnect, share stories and celebrate the friendships built over the years.

The gathering was filled with conversation and laughter. Over a delicious meal, retirees enjoyed each other's company.

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped make the event a special occasion. The Retiree Luncheon remains a wonderful reminder that while careers may come to an end, the relationships and sense of community built over the years endure.



Giving Back Since the Early Nineties



Rosie, the "tab queen" back in the 90s

"I like to make others happy. I like to see them happy too!" shared Rosie recently with Josie (pictured on the front cover). *Learn more about Josie's role at Luther Home below.* Rosie explained that her sister, Laurie, introduced her to the Ronald McDonald house when she was 30. Rosie's sister explained to her that the pop tabs are collected and recycled with the proceeds supporting families in need. Rosie was very interested and donating became a way for the sisters to spend time together. All of their friends and family saved their tabs for Rosie too!

Rosie's tab collecting goes back to the early nineties. It started when she worked at Lott Industries. Rosie was so passionate, she was nicknamed "The Tab Queen," shared her sister Laurie. Rosie and her friends at Lott Industries collected so many tabs they were featured in The Blade Peach Section.

Annually, each person served by Luther Home of Mercy, along with their family and support team, creates an Individual Service Plan (ISP). *An ISP explains what is important to the individual, what goals they have and how their support team will help them reach those goals.* This year, Rosie wanted to help others in her community by collecting pop tabs. Her monthly goal is to place three pop tab collection jars at different locations on campus and then every three months, gather the tabs and deliver them to the Ronald McDonald House. You can tell by Rosie's smile, that she was thrilled to make her first tab delivery.

Rosie typically picks her collection points, then her and Josie deliver them. Next up they plan on partnering with community locations around Genoa to collect more tabs.

Josie's Journey

Josie Schwalbe started as a Direct Support Professional, while attending college. As Josie worked more and more, it grew harder for her to imagine leaving. She had built relationships and connections. It did not feel like 'work.' Upon graduation, Luther Home was hiring QIDPs. "I decided to apply and am so happy I did!" shared Josie.



Leslie, center, recently celebrated his 90th birthday. Josie and the team ensured he had a special day!

A QIDP is a Qualified Intellectual Disabilities Professional. As a QIDP, Josie makes sure Rosie and other residents get the services and support needed to reach their goals. The QIDPs help plan, organize and check on services and make sure the voices of the individuals we serve are heard.





Gifts

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Indianapolis, IN

Jimmy Bennett

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Maumee, OH
Susan Johnson
Toledo, OH

Gene Bihn

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Mr. Robert Chambers
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Joyce Eisenhower

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Ms. Linda Rinderknecht
Upper Sandusky, OH
Mr. & Mrs. David Rinderknecht
Upper Sandusky, OH
Stacy & Mary Beth Schumacher-Lavey
Bowling Green, OH
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Pemberville, OH
Mr. William Welling
Phoenix, AZ
Mr. Jim Witker
Bradner, OH
Ms. Karen Young
Pemberville, OH

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Mr. Richard Feusse
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Toledo, OH

Susan Rasmussen

Ms. Susan Peterson
Warren, MI

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Bellevue, OH

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Mr. & Mrs. Richard Sack
Oak Harbor, OH

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Mrs. Marilyn Sandwisch
Oak Harbor, OH

Vic Schuerman

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Perrysburg, OH
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Mr. & Mrs. Jim Willman
Tiffin, OH
Mr. Jim Witker
Bradner, OH

continued on page 7

Provider of the Quarter



Luther Home of Mercy was recognized by the Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities as their Provider of the Quarter at the Board's June 2026 meeting. *Ciara, Isaac (seated in the front) and Talmadge (far right), along with staff, attended the ceremony.* Here's what was shared:

Luther Home of Mercy is always a pleasure to work with! I enjoy doing side-by-side training there as the staff and individuals served are always engaged and eager to learn. Whenever we have a new idea of a training to try or activity to do, they are one of the first ones in line to sign-up to participate! We appreciate them so much and look forward to continued partnership!
- Board Staff

I was venting to my friend that we really needed help with our son. She said, "call Luther Home of Mercy." I told her that I was told years earlier that they only take care of their own residents. She said I should call them again. Great advice. We were invited to check out Genesis. An adult day habilitation facility. I knew

as soon as we walked in the door. This is a wonderful place! Pleasant cheerful adults are working here. Clients are busy and happy. We decided to try just two days a week because our son was leery after unpleasant experiences. He quickly moved to 5 days a week because he loves being there. We are thankful every day. I can't say enough good things about this wonderful place and these caring adults. Thank God for Luther Home of Mercy!
- mom of Genesis Day Hab client

Medication Administration quality assurance reviews were completed in their three Wood County homes - they earned three perfects. The staff were friendly, welcoming, and the homes were well organized with a warm atmosphere. - Reviewer

Thank you Wood County Board of Developmental Disabilities for recognizing our commitment to care!

Memorials Continued

Diane Swartz

Pastor Al Swartz
Lithopolis, OH

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Pickerington, OH

Carol Vaffis

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Clyde, OH

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Dundee, IL

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Vorwerk
Napoleon, OH

Mary Weihl

Mr. Harold Weihl
Bowling Green, OH

Beverly Weikinger

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Sandra Wozniak

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Kwiatkowski
Maumee, OH

Pastor Don Wukotich

Mr. & Mrs. Vasilis Karayannis
Millbury, OH

Grants

**Ottawa County Community
Foundation, Inc.**
Port Clinton, OH

Charitable Gift Annuity

**Monthly gift in memory of
Rev. Don Wukotich**
Terry Bossert
Maumee, OH

Lists in this issue acknowledge gifts from April 1 - June 30, 2026. We strive to acknowledge all gifts accurately, but if an error is discovered, please accept our apologies and contact Melissa Gregg at 419-972-4338 or email mgregg@lutherhome.org.

Celebrating Our Employees

The last week of June we celebrated Employee Appreciation Week! It was a week of fun events, food, friendship, reminiscing and recognition. We are blessed with longevity in every area of our ministries. Join us in thanking our employees with a milestone anniversary! Employees with a milestone anniversary are invited to share their story, a memorable moment or why they love working at Luther Home of Mercy. Happy reading!

40 Years

Angela Boltz

35 Years

Shelly Coker

30 Years

Emily Brown
Carolyn Doyle
Connie Hill
Maria Lopez

25 Years

Lisa Floro

20 Years

James Brandt
Dawn Byrd
Amanda Esquivel
Connie Guevara
Kristi Lanigan
Dena McPherson
Tamara Presnall
Kasey Purtee
Diana Taylor
Timesha Watkins

15 Years

Joy Cook
Laurie Couthure
Jennifer H client
Tashala Jackson
Michelle Kohler
Paula Mahr
Kathlinda Murdie
Gladys Scott

10 Years

Lindsay Briggs
Shavare Byrd
Megan Davis
Norma Guerra
Toyneka Jones-Carpenter
Amanda Lissner
Ashlee Marchal
Katie Michaels
Christina Zunk

Retirees

Diane Parkes
Carol Purney
Diana Taylor
Barb Turner
Jean Witt

5 Years

Joyce Bergman
Marquita Coleman
Angela Everson
Monica H client
Mercedes Hoover
Arminda Kidwell
Gloria Lewis
Robin Marsh
Dawn McVicker
Kinyada Morgan
Floyd Olds
Pamela Pennington
Luredean Scott
Patricia Scott
Denaisha Smith
David Traver



One of my most memorable moments was when Nino saw Bradenn upset and said we should pray for him.
- James Brandt, 20 years



Angela Boltz
40 years



Emily Brown
30 years



Kristi Lanigan
20 years



"I love working with this population. Working at LHM is more of a ministry than a job; It is extending the love of Christ by serving and I've always loved working with them."
Gloria, 5 years

"I thought LHM was going to be a decent job, until I found something "better." Here I am; 30 years later! So many memories. The only days I've hated were when a dear one was taken from us. I thank my lucky stars for the day God led me to LHM campus! It's not just a job. It's an incredible adventure!"
Connie, 30 years



I'm here because of the values, how the people in our care are valued and how well they're taken care of due to higher standards than I have seen in other companies. Many years ago, when I first came, I felt that if I were no longer able to care for my daughter, with multiple disabilities, LHM would be my preferred ever-after home. Their smiles, high-fives and fist bumps bring me great joy as well as knowing that I am a part of a great team that truly cares.
- Megan Davis, 10 years

Faithfulness that Endures

In every ministry, there are individuals whose quiet faithfulness helps shape the lives of countless others. At Luther Home, we are deeply grateful for the many employees whose years of dedicated service have strengthened our mission and enriched our community. Their steadfast commitment, compassionate hearts, and willingness to serve have become a lasting testimony to God's faithfulness through every season.

This year, we are especially honored to celebrate two remarkable women whose combined years of service span more than a century. Jean Witt recently retired after an extraordinary 64 years with LHM. Throughout her remarkable journey, she faithfully served in a variety of roles, including making history as our first female Executive Director when she was appointed to serve in that role on an interim basis in 1985. Carol Purney also recently retired after 49 years of dedicated service, many of them spent coordinating our central supply services with exceptional care and attention.

While Jean and Carol's milestones are truly exceptional, they also remind us of the many other long-term employees whose faithful service has quietly sustained this ministry over the years. Across every department, these dedicated team members have welcomed new coworkers, embraced change, shared their knowledge and provided stability through decades of growth. Their collective experience, wisdom and daily acts of kindness have helped create the caring environment that defines LHM today.

The adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, we are privileged to serve, have been blessed by employees who consistently choose patience, compassion, dignity and respect in every interaction. These faithful servants demonstrate that a meaningful legacy is not measured simply by years worked, but by lives touched, relationships built and Christ's love shared each and every day.

To Jean and Carol, we offer our heartfelt congratulations and gratitude as they begin this new chapter in retirement. And to all of our long-term employees—past and present—thank you for your enduring commitment to this ministry and to those we are called to serve. Your faithfulness has become part of the foundation of Luther Home and we thank God for each of you.

"Let us not grow weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9



Jean Witt



Carol Purney



Honor Roll

Genesis Staff

Mr. & Mrs. David Alvarado
Perrysburg, OH

Allen & Kathleen Kemner

Mr. & Mrs. Roger Sergent
Pemberville, OH

Kim & Helen Kirkendall

Mr. William Welling
Phoenix, AZ

Joyce Kontak's 90th Birthday

Mr. & Mrs. James Garner
Elmore, OH

Mr. & Mrs. Bob Larson
Oregon, OH

Charles Louys

Ms. Nancy Chamberlain
Bryan, OH

Leslie Sarka

Susan Johnson
Toledo, OH

Bob & Sally Severson

Mr. William Welling
Phoenix, AZ

Evan & Kathy Sonnenberg

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Napoleon, OH

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SHARE THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Adopt a Resident

Every person served in our ministries receives Christmas gifts because of the generosity of individuals and churches in our community. Contact Melissa at 419-972-4338 or mgregg@lutherhome.org to learn more.

Volunteers Welcome



If you'd like to make an impact, visit www.lutherhome.org to fill-out our volunteer application. The upcoming events at our Williston, OH campus include:

- October 4, Fall Fest, 2:30 - 6 pm
- October 27, Halloween Party, 6:30 - 8 pm
- November 12, Elvis Impersonator, 6:30 pm
- November 24, Game Night, 6:30 pm
- December 13, Christmas Worship, 2:30 pm

Please contact Tiffany at 419-972-4402 or email her at TiffanyWhiteman@lutherhome.org if you have any questions.

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

Grace Elmore's Faith in Action



Volunteers from Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church volunteer one Saturday, every other month, at Luther Home's Williston campus. This morning of giving back is part of the Elmore Church's larger Service Saturday initiative.

The most recent project they helped residents in Cottage 9 make was birds! The birds are constructed from toilet paper rolls and skewers that a member of the church makes beforehand. On Service Saturday, the residents use a variety of supplies including feathers, googly eyes and paint to decorate their own bird!

Service Saturday at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church started in February 2026 by Phoebe Jackson, who volunteered at Luther Home as a Woodmore National Honor Society student. This experience in high school motivated her to get her Church, plus her mom & grandma involved.

Thank you Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church!

Join us for Fun!

Bring your chosen projects and enjoy uninterrupted time to work on them!

November 14, 2026

Registration Deadline November 3

No refunds after this date.

9 am-9 pm

\$40 for 4' space | \$50 for 8' space

Enjoy Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner & Snacks



Register at
Lutherhome.org or
scan the QR code



Contact Melissa at 419-972-4338
or mgregg@lutherhome.org if
you have questions about
sponsoring or attending

Thank You CedarCreek



The weather was beautiful for a morning of fishing with our friends from CedarCreek's Oregon Campus. Thank you for choosing to join us for your Service Saturday project!



God's work. Our hands.



September 13, 2026

You're invited to participate in "God's work. Our hands." day of service on September 13 at Luther Home of Mercy's Williston campus. Project options include helping the residents fish, playing bingo and yardwork. Help make a positive change in your community, build relationships and share God's love.

If you would like to participate in "God's work. Our hands." contact Tiffany at 419-972-4402 or email twhiteman@lutherhome.org.



Church Gifts

Bethel Lutheran Church

Toledo, OH

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Pemberville, OH

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Women

Pemberville, OH

Christ Lutheran Church

Bowling Green, OH

First St. John Lutheran Church

Toledo, OH

Grace Lutheran Church

Elmore, OH

Lutheran Church of the Master

Perrysburg, OH

Messiah Lutheran Church

Toledo, OH

Olivet Lutheran Church

Sylvania, OH

Resurrection Lutheran Church

Port Clinton, OH

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church

Perrysburg, OH

Solomon Lutheran Church

Woodville, OH

St. John Lutheran Church

Bellevue, OH

St. John Lutheran Church

Montpelier, OH

St. John Lutheran Church

Oak Harbor, OH

St. John Lutheran Church

Rocky Ridge, OH

St. Mark Lutheran Church

Graytown, OH

St. Mark Lutheran Church

Wapakoneta, OH

St. Michael Lutheran Church

Ottawa Lake, MI

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Maybee, MI

St. Paul Lutheran Church

Sulphur Springs, OH

Trinity Lutheran Church

Elmore, OH

Zoar Lutheran Church

Perrysburg, OH

Corporate Gifts

ConocoPhillips Company

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Lutheran Men & Pastors

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Thrivent Choice

Minneapolis, MN

Our Mission

We are a ministry *Enriching Lives and Individual Abilities*

Our Values

Faithfulness
Stewardship
Ethical Behavior
Integrity
Diversity

Our Ministries

Intermediate Care Facility (ICF)

Williston Campus

Supported Living Homes & Services

Lucas, Ottawa & Wood counties

Day Programs

Advent, Sylvania
Emmanuel, Lindsey
Emmaus, Oregon
Genesis, Northwood

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Echoes of Mercy
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Main Office - Williston

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