

## **February 2022, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story**

### **Happy Valentine's Day from LSI!**

*"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19*

Lutheran Services in Iowa's (LSI) mission is about love: responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. We give thanks for all the ministry partners, both individuals and congregations, who help share this love for Iowa children, adults, and families!

We see this love in newly adopted children and their families; in teens who are overcoming years of trauma and building bright futures; in Iowans with disabilities who are growing their independence and confidence; in new parents who are raising strong and healthy families; and in so many other moments of joy. You can help carry out our mission of hope and healing by giving a gift and showing love to the Iowa families we serve. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at [Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org](mailto:Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org) or 563-676-2065.

Thank you for the love you share and create through LSI. Happy Valentine's Day!

*Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at [LSIowa.org](http://LSIowa.org) and [facebook.com/LSI.iowa](https://facebook.com/LSI.iowa).*

### **Experiencing Love Incarnate**

Penelope had been in and out of residential treatment at various facilities across Iowa for a few years. Her most recent placement was at LSI's Bremwood Residential Treatment Center in Waverly, which provides 24/7 behavioral healthcare and support for children and teens.

Upon her arrival, Penelope was able to build a relationship with the new LSI Spiritual Life Leader, Pastor Kyle. The voluntary Spiritual Life program connects youth on Bremwood's campus to faith-based music and art, youth group, and chapel sessions. After Pastor Kyle had begun to settle into his new call with LSI, he began hosting a worship service each week for children on campus centered around the eucharist. Penelope enjoyed participating in worship and encouraged her peers to join in.

One day while talking with Penelope, Pastor Kyle asked her what got her so excited about worship and why she encouraged her peers to attend.

"Dude," Penelope responded. "It's because we get communion!"

As Pastor Kyle continued the conversation with Penelope, the two discussed the importance of communion and how being fed through the bread of life empowered us to live amongst and for our neighbors.

As we celebrate Valentine's Day this month, Penelope's story about receiving the sacrament of communion helps us to remember that our love for one another is possible through the one who first loved us. No matter who we might receive valentines or sweet treats from on Feb. 14, we trust that all are embraced in love through Jesus Christ.