

FOCUS ON FILLING

SUMMER 2026



A Summer of Celebration

- *Highlighting the impact of Pastor Denise Brown, the Filling Guild, and the staff who make our mission possible.*



Sean and Sue
Main Campus, Napoleon

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



Filling Homes, Luther Home of Mercy, and Lutheran Social Services of NWO are working together under the Lutheran Ministries of Mercy umbrella to share resources. These combined efforts allow us to foster hope, create change and meet the needs of individuals and families in our care. Visit our website at lutheranministriesofmercy.org to learn more.

A Message from Carol Slight

Vice President, Filling Homes

As Pastor Denise so warmly shares in her article, "This is a place of joy." Looking back on this summer at Filling Homes, I can't help but think about how true those words are.

The past few months have given us plenty to celebrate, from honoring Pastor Denise's 40 years of ordained ministry in May to marking 10 years of Abilities Bistro in June. In July, we celebrated nearly 350 staff during Revival Week, themed "Together, We Make a Great Bunch." Our staff were "Peachy," "Berry Appreciated," and "The Zest," with each day offering a fun reminder of how much we appreciate the people who give so much of themselves to Filling Homes. We are truly "Grapeful" for our amazing team.

But the joy at Filling Homes isn't limited to the big celebrations. It can be found in a resident's Elvis-themed 60th birthday, a staff member marking their first anniversary, an art project coming together, or a baseball game or car show shared with others. These moments become part of the bigger memories.

And the fun continues this fall. The Filling Homes Guild will host the Festival of Tables in September, followed by the Filling Fall Fling in November. Both offer opportunities for our community to gather and continue traditions that have become part of the Filling Homes story.

Looking back on this summer, I'm grateful for the people we serve, the staff who support them, and the families, friends, volunteers, and supporters who stand alongside us.

From big milestones to everyday moments of joy, there is always something happening at Filling Homes that is worth celebrating.

Carol Slight



Leadership Team



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Jenny Borgelt
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In May, we welcomed more than 25 retired staff members back to the Main Campus for our annual **Retiree Luncheon**.

As past and current staff came together to reconnect, residents also enjoyed seeing familiar faces from years past. The day was a meaningful reminder of the lasting relationships that make Filling Homes feel like family.

We are grateful for the retired staff who continue to return each year and remain such an important part of our community!

MISSION



A Seat at the Table: Celebrating 10 Years of Abilities Bistro

Jessica has learned how to safely wash a sharp knife. Dalton has progressed from relying on visual cues to independently stocking the refrigerator from memory. Brittany has strengthened her math skills through counting money and working at the register. And Amanda, who has worked at Abilities Bistro for four years, has grown from working at the cash box to cooking in the kitchen.

These accomplishments may seem like small steps, but at Abilities Bistro, they represent something much bigger: the opportunity to learn, contribute, and discover what is possible. Since opening in June 2016 at the Filling Homes Main Campus in Napoleon, the bistro has been part of Filling Homes' Adult Day Services program, providing clients with hands-on experience in a licensed food service setting.

Clients take on many of the responsibilities that keep the Bistro running, including preparing and serving meals, greeting guests, taking orders, operating the register, maintaining the dining area, and helping with menu planning. Through that work, they build practical skills while gaining confidence and independence. The skills learned at the bistro can extend beyond its doors. Amanda uses the cash management skills she developed there in her work at Soaring Arts, where she helps collect payment for homemade dog treats.

Job coaches Linda and Katie lead the program, guiding eight clients who rotate through the small restaurant each week and are paid for their work. Linda, who has worked at Filling Homes for 46 years, has spent much of her career helping clients develop skills and independence. Katie has co-led the Bistro for five years and, with her upbeat personality, she helps clients feel comfortable and confident as they learn new skills. Together, they provide the training and support that allow clients to succeed and have fun along the way.

Some of the most meaningful parts of the bistro happen between the tasks. Clients enjoy working alongside one another, greeting familiar customers, and welcoming new faces. Over the years, regular guests have become friends, returning not only for lunch but to catch up with the clients and staff they have come to know. Those everyday conversations and shared laughs are part of what has made the bistro such a special part of Filling Homes.

Abilities Bistro welcomes the public Monday-Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Stop in for a homemade meal, stay for a conversation, and celebrate 10 years of good food and the people who make this lunch-time spot so special.



Pictured: Filling Homes supporters dining at Abilities Bistro; Jess cooking in the kitchen alongside Katie and Linda; pickle-loving duo Katie and Linda; Tara serving a delicious meal to Angie; Amanda working the cash register with a smile.

THE FILLING HOME FOUNDATION

WE SINCERELY THANK OUR FRIENDS WHO GENEROUSLY SUPPORT OUR MINISTRY.

In Memory of

Hubert Abney

- Glenn & Patricia Alexander,
Miamisburg, OH

Ora Bidlack

- Robert & Connie Flory,
Defiance, OH

Marlene Bockelman

- Family & Friends of Marlene,
Napoleon, OH
- Joyce & Jerry Erven,
Napoleon, OH
- Kenneth & Arlene Freytag,
Napoleon, OH

- Robert & Sharon Loomer,
Millersburg, OH

Janis Dachenhaus

- Walter & Lorna Hougland,
Napoleon, OH

Marcia Elshout

- Earl LaGorin, *Sarasota, FL*

Karen Kemper

- Thomas & Cheryl Hoefler,
Kettering, OH

Bill Krueger

- The Gerken Companies,
Napoleon, OH

Elvera Kruse

- Marian Dickmann,
Napoleon, OH

John McBride

- Joe & Cindy Krueger,
Napoleon, OH

Betsy Long Mix

- Karen Long,
Chapel Hill, NC

Ann Luzny

- Gregory & Margaret Mary Luzny,
Bonita Springs, FL

Dennis D. Moore

- Jeff Mires, *Archbold, OH*

Jon Rickenberg

- Sarah Jackson,
Napoleon, OH

Monica Schuette

- Evelyn & Larry Schuette,
Wauseon, OH

In Memory of (Cont.)

Lee Schumaker

- Todd & Carol Slight,
Napoleon, OH

Dan Shiner

- Rob & Renee Timbrook,
Perrysburg, OH
- The Andersons,
Maumee, OH

J. Stan Wilhelm, III

- Kevin Wilhelm,
Maryland Heights, MO

In Honor of

Geri Alexander

- Thomas & Cheryl Hoefler,
Kettering, OH
- Steven Kemper,
Franklin, OH

Pat Basselman

- Randy & Diane Rohrs,
Ridgeville Corners, OH

Trust

- **Richard L. Johnson Trust,**
Napoleon, OH

- **Estate of Paul Klink,**
Shelby, OH

Individual Gifts

- **Carlan Badenhop,**
Wauseon, OH

- **Michael Benecke,**
Napoleon, OH

- **Barbara Bockelman,**
Napoleon, OH

- **Chuck & Jeri Campbell,**
Toledo, OH

- **Rosemarie Cole,** *Napoleon, OH*

- **David & Rachel Downs,**
Dublin, OH

- **Randolf Germann,**
Napoleon, OH

- **Todd & Diann Grieser,**
Ridgeville Corners, OH

- **Don & Terri Grimm,**
Grand Rapids, OH

Individual Gifts (Cont.)

- **Orville & Linda Hardy,**
Sherwood, OH

- **Barbara Hare, Celina,** *OH*

- **Phyllis Hyer,** *Columbus, OH*

- **Scott Jordan,** *Holgate, OH*

- **Kurt & Donna Meyers,**
Toledo, OH

- **Joan W. Myers,** *Toledo, OH*

- **Paul Oehrtman,** *Napoleon, OH*

- **Dennis & Cathy Price,**
Delaware, OH

- **Julia Rhodes,** *Bryan, OH*

- **John & Wanda Schimpf,**
Bloomville, OH

- **Carol Schroeder,**
New Bavaria, OH



Gabe and Jess cool off at Trinity Place



Bob playing with daycare visitors at FHCC



Revival Week 2026, Blessing of the Hands

Congregational

- **Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Defiance, OH**
- **Emanuel Lutheran Church, Napoleon, OH**
- **Hope Lutheran Church, Hamler, OH**
- **St. John Lutheran Church, Defiance, OH**
- **St. John Lutheran Church, Napoleon, OH**
- **St. John Lutheran Church Youth Fund, Montpelier, OH**
- **St. Marks Lutheran Church, Defiance, OH**
- **St. Marks Lutheran Church, Wapakoneta, OH**
- **St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, Defiance, OH**
- **St. Paul Lutheran Church, Sulphur Springs, OH**
- **St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Napoleon, OH**
- **St. Peters Lutheran Church, Holgate, OH**
- **Wauseon Women's Guild Of Filling Memorial Home, Wauseon, OH**
- **Zions Lutheran Church, Defiance, OH**

In Kind

- **Jan Bratton, Delta, OH**
- **Greg & Patricia Fisher, Defiance, OH**
- **Jennifer Gerken, Napoleon, OH**
- **Kathy Gobrogge, McClure, OH**
- **Suzanne Johnson, Archbold, OH**
- **Linda Meyer, Napoleon, OH**
- **Chris & Beth Moore, Napoleon, OH**
- **Steve & Tina Parsons, Napoleon, OH**
- **Grace Peterson, Toledo, OH**
- **George & Beth Recknagel, Seattle, WA**
- **Linda Rieffers, Napoleon, OH**
- **Becky Sickmiller, Malinta, OH**
- **Sharon Schuster, McClure, OH**
- **Diane Smigelski, Wauseon, OH**

In Kind (Cont.)

- **Kevin Wilhelm, Maryland Heights, MO**
- **Kathy Yunker, Swanton, OH**
- **Quilters Hideaway, Napoleon, OH**

Business

- **The Andersons, Maumee, OH**
- **The Blackbaud Giving Fund, Charleston, SC**
- **Boeing, Annapolis Junction, MD**
- **The Kroger Company, Williston, OH**
- **Napoleon Faculty Association, Napoleon, OH**
- **Panorama, Claymont, DE**
- **Thrivent Choice, Minneapolis, MN**
- **Walmart Superstore, Napoleon, OH**

Grant

- **Bryan Area Foundation, Bryan, OH**
- **Toledo Community Foundation, Toledo, OH**

Scholarship

- **Terry L. Bossert Soaring Arts Scholarship, Toledo, OH**

Thrivent Choice

- **Tricia Baden, Hamler, OH**
- **Maria Barnes, Hamler, OH**
- **Marilyn Behrman, Defiance, OH**
- **Patricia Bilow, Holgate, OH**
- **David Bishop, Deshler, OH**
- **Barbara Bockelman, Napoleon, OH**
- **Suzanne Bockelman, Napoleon, OH**
- **Jeri Bostelman, Defiance, OH**
- **Jane Brasher-Garrow, Morenci, MI**
- **Nancy Bressler, Napoleon, OH**
- **Herb Bunke, Clearwater, KS**
- **Marie Busch, Napoleon, OH**
- **Richard Clark, Montpelier, OH**
- **David & Carole Darr, Ann Arbor, MI**

Thrivent Choice (Cont.)

- **Merlin & Judith Elarton, Fayette, OH**
- **Susan Funchion, Napoleon, OH**
- **Marcia Gobrogge, Napoleon, OH**
- **Margaret Greene, Napoleon, OH**
- **Gregory & Peggy Harmon, Perrysburg, OH**
- **Connie Holers, Napoleon, OH**
- **Lynette Hulbert, Defiance, OH**
- **Sarah Jackson, Napoleon, OH**
- **Robert Jones, Napoleon, OH**
- **Amy Krassow, Napoleon, OH**
- **Daniel Ludemann, Defiance, OH**
- **Kevin Miller, Napoleon, OH**
- **Mary Jo Moden, Napoleon, OH**
- **William & Bethany Moden, Napoleon, OH**
- **Scott & Anna Norris, Wauseon, OH**
- **Esther Oberhaus, Napoleon, OH**
- **Ward & Marirose Replogle, Defiance, OH**
- **Jason & Kim Stevens, Wauseon, OH**
- **Stephen Voigt, Defiance, OH**
- **Helen Witte, Malinta, OH**



Terry L. Bossert Soaring Arts Scholarship



2026 Walmart Community Garden, Main Campus

THE FILLING HOME FOUNDATION

WE SINCERELY THANK OUR FRIENDS WHO GENEROUSLY SUPPORT OUR MINISTRY.

Thrivent Action Team

- Jenna Blue, Napoleon, OH
- Kevin & Kelli Gerken, Napoleon, OH
- Tracy Junge, Napoleon, OH
- Allicyn Mangas, Hamler, OH
- Peggy Ritz, McClure, OH
- Miguel & Lisa Rodriguez, Fayette, OH
- Jessica Stover, Napoleon, OH

Purses for a Purpose

- Kimberly Hopkins, Toledo, OH
- Mary Poore, Waterville, OH
- Nikki Hamons, Maumee, OH
- The Rushworth Giving Fund, OH

Heart to Heart, Staff Appreciation

- Glenn & Patricia Alexander, Miamisburg, OH
- Deborah Miller, Toledo, OH
- Mary Poore, Waterville, OH
- Steven & Linda Warner, Bryan, OH
- Janet Wright-Haggarty, Deshler, OH

In Memory of Douglas Bitzinger

- Alice Bitzinger, Napoleon, OH

In Honor of Ben Clausen

- Eric Clausen, Celina, OH
- Scott Clausen, Wauseon, OH
- Shawn Clauson, Frederic, MI
- LaWonda Keefer, Wauseon, OH
- Rena Schroeder, Wauseon, OH

In Honor of Matthew Webster

- Steve & Sharon Webster, Wauseon, OH

The gifts listed were received between April 1-June 30, 2026. If your name or gift is listed incorrectly, please contact info@fillinghome.org. Thank you for supporting the



Pictured: Revival Week 2026 brought fun and smiles for staff, residents, and clients alike. Mark, Tara, Esty, J.P., and Sheryl enjoy the annual appreciation celebration.

A Legacy of Giving: The Filling Homes Guild

For more than 60 years, the Guild has been part of the Filling Homes story. The group was formed in September 1965, following the passing of Carrie Filling Vagen, to honor her legacy and continue her spirit of support for the people and mission she cared so deeply about. Originally established as the Women's Guild of the Filling Memorial Home of Mercy, the Guild has grown into a welcoming group of men and women who continue to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

That spirit of giving began early. In April 1969, Guild members awarded the first Moser Memorial Nursing Scholarship for \$250. More than 50 years later, the scholarship continues to support students pursuing nursing. The award amount varies each year based on membership dues and donations, and the Guild was pleased to award \$1,000 scholarships to 2026 recipients Kenna Rosengarten and Elizabeth Orozco.

Over the years, the Guild's generosity has helped make a variety of projects at Filling Homes possible. From supporting updated accessible transportation to providing a new hydraulic lift for the Hanson Aquatic Therapy Center, as well as helping fund the construction of the Main Campus greenhouse, their contributions have made a lasting impact on the people we serve.

Today, the Guild continues its tradition of fellowship and fundraising. Their annual Festival of Tables and Fall Fling bring people together while raising funds to benefit Filling Homes. This year's Festival of Tables will take place Saturday, September 26, followed by Fall Fling on Saturday, November 7.

For those looking for a way to become more involved, the Guild offers an opportunity to connect with others who share a heart for Filling Homes. Members can lend a hand at events, participate in fundraising, or simply enjoy fellowship with others who are committed to supporting our mission. Membership is open to men and women of all ages, and annual dues are just \$1.

We are truly grateful to the Guild members who continue to honor Carrie Filling Vagen's vision by supporting the people and mission of Filling Homes. To learn more about ways to get involved, please contact Mission Advancement Director Tina Parsons at tinaparsons@fillinghome.org.



Pictured: Anthony working at the Main Campus greenhouse; past and present Guild members with updated accessible transportation; Hanson Aquatic Therapy Center pool lift; Festival of Tables; Guild Secretary Cathy Aschemeier with 2026 Moser Memorial Nursing Scholarship recipient Kenna Rosengarten.

Pastor Denise Brown: Faithfully Serving for 40 Years



Pastor Denise Brown's ministry has always been centered on people. This spring, Filling Homes celebrated her 40th anniversary of ordination. For the past 27 years, she has served as the Filling Homes chaplain, becoming like family to generations of residents, families, and staff.

At the heart of her work is a simple belief: people of all abilities deserve to know they are loved by God. Pastor Denise's calling to disability ministry grew from a desire to help people discover God's love while respecting each person's right to explore their faith, ask questions, and make their own choices.

Over the years, she has quietly planted seeds of faith in the lives of residents, giving them space to grow in their own way and in their own time. Whether sitting with someone who needs to be heard, visiting someone who is sick, or sharing in a celebration, she has built relationships through presence and trust. Her doctoral studies in disability ministry further deepened her understanding of how faith can be shared in ways that honor each person's abilities and experiences.

Each week, residents have the opportunity to gather for chapel, participating through prayer, music, words, or simply being present. Her work also extends through Community Chapel, a monthly worship service at Filling Homes for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities across northwest Ohio. Through both services, she creates opportunities for people to worship, ask questions, and experience God's love in ways that are meaningful to them.

Pastor Denise describes Filling Homes as "a place of joy and celebration." She sees God's beauty in the people around her and, as she says, "God loves each of us individually."

For Pastor Denise, that is what ministry is about: helping people know they are seen, valued, and loved by God, exactly as they are.

Pastor Denise, thank you for being a faithful leader in our community and a devoted advocate! Your faithfulness has made, and continues to make, a BIG difference in the lives of so many. We congratulate you on 40 years of ordained ministry!

Pictured: Pastor Denise and Tim closing chapel; Blessing of the Hands at Revival Week 2026; Pastor Denise with a little reminder of the Good Shepherd's love.

ACCEPTING NEW RESIDENTS



If you know an individual or family exploring residential options, Filling Homes is currently accepting new residents at our Main Campus in Napoleon, Ohio.

To learn more, contact Kim Stevens
at kstevens@fillinghome.org or
419-592-6451 ext. 1210.

**Bryan, Archbold, Wauseon,
Defiance, Napoleon, West Unity**

We're Hiring!



**2025 Making A
Difference
Award Winner**

**Quick Apply:
fillinghome.org**

Direct Support Professional, 18+

DSPs empower individuals with developmental disabilities through hands-on support and care.



Our Mission

Rooted in faith, we support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, enriching lives full of value, hope and choice within their community.

Our Core Values

Treat all with Respect
Act with Integrity
Serve as Faithful Stewards
Strive for Excellence

Our Ministries

Intermediate Care Facility (ICF)

Filling Home Main Campus, *Napoleon*
Cardinal Home, *Bryan*
Egley Home, *West Unity*

Supported Living Homes & Services

Fulton, Henry, & Defiance Counties

Adult Day Services Programs

Abilities Bistro, *Napoleon*
Filling Home Main Campus, *Napoleon*
Filling Home Community Center, *Napoleon*
Soaring Arts, *Napoleon*
Studio Express, *Napoleon*
Trinity Place, *Bryan*

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**N160 State Route 108
Napoleon, OH 43545**

**419-592-6451
fillinghome.org**



THE GUILD OF FILLING HOMES'

Festival of Tables

SPONSORED BY HYLANT

Saturday, September 26, 2026

Doors open at 11 A.M.

**Hanson Aquatic Therapy Center
N160 State Route 108, Napoleon, OH**

\$15 per seating

**A cherished tradition since 1998,
Festival of Tables is a luncheon
fundraiser benefiting Filling Homes.**

Enjoy beautifully decorated tables,
fellowship, and entertainment while
supporting people with intellectual
and developmental disabilities.

**Bring your creativity to life by
hosting a themed table, any theme
is welcome, or join us as a guest!**

Featuring the Henry County Chorale

**To learn more or reserve your table,
please contact:**

**Micky Baker: 567-454-9741
hbm3@bright.net**

**Tina Parsons: 419-599-6901
tinaparsons@fillinghome.org**

Together, as we continue fulfilling our mission, we are grateful for the generosity of those who support Filling Homes. If you feel led to give, donations of everyday items help us provide meaningful support to individuals at our **Supported Living** and **Adult Day Service** sites.

ITEMS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

- Acrylic Markers
- Acrylic Paints
- Aprons
- Blank Canvas – Any Size
- Cactus/Plant Potting Soil
- Jiffy Organic Seed Starting Mix
- Paint Brushes
- Paint Markers
- Paper Towels
- Peanut Butter
- Pens
- Planting Pots
- Printer Paper
- Sharpies
- Sketch Pads
- Sticky Notes
- Tape
- Tissues
- Toilet Paper
- Washcloths
- Watercolors
- Wheat Flour

thank you!