



Who is my neighbor?

Stories of social ministry in action

In answer to the question “And who is my neighbor?” in Luke 10:25, Jesus tells the story of the Good Samaritan, an outcast traveler who stops along the road to give assistance and sustenance to a victim of violence.

Every day, the staff and volunteers of Lutheran Community Services Northwest reach out, reflecting the compassionate face of God, in service to our neighbors and our communities.

Meet our neighbor,

Janet

Blessings returned double

In her own words

We foster parented six (mostly teen) children over many years, fitting them in between and amongst the births of our other children. Three of the children have remained a permanent part of our lives. Lilia, my most recent, graduates from high school this June and we couldn't be more proud as she heads off to college in the fall. I still remember the first time Lilia called me Mom. She was talking on her cell phone, a permanent growth that erupted on the heads of all my children in adolescence, when she said to her friend, “I gotta go. Mi mama esta llamándome para cenar.” My mother is calling me for supper. She turned and smiled at me. “Okay, Mom. Let's eat.”

Foster parenting requires grace and patience and sometimes just pure grit and endurance. But there are rewards, if sometimes late in arrival. One of my foster daughters is now married with two beautiful little girls.

We sat on a bench one day, watching the girls play at the park. My daughter was quiet, musing... “Remember the day you broke my Marilyn Manson CD?”, she asked. We had a house rule against music with parental advisory notices. “Oh yeah,” I answered, “we paid for that ‘big time’.” The tantrums and pouting had lasted awhile. “I just want to thank you,” she looked at me. “That's when I knew how much you really cared.”

The blessings return double portion. When you love a foster kid, there's quite an amazing return on the investment. *“For to everyone who has shall more be given, and they shall have an abundance.”* (Matthew 25:29)

May is National Foster Care Month. Join us in honoring the LCS staff who faithfully serve and care for our foster and adoptive families, and our amazing foster and adoptive parents. Parenting foster children is a special challenge and requires people with tender hearts and excellent skills. Many consider it a calling. At Lutheran Community Services we are privileged to serve those families.

Janet St. Clair Lazar, besides being a long-time foster parent, is also the former Area Director of LCS' North Puget Sound Office.

“Who is my neighbor?” presents the many faces of social outreach ministry, as carried out by our agency in communities across the Northwest.

For more information about the programs of Lutheran Community Services Northwest, and to learn how you can help support our ministry, contact your nearest LCS office or visit our web site at www.lcsnw.org

