



Interfaith Caregivers  
of Polk County

Greetings ,

As we celebrate this season of connection and compassion, I wanted to bring you a story that highlights the heart of our work. Let me tell you about Shirley, an Interfaith Caregivers' client, and Laura, one of our amazing volunteers. Two strangers who formed an inseparable bond after being brought together by Interfaith.

It began shortly around Shirley's 95th birthday when she promised her family that she would give up her car. However, just the thought of not being able to drive herself left Shirley feeling overwhelmed. How would she manage trips to the grocery store, doctor, dentist, and hair salon? How would she stay connected with her friends? Would she still be able to play piano and organ at church? ***She was worried!***



Determined not to give up her independence, Shirley remembered that Interfaith had once helped her by providing a volunteer to stay with her late husband when she needed time away. Encouraged by her family, she reached back out to Interfaith to see how we could help. Soon after, Shirley began scheduling regular rides.

On one of her first rides, she met Laura, a fairly new Interfaith Caregivers' volunteer. During their time together, they discovered many shared interests. They both loved puzzles, crafts and music, and they had both grown up out of state. Laura also found out that Shirley learned to drive on a Model A and had been a piano teacher for 30 years! Their relationship really took off!

Now, they are more like mother and daughter than volunteer and client. Shirley says, ***"It seems like I've always known you."*** And Laura feels the same saying ***"You've been a blessing to me."*** Today, you can find them stopping for ice cream, grabbing a sandwich, sorting through yarn together, or working on a puzzle after running errands.

Thinking back to that first ride, Shirley says ***"[It's] all because of Interfaith. I would never have met Laura if it wasn't for them."***

*(over please)*



Interfaith volunteers like Laura are there to help seniors and adults with disabilities in Polk County to continue living independently at home for as long as possible. Things like medical rides, everyday errands, food shelf deliveries, friendly visits and phone calls, housekeeping, yardwork, and caregiver relief are just some of the many essential services that Interfaith Caregivers provides. And the work we do here goes so much deeper than just giving a helping hand. It opens the door for people in our community to stay connected, feel included, be loved.

Without the services we provide, Shirley's story might be very different. Would she have to forego medical care? Would she have enough food to eat? Would she be lonely or depressed? She says it herself: ***"I'd be lost without Interfaith."***

Your generosity has such an impact, and quite honestly, without the support from people like you, our program would cease to exist.

With your donation, Interfaith will be able to continue to provide the transportation, companionship, and care that make a world of difference to seniors, like Shirley, and adults with disabilities in our rural community.

If you can find it in your heart, please consider making a gift today to help us continue to provide critical, **no-cost services** for the people who need them most. Don't underestimate the difference you can make. Just ask Shirley and Laura.

Wishing you peace and joy this holiday season,



Luann Olson - Program Director  
Interfaith Caregivers of Polk County



P.S. Don't forget to return the enclosed envelope with your contribution or donate securely online through our website at [interfaithpolk.org/donate](http://interfaithpolk.org/donate).

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