

Why Do We Do the Things We Do?

by Sheila De Jong

Our lives are busy, our days and calendars fill quickly, but we don't often take time to really think about why we are doing what we are doing, rather just making sure we are getting there on time or getting to the right place. It seems this is a question we don't always think to ask ourselves, or one we consider, as we go about our tasks or fulfill our meetings and obligations. We might ask a child – "what did you do" or "why are you doing that" but don't generally take time to ask ourselves the same question. I have been praying about our children, and challenged by a friend, to truly think about what we are doing to help our children grow in relationship with Him and how the things we do model that for them.

As our grandmother passed away this week, we have been reflecting on this sweet life that we enjoyed with her and that lingers with us even now as she is rejoicing with our Lord. She has left a legacy for us to cherish and one to strive to follow. She was very deliberate in the things she did, the choices she made, and the faith that she shared. She was quick to praise others, quick to come along side in any way to serve, and quick to share how she loved the Lord and of His faithfulness in all things.

As we are missing Grandma here with us we know she has left much of herself behind. I hope my children will be able to say the same and that we will show them things we feel passionately about, things that He expects of us, even when the world tells us differently, and a way to live in spite of our own desires or "busy schedules". I pray that the choices we make will show He is greater than the things of the world and He is a living and active God.

We have been reading about the missionary Mary Slessor and her deep desire to seek Him, serve Him, and bring Him to those who have never heard His name before. She experienced great loss, personal pain, and hardship, and yet in these difficulties she claimed that in her salvation in Him, she was victorious in all things. She experienced unthinkable hardships early in her life that would have caused many to stumble and not go forth, but she heard His voice asking and propelling her ahead. So many times, it seems we feel we are not able to move ahead or that our actions will not make a difference, she is a great example that He can use anyone, any circumstance, any race, at any time, for His glory. No one is insignificant, no one more worthy than others.

As we see the devastation in Haiti and see the cries of His people there, it is a visual reminder again, just as with Grandma, the frailty of this earthly life, and the impact of our actions on eternal life. As we see how fleeting time is and how quickly we will pass, the question arises - why do we do the things we do and are we leaving a lasting legacy beyond the time we share here on earth? Are we showing His love in the things we do, in the people we love, the ways we serve, in the times of great harvest and joy, and in the midst of chaos and sorrow, do we show He is faithful in all things?

We pray that you will continue to walk with us as a ministry as we earnestly seek Him in all we do, so we can see Him revealed in the things He desires of us. We know He is not a discriminating God, that He loves all whom He has created, and is eagerly awaiting others to know and praise Him. We know He rejoices when children are placed within Christian families to have the opportunity to know Him and to have a faith legacy of their own. We humbly praise Him for adopting us and showing us the biblical and personal example of adoption. How He took a child who was lost without a legacy and claimed them as His own, showing that our legacy is in Him and our eternal inheritance comes from His deep love for His children.

As we all go forth in the next busy days and months, and for those of us who write lists, cross items off, and look to complete the next items, let our minds not get trapped in these temporary things and the daily tasks but rather we pray our eyes will look to Him. Let our eyes be open to see what He is asking of our time, our attitudes, our lives, and if asked, we can answer the question... why we do the things we do... to leave a legacy in Him.

Katelyn's Fund

1327 Third Ave SE
Sioux Center, IA 51250

www.katelynsfund.org

Join us at our support meetings!

Sioux Center Support Meeting
meets the 2nd Thursday of the month
(Sept - May) 7:00pm
at First Reformed Church
Fireside Room, 160 Tenth Street SE
Sioux Center, Iowa

Sioux Falls Support Meeting
meets the 3rd Thursday of the month
(Sept-May) 7:00pm
at Prairie Hills Covenant Church
2500 South Powder House Road
Sioux Falls, SD

Anyone is welcome to attend!

Katelyn's Fund Board Members:

Kelly and Sheila De Jong
Monique Schiebout
Matt Schuiteman
Jean Vander Plaats
Mark Vermeer
Tammy Zevenbergen

Katelyn's Fund Support Team Members:

Sherri Langton
Julie Post
Jill Schut
Heather Van Es



Daniella, Christopher, Mikano
Lee

The Lees

Chad, Sandra
Amanda (8), Adam (8)

Brookings First Assembly of God
Brookings, SD

New Additions: Daniella (4), Christopher (3), Mikano (1)

In August 2008, we were enjoying our last summer days with our twins before they started Kindergarten. I was also making plans for the free time that would result from soon-to-come school days. But God had a big surprise for us! Labor day weekend we attended the Lighthouse Music Festival and were asked by a vendor about considering adoption. I told her we were not interested in adopting because we had 2 kids already, were over 40, etc. She gave me a book anyway, which detailed one couple's journey, and that's when God started to speak. I was gripped by the first paragraph, looking on-line two days later at pictures of kids waiting for families, and heartbroken for a certain set of preschoolers in Haiti with nowhere to call home. Still, I didn't think it made sense for us to adopt. I finished the book by day 5, feeling like God had been speaking to me about this all week. I was all for adoption, it just didn't seem to fit with my plans for my time, my family, my money, my home. Then God used a sermon at church 2 days later to wake me up to my pride in thinking that I could run my life and family better than He could. My selfishness in wanting to be in control of what I have, giving of my family when it is comfortable and convenient, was blatantly obvious. The call was undeniable. That day we said, "Yes," to God.

From the beginning, both my husband and I knew God had more than one child for us to adopt. Then came the fears about how we were going to pay for the adoption of multiple children when we had no idea where the money would come from. As we've stepped out in faith, though, we've experienced God's provision. Last April we accepted the referral of two Haitian preschoolers, Daniella and Christopher. Then in October '09, the big surprise came that their baby brother had just been brought to the orphanage. We knew that Mikano was meant for our family as well, and all the pieces fell into place as preordained. At the same time we were approved for a grant from Katelyn's Fund, just when we needed it most.

As you know, the earthquake on January 12 has devastated Haiti. Though our kids are okay, there is orphanage damage and conditions are less than ideal. We are working hard to get all 3 children approved to come live with us while immigration paperwork is processed and the final adoption is completed. We want to thank Katelyn's Fund for their encouragement during this long process. We also want to thank all who support this ministry through time, gifts, and prayer, making it possible for this group to touch the lives of so many orphans. God bless you all!

The Dekkers

Steve, Tara
Kian (3 1/2), Marae (2)

We talked about our desire to adopt a child someday when we were friends in high-school, now here we are married and adopting together! Steve's younger sister was adopted from Korea which made a huge impact on him. Tara traveled to an orphanage on a mission's trip during high-school and God used this experience to deepen her desire to someday have an adoptive family.

Early in our marriage we committed to pray for our children before they were born and have always had in mind that our children might not all be biological. God is and has answered those prayers. Tara's heart had longed to adopt an

(continued on next page)

older child or sibling group and prayed earnestly about this desire. Steve originally was not sure about the idea; he only considered adopting one child. God brought our ideas together through the birth of our first 2 children.

When Kian, our oldest child, turned a year old we began looking into adoption agencies. We did not feel a strong pull in that direction just yet, but we began to look into the process. Tara was still in graduate school and our plans for the future were uncertain. Shortly after looking into a few different agencies, we were surprised to be pregnant a second time and were reminded that God had different plans for our family. When Marae, our youngest child, turned one year old we began to think about adoption again. We looked at the countries where adoption was open and began the process of choosing a country and agency. This was no easy decision as we realized God's heart for each child as well as every tribe and language (Rev. 7:9) yet our task was to choose just one country. With some prayer and research He laid Ethiopia on our hearts. We then spent some time praying and searching for an agency that would allow us to adopt from Ethiopia. It was on June 6th, our wedding anniversary, that we filled out the initial adoption application form and paid the initial application fee together as a gift to each other. In the process of filling out the application, we began to reflect on our family and what God was doing through us. Steve then revealed that God had been prompting him to long for adopting a sibling group. God is so good! We are therefore anxiously awaiting a call for a referral of siblings from Ethiopia. While we wait, we read and try to prepare ourselves for what is to come knowing that we cannot prepare for everything. At the same time, we were reminded by a fellow adoptive family that God is developing us into who we each need to be before uniting us together as an adoptive family in His perfect timing. We therefore are working to develop ourselves into who God would have us be while we wait.

It excites us to take an active part in God's command to care for those who are relinquished. Though for some that looks different than others, for us, obedience to this command is a pure joy (though it will have its challenges)! God has given us the ability to love and care for children and to raise them to know the Lord. We have been blessed in many ways with faith, friends, family, church, and the love of God. We believe that God blesses so that we can bless others. We are excited to ultimately share that blessing by adopting children into our hearts, home, and life. We look forward to meeting our children and bringing them home to begin our lives together as an adoptive family! It is amazing to see how God provides. We are so grateful to Katelyn's Fund for being the hands and feet of Christ through financial support, prayer, and verbal encouragement. To have Katelyn's Fund partner with us in "making a difference one child at a time" is an encouragement and an inspiration. We are completely dependent on God to provide for us through this journey emotionally, spiritually, and financially. God is using Katelyn's Fund to answer those prayers. We are so grateful for the words and actions from others around us which have affirmed our decision to adopt.

The Harrills

John, Christa
Aysia (8), Siana (7), Elias (5), Kaiya (3)

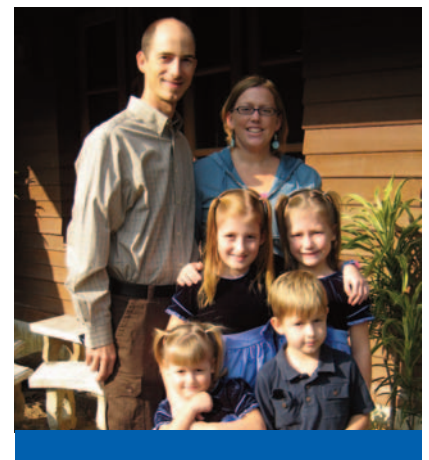
Evangelical Free Church of Conejo Valley
Newbury Park, CA

New Addition: Tobey (1)

Our family has served in China for the past 10 years. From a young age Christa had always wanted to adopt and went to China with the purpose of helping in orphanages. I had never seriously considered adoption until Christa and I started to be involved in a foster care program for Chinese orphans. Last year, we were asked by a friend to take care of a recently abandoned 9-month old baby boy. When we brought him home, our children immediately doted on him. He fit right in with the four of them. They would call him "Didi", meaning "little brother" in Chinese. They really wanted him to become a part of our family. Likewise, I began to see how I could easily become attached to a parentless child. God completely opened my heart to adoption and made me realize how easy it is to love, adore, and become attached to a child that someone else didn't want. The worries I previously had about adopting a non-biological child, who didn't look

(continued on next page)

We were reminded by a fellow adoptive family that God is developing us into who we each need to be before uniting us together as an adoptive family in His perfect timing.





Tobey Harrill

a bit like us, instantly vanished as I began to raise and nurture the child as one of my own. I could see adopting this child into our family as a very natural thing. The longer he stayed with us the easier it was to picture him being a part of our lives for the long-term. My wife and I were dumbfounded as to why someone could give up such a precious gift. We felt so privileged and blessed to take care of him. It soon became our dream for this most recent foster boy, Tobey, to become our very own son, whom we could give the love and attention he so much deserves. We look forward to teaching Tobey to know and follow God, who adopted us into his own family when we, too, were without hope.

Since our income is based on support from friends and churches, it varies month by month. We never know where the money will come from to pay for our expenses, but God has always been faithful to provide. Based on our monthly support, we realized that there was no way we could afford adoption. But, we believed God was calling us into this journey of adoption, and we chose to obediently follow him down the path. This journey has not been an easy one, though. We received a few small gifts, but the financial aid didn't start rolling in like we were hoping it would. The grant from Katelyn's Fund was a tremendous boost and helped us to see that there was "a light at the end of the tunnel". God is showing us that he will continue to provide for this adoption, but he wants us to trust him as he does it his way and in his own timing. Thank you, Katelyn's Fund, for walking with us through this journey with your prayers and financial support!

The McCallums

Jonathan, Sarah

Northview Christian Church
Danville, IN

Hello! We are Jonathan and Sarah McCallum. We have both been excited about adopting since before we met five years ago. Jonathan's from Sydney, Australia, and I'm from Indiana, U.S., and since the time we met as volunteers for a children's program in Madrid, we've married and God has increased our desire to be a family for children without a family. We are still in the paper-chasing phase, so we do not know the names or ages of our children, but we are hoping to grow our family from the two of us to include two siblings under 5 years old from Ethiopia.

Because of the volunteer nature of the work we do to see Jesus' name known around the world, it has taken quite a bit of faith for us to attempt this miracle of adoption. I, especially, have struggled with doubt about whether it will actually happen, and the Lord has been good to reassure me in several ways. Firstly, I'm married to a man of great faith who expects miracles from our powerful and loving God. Also, God has reminded me in His word that He is the Father of the fatherless and that the work He begins in us He will carry on to completion in the day of Christ Jesus. We have also seen God provide in miraculous ways--from arranging a home study facilitator to come to Nepal (where we now live) before we even asked, to providing financially, including the grant from Katelyn's Fund. We have been encouraged both in our adoption and in our faith, as we see the great I AM do abundantly more than we can ask or imagine! May you, also, be encouraged to take a step of faith today--God will do the rest!

The Benners

Dusty, Chandra
Konrad (6), Tiernan (4.5), Traeton (2.5)

Church: The Rock
Nampa, ID

Our family began its adoption journey before we were married. As a couple, we discussed having both biological children and adopting. Two years after we were married, we had our first biological son and then had 2 more sons in the next 4 years. We thought that we would have another biological child within the next 2 years. But in fall of 2008, we both became convicted that God was telling us that it was time to adopt. So, instead of becoming pregnant again, we

(continued on next page)

began the process of adopting our 4th child. We both strongly felt that God was telling us to adopt internationally and we settled on Ethiopia. We felt like God had left a special place in our hearts for a little girl. Our heart desire is to bring our daughter home and love her and let her know how much Jesus loves her!

We hit several obstacles at the beginning of the process, mainly due to finances. According to our salary, there was no way that we would be able to complete the process of adoption from Ethiopia. But God is faithful and bigger than our worldly view of money. When adoption costs came, He provided. Each step of the way, we had the money we needed to complete that step! We were completing our dossier and knew that the time was coming that we had to pay the adoption fees to our international agency in order to continue the process. Just at that time, Katelyn's Fund informed us that we were receiving a grant from them! God provided again! We stand in awe of Him and all He does.

So now we are in the waiting part of the process. We sent in our dossier in October and are now waiting for a referral. We know that God has us and our daughter in His hands. We are encouraged by Zechariah 8:6&9, "This is what the Lord Almighty says: All this may seem impossible to you now... But do you think this is impossible for ME, the Lord Almighty? ...take heart and finish the task!"

Nothing is impossible with God. We are glad that He has been walking with us in this process and cannot wait to hold our beautiful daughter in our arms. The first thing we are going to tell her is that God loves her so much and the very fact that she is in our arms is proof of that fact!

The Leachs

Weyland, Katie
Lily Grace (21 months)

Immanuel Baptist Church
Louisville, KY

Our adoption journey began six years ago. When we married, we knew that unless God performed a miracle in us, we would never be able to have biological children. We began praying for the Lord to provide children for us through adoption! We began pursuing a domestic adoption during our 3rd year of marriage, in 2007. It took a whole year just to finish our home study due to our tight finances. It was amazing to see God provide during those months! We saw that He had His perfect timing for our family!

In March 2008, we traveled to adopt our first child, a daughter! We received her in our arms, crying tears of joy and thankfulness! We named her Amber Kate. We held her in our arms five days before her birth mother changed her mind about placing Amber for adoption. As you can imagine, this was heartbreaking. We are thankful that Christ held us and our faith was strong amidst the grief of losing our daughter. We traveled back home and decided to put adoption on hold for a season to let our hearts heal as well as be available if the birthmother changed her mind again in favor of adoption.

During the next weeks, we continued to pray for Amber and God's will for our lives. God was at work through our agency! They called us a month after losing Amber, even though we did not want to be called! They said, we know you are waiting to see what happens with Amber, but we have another baby girl for you! If Amber becomes available, you can have both girls! We prayed, sought council, and agreed to receive this other baby girl into our arms! We traveled over Mother's Day weekend, May 2008, to adopt Lily Grace. It was difficult to know if we would have the same love for her as we did with Amber. We prayed for the Lord to heal our hearts as we anticipated receiving Lily, and He did! Lily

(continued on next page)



God gave us peace through the whole process that we just cannot explain.

was so beautiful, and God was so good to show His fatherly love to us in blessing us with her life!

Since then, we traveled home, showed her off, and have enjoyed the last 21 months of her exuberant life! During all these months, we have also prayed daily for Amber. That God would keep her in His hands and reveal himself to her. In June of 2009, our agency called us with news of Amber! She was possibly going up for adoption and they wondered if we were still interested! Absolutely! We rushed to get our home study updated for the court hearing that was going to be the following month. We found out then, that there would be a series of court meetings due to the nature of this particular adoption. We were not guaranteed in getting her, but we were told we had a good chance. Back home we prayed for guidance, and proceeded forward. Our finances were still "recovering" from adopting Lily, since it had been just a year. We decided to apply for grants, making our story clear, while not knowing if we'd get any support with the nature of this adoption. It is amazing how the Lord provides for His children! We are humbled to be a grant recipient of Katelyn's Fund! We feel as if we don't deserve it, but we are also comforted to know God is at work for us through so many other means! We don't know how long the road is ahead of us, we pray not much longer. Amber is 22 months old and is currently in foster care. We trust in the Lord, no matter the outcome. And no matter the outcome, we pray He will bless us with another child, whether that be Amber, or another orphan.

The Voses

Brad, Stephanie

**CrossWay Church
Vancouver, WA**

New Addition: Anika (3 months)

Hello! We are Brad and Stephanie Vos. We were married in summer of 2006. We are currently living in Vancouver, WA. Brad is a pastor and we are planting a new church called CrossWay Church. We have known from the beginning of our marriage that we would build our family through the miracle of adoption. We chose to wait several years to start the adoption process, as we were both finishing up school.

In March of 2009 we began the adoption process through Bethany Christian Services. Over the Spring and Summer we worked to complete all the necessary steps and paperwork for the domestic infant program. By the end of August we had everything complete and we were officially on the waiting list, 10 days later we got a call from our social worker that we had been chosen by a birth mom to be the parents of her baby girl who was due to be born in November. A couple of weeks later we got the opportunity to meet our daughter's birth mom. Upon meeting her we were struck with the fact that she was choosing life for her baby, and choosing to give this baby girl the kind of life and future she wouldn't be able to provide. Her main motivation was love! What an unselfish gift to both us, and to this baby girl!

Mid-November 2009 our daughter, Anika Grace, was born. We were able to be there at the hospital and took her home two days later. We are so blessed by her. She is a beautiful, healthy, happy girl. Her smile is the highlight of our days, and we couldn't imagine life without her.

Katelyn's Fund has blessed our family immensely through the financial grant we received. It has eased the financial burden that comes with adoption, which is a huge blessing to us as we raise a good portion of our salary through personal supporters. We thank God for using Katelyn's Fund to help us to fulfill our dream of starting our family. We thank you for supporting Katelyn's Fund!



Anika Vos

The Barbers

**Chris, Christy
Drew (3)**

**Central Baptist Church
Sioux City, IA**

New Addition: Kati (5 months)

We have been married for 8 years and have a 3-year-old son, Drew, who we adopted as an infant and a 5-month-old daughter, Kati, who we also adopted as an infant. They are such blessings to us and it has been amazing to see how God has worked to bring each of them into our lives and our family!

In the spring of 2004 we were told that our chances of having children were slim without medical intervention. We went that route and throughout the course of three failed procedures, God was working on our hearts and turning us toward adoption. Neither of us really had any connection to adoption prior to our own, so we didn't know much about it. After our third failed procedure in May 2005 we decided to start looking into adoption. By November, we had found an agency we liked and decided to go to their informational meeting that month. We both left the meeting knowing that this was what God wanted us to do! We got started on the paperwork right away and were ready and waiting by February 2006. Four short months later, in June 2006, we were packing to go on vacation when our phone rang. Our social worker told us that a baby boy had been born that morning and we had been chosen to be his parents. Two days later we met our son and brought him home!

In the summer of 2008 we began to feel God leading us to adopt again. The road to Kati was a little longer and a little bumpier than Drew's was, but she is so worth it! This time, we were on one income. Christy quit her job when Drew was born to stay home with him, so it was a lot tougher to pull the finances together. We knew God would provide, as He did with Drew and we also knew that this was His plan and He already had the details worked out. There were times that we started to question whether or not we should be doing this or if this was the right match for us, and every time He gave us the reassurance that it was. In fact, when we got the call that we were being considered for this baby girl, we both just had a feeling that she would be ours. God gave us a peace through the whole process that we just cannot explain. Our social worker gave us some information about Katelyn's Fund and we decided to apply for their grant. We were so excited when they called to let us know that we had been selected as a grant recipient! Kati was born with an esophageal defect and spent two and a half weeks in the NICU after she was born. The grant took away the stress of figuring out how to pay the remaining expenses and let us focus on our baby girl. It was also really comforting to know that everyone at Katelyn's Fund was praying for us.



Kati Barber

The Robertsons

**Chad, Erica
Meriah (10), Bryce (8) and Colin (8)**

**Carmel Reformed Church
Carmel, IA**

New addition: Aniya

After the birth of our twins, we thought our family was complete, but a few years ago, God began working in Chad's heart to adopt. Erica thought he was crazy, but over time she also began to feel God leading her in that direction. On Thanksgiving Day, 2008, we sat down with our children and discussed the possibility of adopting and what that would mean for our family. With them excited about adding to our family, we began the application process the following week. We originally planned to adopt internationally until it seemed God was closing those doors and we



(continued on next page)



Aniya Robertson

eventually learned of the increasing need for parents to domestically adopt African American and bi-racial children. We knew this was what we were meant to do.

Near the end of October, 2009, our social worker informed us that we had been chosen by a couple in Iowa for the placement of their baby. She was due on November 24 so that gave us time to prepare, mentally and physically, and it also gave us enough time to have the privilege of meeting the couple. Aniya Mari Lynn was born on Friday, November 20, 2009. She was welcomed into our home two days later by Meriah (10), Bryce (8) and Colin (8).

The entire adoption journey was, and continues to be, an incredible faith-building experience. Through it all, God continually reminded us that He was in control and He had it all worked out. We are overwhelmed by the perfect details of His plan and His goodness. Katelyn's Fund has been an integral part of this journey and another "detail" God had in place. We were blessed not only by the grant, but also through the informational meetings, encouragement from members and prayer support. We are thankful to have an incredible support network so close to home!

The Couchs

**Montie, Sallee
Adeline (16), Madeline (16), Gabriel (11), Esther (4), Solomon (3)**

**Zion Presbyterian Church,
Columbia, TN**

I am Montie Couch and I write to tell you a little about our family journey. My wife and I are approaching our 20 year wedding anniversary this March! We are very blessed with five children. We have twin daughters who are 16 years old, a son 11 years, a daughter 4 years, and our little son just a few days shy of 3 years old.

My wife and I thought we had the perfect family after our third child was born, but God told us we were not complete yet! We adopted little Esther in 2006 and she has been such a joy and brought so much energy into our lives. Once again we thought we were complete, yet God had plans that took us down the journey of adopting again. Solomon joined our Couch family in 2008 and we cannot imagine family life without him. We now realize that despite the plans we make regarding what our family should look like, God is in control and we faithfully follow His guidance.

We are now in the process of adopting number six. Our dossier is in Ethiopia and now we wait for our referral of the child God has for our family. We have requested a child of either gender that is between ages 0-24 months. We are praying and knowing that God will again provide every penny for this adoption. The initial costs of bringing our child home is overwhelming, but as with our 2 previous adoptions, we are confident that the Lord will provide. We were blessed incredibly to see God's hand throughout the entire process with both Esther and Solomon. We are so very grateful to Katelyn's Fund for their generous grant given towards our adoption. We were also very blessed by the time they spent in prayer with us during our phone interview. They have continued keeping in touch to pray with us as specific requests arise, and we so appreciate this.

There is always room for one more, not only in our home, but in our hearts! We seek to raise our children to love and serve Christ with their lives. We do realize that to many in this world, we seem strange if not out of our minds. And to that I say "yes", we are strange to this world for this is not our home and this life is not mine... it is a life of service to our Savior

The Barnetts

Tim, Carolyn
Connor (8), Ethan (6), Bella (5)

Sunrise Church of the Nazarene
South Point, OH

New Addition: Ling (12)

We are the Barnett family and we have an interesting story that Tim and I (Carolyn) never would've imagined would be written about our lives.

We met at church, and dated for quite a while before we were married in 1997. Our first son, Connor, was born in 2001. We then had Ethan in 2003, and that is when things really got interesting. Ethan was born with a genetic disorder called Albinism, which is to say he is Albino. We did a lot of research and a tremendous amount of praying for him and for our family after his diagnosis. We know that Ethan was given to us specifically for a reason, and at the time of his birth, we had no idea what God had in store for us.

A short time after Ethan's birth, Tim started mentioning adoption, something he had on his heart for quite some time but I had never really considered. But after much prayer and discussion, we began to feel that God had given us Ethan and his condition for a reason. We felt that this reason was that He wanted us to help another child with this condition that might not otherwise receive any type of help or treatment. With God's guidance, we started looking at different adoption agencies and gathering all the information we could. We continued to pray for God to show us His will for our lives, and through His faithfulness, He did. This has been shown to us time and time again as we then began to complete the mountain of paperwork and cover the entire adoption process with prayer. We felt led to adopt from China, and after awhile, were directed to a beautiful little girl named Bella who resided in a special needs foster home. Bella also had Albinism.

Throughout the process, we trusted God to bring about the necessary finances to bring Bella home and we are forever grateful that He did. Bella came home in July, of 2007 and has blessed our home from day one. It has now been approximately two and a half years, and once again we feel God's hand leading us to adopt another child with Albinism from China. We are in the process of adopting a 12 year old girl named Ling that also has Albinism. We hope to bring her home sometime between April and June of 2010.

Again, we were faced with the financial hurdle of adoption. We applied to Katelyn's Fund and have been tremendously blessed to have been awarded a grant to help bring Ling home. If it wasn't for organizations like Katelyn's Fund and its volunteers, I believe there would be many more children still left in the orphanages waiting on a family. Katelyn's Fund has been such a blessing in our lives and we could never express the deep appreciation and thankfulness for their following God's will by blessing our family and others in helping relieve the financial burdens of bringing these beautiful children into Christian homes.

I know that God has a bigger plan for our family, a plan bigger and better than we could ever dream. Both adoptions have made us more open to following His will and have shown us that we need to lean more on faith than on our own plans. We have witnessed God's faithfulness and we know that He will never lead us where He hasn't already been. Thank you Katelyn's Fund for your generosity and faithful stewardship!



Ling Barnett

We have witnessed God's faithfulness and we know that He will never lead us where He hasn't already been.

The Thompsons

Luke, Jennifer
Malachi (2)

Sovereign Grace Fellowship
Bloomington, MN

New Addition: Nerea (6 weeks)

My wife and I have wanted to adopt since I can remember beginning to discuss having children. We have always loved adoption for a number of reasons. One of the primary reasons is our mutual sadness over the atrocity of abortion. Our desire is to care for the babies of mothers that will not – for whatever reason – be parenting their children but have chosen to spare their lives. We know that we cannot personally care for all of the little ones whose mothers choose life for them, but we wholeheartedly hope to add a few of them to our family and love them as our own.

The Bible calls us to care for orphans, and we felt much joy as we were embarking on that journey. We knew it would be our pleasure to honor the birth mother's wishes of giving her child a stable and happy life marked with unconditional love.

As we mentioned above, our Christian faith compels us to adopt. The Bible says that children are a blessing from God, and we feel the love and care that parents feel for their children is a reflection of the love that God has for all His own children. A love and a redemption that weren't ours have been given to us. At one time, we were opposed to God, his enemies, and children of wrath. But now through unbelievable mercy, we are not only forgiven by God, but also are His very own children and co-heirs with Jesus Christ. This is the greatest truth that the world has ever known— and adoption is representative of it.

We also especially love adoption that leads to multi-colored families, because it is a picture of Heaven. Heaven will be filled with all nations, tribes, and every people group that has ever lived on the face of the earth. Therefore, as our heavenly family is multi-colored, I would love for my earthly family to look like my heavenly one.

I also look forward to great teaching opportunities within our own family unit. I greatly look forward to telling my children about adoption and why we chose to adopt. I will be genuinely excited to have a conversation with children about why they look different than each other. I daydream about ways to share the Gospel with my children in the future. This will be a great, simple way to do it.

However, in spite of these strong convictions and passion for adoption, we had always felt overwhelmed by the cost of adoption and amount of paperwork associated with it, and so until earlier this past year, adoption was something we had planned to do "later" (later when we had the money, later when Jen finished school, later when we happened to stumble across a birth mom on our own, etc.). However, we decided that nothing in the future is a guarantee, and now was the time to take the leap of faith.

Since the cost of adoption was one of the biggest hindrances to our adoption, the grant we received from Katelyn's Fund was a huge answer to prayer. It was one of the big ways God provided for us. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights..." (James 2:17) Adoption definitely has a cost, but one that is well worth the price.

Our adoption experience has been a blessed one, although not without trial. In our first match, our birth mother dropped off the radar. This was a frustrating experience. We were excited and ready for our new baby boy, and one day the birth mother missed a conference call. After a few days passed, the agency called and informed us that this



Nerea Thompson

thing can happen occasionally. We were now not matched. However, we were on the top of their list for new placements.

The next day, a situation with a new birth mother arose and within six hours, we were re-matched and driving to the state where our birth mother was planning to deliver her baby GIRL in a couple days! It's amazing how God's plan is sure, even though our lives can seem so random and alternating.

Our trip to the state where our daughter was born was not without complication. During our trip:

- Our son and I both got pneumonia while waiting for our sister/daughter's release from the hospital.
- Our daughter was diagnosed with pneumonia after birth. (However, God healed her and she was cleared to leave the next day!)
- We were confined to our hotel for the majority of the trip and didn't get to experience much of the place where we were visiting.

However, through all this process, God was good. We lived through the illnesses. We got to meet our daughter's wonderful, loving birthmother. Our beautiful, baby girl was healthy and released from the hospital. The paperwork went through without complication. And we are now back at home, enjoying our sweet baby girl. Praise God from whom all blessings flow! And thank you to Katelyn's Fund for the financial support AND the prayer support!

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights..."

(James 2:17)

Adoption definitely has a cost, but one that is well worth the price.

Adoption Support

by Amy Van Es

I recently had a conversation with an adoptive dad. He stated that he feels it's often counter-productive for adoptive parents to involve themselves in adoption groups. He believes these groups encourage parents to treat their sons and daughters as their adopted children, rather than simply as their children. He may have a point. There is a tendency within the adoption community to analyze and consider every emotion or behavior of our children solely within the context of adoption, neglecting to realize that they are so much more than their adoption stories.

Just as our children are so much more than their adoption stories, however, an adoption network can be so much more than passively listening to a speaker. The world of adoption is often complicated and intimidating, and having others to answer questions, or empathize with challenges, can be such a blessing. Rich friendships develop – initiated largely because of a shared interest or involvement in adoption, and evolving into much more. Sometimes we involve ourselves not for our own benefit, but to be a support and encouragement to those going down a path we've already traveled. At times the value may simply be hearing about other countries and people outside of the Midwest, enabling us to pass on a broader worldview to our children. Beyond all this, however, remains the simple fact of God's promise, that where two or three are gathered, there He will be also. (Matt 18:20)

When we began planning for Katelyn's Fund support meetings in Sioux Falls, there were many unknowns. Was there a need for this in the Sioux Falls area? Who would be involved? Where would we meet? Would anyone show up? God faithfully provided answers to our questions, and after years of prayer and months of planning, Katelyn's Fund held its first Sioux Falls support meeting on January 21. True to form this winter, the weather was cold and windy, blowing snow around and making travel treacherous. The warmth of the meeting more than made up for the frigid conditions, however, as we were blessed to hear Mike and Kim Adams share their Ethiopian adoption journey, and witness firsthand their obedience to God and to His timing. It was also a great night to share the vision of Katelyn's Fund, and provided a forum for people with differing adoption plans and interests to come together.

We are excited to see what God has in store for Katelyn's Fund – Sioux Falls. We meet the third Thursday of every month at Prairie Hills Covenant Church, which is on the east side of the city. Please check the Katelyn's Fund website for our meeting schedule, and pass the word along to your friends and neighbors. You don't need to be an adoptive parent or be in-process to attend. We welcome anyone with a heart for orphans or an interest in adoption – whatever that may look like!

God Has Worked Through People's Generous and Creative Giving to Katelyn's Fund

We have been honored to be the recipients of several fun and creative ways that others have felt God leading them to give to Katelyn's Fund. We are so grateful for their caring and servant hearts, striving to make an impact for Him and to help provide the opportunity for a child to know Him. We are dependent on Him for provisions for the ministry and trust He will work through many others so we can continue to bless families and children.

"Since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving."
Colossians 3:23-25



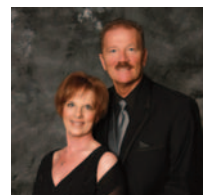
Becky Bilby

Becky Bilby – is working on blog designs to raise funds for the ministry. What a gift to others through her creative work but also for the ministry to bring awareness to the fund.

Carey Borchers – hosted several "Ladies Night's In" to bring awareness and fundraising for Katelyn's Fund. This was a wonderful fundraiser for the ministry and also a night for fellowship and fun for many ladies.

Jayne and Bruce Rosenboom – raised money for Katelyn's Fund by having a garage sale at their home. God blessed this event and not only was this a great way to support other families with funds, it also was a chance to share information about the ministry and orphan care.

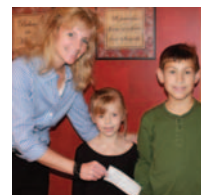
Van Es family – the children in the Van Es family assembled a lemonade stand to raise money and awareness for Katelyn's Fund. They served together and provided a way help other children.



Jayne and Bruce Rosenboom



Carey Borchers and Sheila De Jong



Ty and Elisabeth Van Es and Sheila De Jong



Van Es family and friends

Special Thanks to our Honorary Donors

Creston Hoekstra
in honor of Elijah Kaleb
son of Tim and Rachael
Vande Hoef

Karl and Gloria Kempers
in honor of their grandson
Aiden Gerrit
on his 2nd birthday

Barry and Lora Brandt
in honor of Cora Jael
daughter of Lyle and Jill Schut

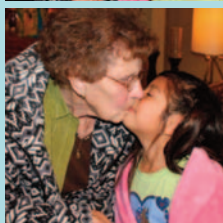
Gary Fedders
in honor of grandchildren
Ethan and Ava
children of Steve and
Pat Sandbulte

Steve and Pat Sandbulte
in honor of their children
Ethan and Ava

John and Judy Van Wyk
in honor of Saron
daughter of Jason and
Sarah Van Wyk

Loved One's of Tillie Van Voorst Kelly and Sheila's grandma

In loving memory of our mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and friend we will miss you in our lives and are grateful for the faith legacy you have left us. We are thankful to grandma for choosing Katelyn's Fund for her memorial gifts. We are grateful to each one of you who have given a gift to honor Till and what that will mean in the life of a child.



To make an honorary donation, please see the mailing address and information below.

Katelyn's Fund ~ Orphan Ministry
1327 Third Ave SE, Sioux Center, IA 51250

All donations are tax deductible. If you would like to make an honorary donation, please indicate the child/family in honor or in memory of.

Katelyn's Fund
ORPHAN MINISTRY

FAMILY FUN NIGHT

Saturday, March 27 - 5:30 pm
First Reformed Church,
Sioux Center,
Youth Family Life Center
Cost - \$4.00/person

RSVP to daletam@mtcnet.net
or 712-722-4592 by March 24

Katelyn's Fund T-Shirts and Calendars FOR SALE!

T-shirts available in a wide range of sizes ~
Child 2T to Adult 2X.
Cost is \$15
(\$20 for Adult 2X, additional \$3.00 for shipping)

Calendar Cost is \$20
(Additional \$3.00 for shipping)



Front



If you are interested in purchasing a T-shirt or calendar to help support the ministry, please email support@katelynsfund.org.