



His eye is on you, as you put your eyes on Him

written by: Sheila De Jong ~ President

As I was praying a few weeks ago, I heard Holy Spirit say, my eye is on them, my eye is on him, my eye is on you. Continue to pray boldly for Haiti, families, that He shields and shepherds, provides and protects, that He outstretches His mighty arm and opens covering under the feathers of His wings. Things have been even more turbulent and dangerous in Haiti, the gangs have been very destructive, there continues to be many challenges with safety, shortages of food, and overall uncertainty. So much need for the Lord. Please continue to pray with us, for His protection over all our Haitian family within care, all of the staff and teachers, that He will be more known, that He will show His tender mercy and mighty power. That they have security in knowing - His eye is on them.



I love the change of seasons, the spring buds and the hope of things ahead, dusting off of the cold winter and experiencing the warm weather, the birds returning and starting to make nests, picturing new life here and ahead. As we seek the Father's heart for Haiti, for families, and children, He spoke to me about His care for us, that He understands the vulnerability and says we are valuable to Him, He desires for us to be seen, known, to know our security, to grow in strength and in skill, all along the way, helping us to look to Him.

Bird parenting seems instinctual and yet complex, seems there are many styles among the bird populations, interesting patterns, and uniqueness in their methods. Interesting to see birds learning from those before them, the ways they were taught, things that they observe. There is a commonality that young birds, are quite vulnerable to many things around them, many things put them in danger, and they need support to weather these, from their parents and skills to help them. His eye is on them.

The same is true for us as parents, as shepherds to those in our care. We have different methods and styles, but the commonality, seeking to give care, love, support, and training to our vulnerable ones, little and big. We look to Him, to those generations ahead, those that we have observed, that we have watched and some that have watched over us. Our Father in heaven, always watches us, always asks

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for our eyes to look to Him, to see Him. I love the picture of baby birds with their mouths open wide – waiting – hoping – expecting to be feed and filled. As a mother bird is caring for her young, she is watching, meeting needs, preparing and equipping. Her eyes are on the lookout, protective, she nudges and prompts, gives food and shelter. Are we in those places of desperation opening our mouths up wide to receive straight from His mouth to ours? Are we keeping our eyes on Him, secure in His presence (nest) as His eye is on us.

Psalms 84 is a precious Psalm of seeking and security, of looking and finding rest. Psalm 84:3 says: “Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow builds her nest and raises her young at a place near your altar, O LORD of Heaven’s Armies, my King and my God!” Wow, that is such a powerful verse about the best thing for us to do in parenting, fostering, shepherding—build a nest for your young, in His presence, near Him, lay things before the alter, trusting in the King of Heaven’s armies. Care for your young by watching out for them, meeting their needs, giving them food, but even more bring them to Him so He can provide, He cares for us as we care for them.

In Matthew, there are instructions about treasures in Heaven, not things here, instruction to not worry, that He cares for the sparrow and for us. Matthew 6:26 say, “Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?” How wise and kind our Father is, He cares for us, provides for us, assures us not to worry about storing things up, planning things too far ahead, or being too anxious about figuring everything out that seems like too much. He gives a place to find refuge, to come under His feathers, in His care, Psalm 91.

As we are preparing nests, waiting for children, building nests, launching from the nest, or trying so hard to maintain nests with so many needs, like Haiti, He is with us. He is over us, He is in the needles and the loudness, in what might seem chaotic, combative, and confusing. He sees the difficulties, the struggles, the deep loses. He asks us to continue to trust in Him, to be steadfast in waiting, in hoping, expecting to be feed and filled, keeping our eyes on Him. He sees us, He draws us in near Him, He helps us bring little and big ones to Him, He lifts our eyes to Him, He provides and protects, He is faithful to us just as He is to the sparrow. A powerful song, written by Civilia D. Martin, in 1905, is called “His eye is on the Sparrow.” Be reminded today, His eye is on you, as you put your eyes on Him.

Please Pray with and for us that:

- ~ That He continues to show His faithfulness over families and children.
- ~ He prompts and presses on the church to rise up to speak up for the orphan and take action, to not draw back.
- ~ Encouragement for the weariness of the season over families, leaders, ministries.
- ~ That Father continues to bring needed provision in this uncertain season, showing He has and owns all things.
- ~ Safety, protection, and healing over families, children, One Vision Orphanage.

- ~ That the Lord will confuse those who mean to do evil and protect those that are doing good.
- ~ He uses this time to bring many to know and call upon Him, new salvation testimonies in Jesus name.
- ~ We walk in identity in Him, not of the world, and being rooted in Him, gives security and peace.



SCAN ME

We would love to pray with you! Scan this QR Code and send your prayer requests confidentially to our prayer team.

One Vision Haiti Update

written by: Teresa Dekkers, Haiti Sponsorship Coordinator

Feeling Disconnected.....

Do you remember a few years ago what seemed like, overnight, we were disconnected from seeing and being in close contact with people we loved? From the people that supported us and walked with us through hard and joyful times. We were asked to be removed to remain safe but to be safe we also felt disconnected. For a couple of years, we have been telling you all about the hardships of life in Haiti and the hardships of walking with people we love in Haiti. The hardship for many of us has been that we have felt disconnected from the children, staff, and leaders of One Vision. We have felt disconnected because we have not been able to travel due to increased violence. The last time we had a team there was over three and half years ago.....that is a long time.....a long time to not see people you love. A long time to not see them face to face and remind them how much we care for them and that we are there for them.

We have heard that supporters of Katelyn's Fund and One Vision might feel disconnected and maybe not updated. We sympathize and hear you. We desire transparency and connection with all of you. We want to share all the information that we are able to but we also deeply desire to help keep the 76 kids we partner with safe. We deeply desire to keep the leader and staff safe. We were informed that a school in Haiti which is connected to the Midwest, had several people who died in all of this with the gangs. A ministry, which empowers and employs Haitian people, also founded and led by a North American recently had to move their manager out of Haiti into a nearby country to remain safe. There is much danger, destruction, separation, suffering, and even death. So while we desire to keep you fully updated on life at the orphanage we also do not want to put the director, the staff, or the children at risk with the violence. The violence has gotten closer to them and the danger is real. The threat of running out of food soon (like by the end of May) is real. The fear of violence and potential loss of life while traveling to or from the orphanage to get food or any supplies is very real.

Please know we are sharing what we can to keep you all informed and engaged while keeping our loved ones safe. Please know we are so grateful for you. Please continue to press in and pray. We ask that you join us in seeking the Lord's will and His protection for the children, the staff, and the leader of OV. Plead the case of the orphan and the fatherless to the Father who loves and sees us all. We know that He desires the hearts of both the orphan and the gang member. He wants us all kneeling before His throne. While you pray for protection for the innocent, pray also for hearts to be softened and changed to see the Father.

His Eye is on the Sparrow

Civilla D. Martin, 1905

Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come,
Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heav'n and home,
When Jesus is my portion? My constant Friend is He:
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

Refrain:

I sing because I'm happy, I sing because I'm free,
For His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

"Let not your heart be troubled," His tender word I hear,
And resting on His goodness, I lose my doubts and fears;
Though by the path He leadeth, but one step I may see;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.
Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,
When songs give place to sighing, when hope within me dies,
I draw the closer to Him, from care He sets me free;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

Did you know Katelyn's Fund gives 6 - 8 grants to hopeful adoptive families each month? Did you also know YOU can be a part of helping families overcome the financial barriers of being together? 100% of every generous donation goes back to serving and supporting foster and adoptive families.

→ Check out these testimonies from recent grant recipients! ←

The Gabhart Family

Michael and Brittany Adopting Domestically



The process of adoption requires that we step out in faith and be stretched in ways that are very much out of our comfort zone. As we go about this journey, we will walk by faith. And trusting in God one day at a time knowing that whatever happens He is in control. This may not always look perfect because we are broken people in need of His grace daily. But it is our goal to follow His lead in this process. We have not yet been matched with the future expectant mama whom we will share the rest of our lives with, but we have been praying for her daily.

The team at "Katelyn's Fund" has been an incredible blessing for us in this process. Not only have they supported us financially to bring our future child home, but they haven't stopped praying for our family. The first time we met with their amazing team, we were prayed over in a way that we never had been before. It left us in tears, feeling so encouraged, and in awe of how much God was working through their ministry. We truly felt a weight lifted off our shoulders and were reminded of how vast and deep God's love is for us, our son, and our future child. The adoption process is hard. We never understood how hard until we were in the midst of it. The people in this ministry understand the heartache, waiting, loss, struggle, and sacrifices that come with this process and are there with you, praying with you, pointing you to God's goodness, and loving you through it. We can't even put into words how thankful we are to have been connected with this amazing ministry who's passion is for Jesus and glorifying Him in all aspects of the adoption process.

We have seen God work in teaching us how to wait "well" and how vast His grace is when we fail at this and how He is actively transforming our hearts in this process. Overall, this process has led us to fully depend on God and lean into intentional prayer through all of the details. Adoption is a process of complete surrender, which is what God wants us to do with our entire lives, surrender and TRUST him.

Our deepest desire for our children is for them to love Jesus and know of His love for them. We pray for their salvation, and complete dependence and obedience to God. We pray they grow to live a life that points others to how amazing our God is. We pray that through us, they would feel and know of God's love for them.

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The Door Family

Jason and Katie

Adopted Domestically



We were called on 2/8/23 and asked to be an interim family for a baby boy born 2/6/23. We had him for two weeks, while having him Katie got to build a relationship with the birth mom through text sending her pictures everyday. The Birth family was shown profiles but just kept thinking how much they really liked us and the interim family. They asked their social worker if it's possible to have the baby stay with the interim family forever and they said "yes". We were so excited we not only got the first few weeks with him but that He was ours!!!

We have seen God uniquely work in this process! We weren't even shown as an option to the birth parents but God some how still made his plan happen. We have prayed that God would open doors no man could shut and that he would close doors no man could open. And Praise the Lord he did.

Talking with the birth parents in person was a very humbling experience for Jason and I. When we look back over the year 1/2 it took of waiting we have realized that God is going to do what He wants and it is always very good.

Our deepest desire for our children is to know Jesus and to become fully devoted followers of Christ. We believe everything else will line up under that.

The Miller Family

Christian and Megan

Adopted Internationally



After adopting two of our daughters from Ukraine, our heart set out to adopt another child from there. With the current conflict we were unable to do so and the progress that we had been making, was all for nothing. Realizing that we were unable to adopt the little boy that we had chosen in Ukraine was heart breaking, and left us with a feeling that we were not actually called to adopt any more. Within days, another little boy in a different country came available. We prayed, and immediately God told us to seek after him. We submitted out application and after a week of deliberations, we were selected as the family to bring him home! It was an incredible moment that truly showed us what God wanted for our growing family. As a result of the previous adoption, we had lost thousands of dollars due to not being able to continue our Ukrainian adoption. Katelyn's Fund has played a role in helping us continue to fund to bring our son home. We are, and will forever be grateful for the caring compassion your foundation has for the

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the orphans of this world, supporting us to bring a child of God home. When we thought that there was no longer a chance for us to adopt, God showed us yet again that His timing is not OUR timing. This has been a consistent principle that God has continually shown us.

God has taught us through adoption that despite what WE want, country, child, that there will always be a child that needs to be shown love from a family. Adoption has been one of the greatest blessings that we have ever been allowed to be a part of. The love that our daughters have shown us, and we have shown them has changed our lives forever.

The Bendorf Family

Nate and Sarah Adopting Internationally



There has been a lot of family prayer, conversation and discernment that has led to the decision to adopt. What ultimately led us to this decision is our faith in Jesus Christ. We truly believe that in this decision we are following God's guidance and will with our actions and decisions. We feel God has equipped us, prepared us, and opened our hearts, minds and lives to adoption. We feel that as a family, we have the capacity and love to raise another child(ren)/sister.

This decision has actually been a long time coming. As far back as we can remember, anything to do with the global world has always intrigued all of us. Shortly after our marriage more than 15 years ago, adoption was a subject we do recall conversing about more than once, in some form or fashion. As many families do, we struggled with infertility, and then going through the heart-break of a miscarriage. Going through those struggles was agonizing, but truly grew our faith and dependence on God and gave us a respect for life. We also believe that our biological daughter is a miracle (and definitely one-of-a-kind)! Amidst those years of highs and lows, adoption was something God was leading us towards. One of the biggest obstacles was timing. We will be the first to tell you, there is never a perfect time - for a lot of big decisions in life. We are guessing that most of us, at some point in our lives or even now, put off doing things we feel called to do because of not feeling equipped, ready or waiting for that 'perfect time'. Obviously, timing is important, but maybe a better question to ask is, 'Why not now'? And 'Why not us'? In obedience to God's calling, we are excited to adopt!

One of the most powerful things we have done as a family is to pray for and discuss with others, like "Katelyn's Fund", our adopted child(ren), whom we have not even met. To pray for her safety and wellness and asking God to prepare all of us to meet and become a forever family. We know that we will not be perfect parents. We know that the process of adoption will not go perfect. We know that at times we will disappoint our child(ren). We know that we will fall short of meeting all the expectations of our children.

Yet, amidst all of this, we can promise certain things. Because God first promised to us! Thus, we promise to always love, because God loved us first (1 John 4:8-10), to always be present, because God is always with us (Psalm 23:4) and to always serve, because God first served (Philippians 2:1-8). This we promise, may God so help us!

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The Verwolf Family

Brian and Rachel Adopting Domestically



After being married for 4 years we moved to Chicago, Illinois for a job-change. Immediately after moving we had our first child, a daughter (biological). When she became a year old, we started the adoption process for the first time. We adopted our second child, a son, after waiting for over a year. And just 6-months later we welcomed another son to our family (biological). Week later we moved back to Iowa.

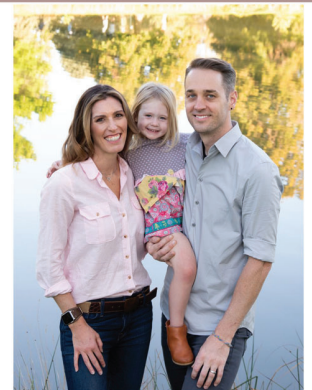
We feel so blessed to be growing our family in this way! From a young age, we both had a desire to have a big family. When Rachel was 12 years old her family adopted a sister from China, and three years later they adopted another sister from China. Rachel's experience growing up with 3 biological siblings and 2 adopted siblings spurred our own desire to adopt alongside having biological children. Now with 3 children (2 biological and 1 adopted), we feel called to adopt again. We think it is important for our adopted child to have a brother or sister who also has a different birth family.

It is no secret. Adoption is complex! Katelyn's Fund has served our family and countless other families by sharing resources, providing educational opportunities, offering a support community, and assisting with financial grants. Our family recently received a grant for our second adoption, and we couldn't be more grateful for their prayer and financial aid.

We interviewed with Katelyn's Fund Board of Directors after applying for an adoption grant. The interview was spirit-led. We prayed and shared stories, and it was such a blessing to us. 2 weeks later we learned that we would be the recipients of a financial grant. Praise God! Just 1-day after that, we got a call from our social worker letting us know that a birth mom wanted us to parent their child.

The Maxwell Family

James and Hilary Adopting Domestically



On one of our first dates, we shared our individual desires to adopt. After marrying, we prayed over the timing for when we would engage in the adoption journey. After 4.5 years of fertility treatments & challenges, we began to pray about beginning the adoption process. Soon after, we were gifted with a child. Knowing we wanted to have more and wanted to adopt, we felt this was the right time to begin our journey toward adopting and welcoming another sweet

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child into our home. God was opening the door for us in the fall of 2022. With months of prayer, we selected our adoption agency, submitted our application and began to watch God work. The desire to adopt is not for the faint of heart as there is so much effort, prayer, waiting, patience, and trust for Gods will to be done to bring us the little child we are to love and raise. We also turn to God for the logistics, including the finances associated with adoption.

Katelyn's Fund will alleviate some of the financial pressures with the ongoing fees associated with adoption as we walk along this journey. Being invited to be apart of Katelyn's Fund allows us to keep our focus on the child God has for us and confirms God's presence and power in our journey. We continue to pray for God to make our path clear and discern what honors God as we submit each piece of paperwork. We received our referral for our daughter two weeks before we were invited to be a recipient of Katelyn's Fund only confirming we are supported by the Lord on this journey and we pray we can remain obedient to God's calling in our life.

From the moment we submitted our initial application to our agency, we feel God has blown the doors wide open. Our initial in person meeting was scheduled three days after our interest submission, which landed on the day of our pre-schedule date night when we had childcare. The first step was a homestudy and we were able to schedule all three visits within 6 weeks and the psych evaluation which usually takes months to schedule occurred within a month from start to finish because of a connection to a Counseling professor at the local seminary. Our homestudy was submitted to India's adoption office (CARA/Carings) and it was approved one week shy of the quoted timeframe (3 months). Our original meeting with Katelyn's Fund was during the period we were waiting for approval and rescheduled for five days after we received approval and our referral for our daughter. Although the piles of paperwork were not easy, it feels as though God is guiding every step of the way, just asking us to trust him with his will and his timing.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Mom's Day Out

JULY 18



Katelyn's Fund
Annual Picnic

AUGUST 8



Katelyn's Fund
Support Begins

SEPT. 14



Katelyn's Fund
Annual Auction

NOV. 3



Katelyn's Fund
Orphan Sunday

NOV. 12

More information available at www.katelynsfund.org



Support Community Information

written by: Tammy Zevenbergen ~ Board Member

Our Adoption and Foster Support meetings have come to an end for '22-'23. We had another year of encouraging and walking together as we learned from our speakers each month. We are so thankful for each speaker who came and gave of their time to share their stories, and also tools and ideas, with our families. Parenting can be challenging, no matter how God brings our children into our families so the monthly meetings are encouraging in so many ways. If you are a parent, grandparent, teacher or support person to a child(ren) come join us in the fall to enjoy community but also gain tools as we “train up our children in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

Here is a quick summary of our speakers this year.

Loren De Jong shared some parenting strategies but he said the ultimate goal as Christian parents is to point our children to Christ (Isaiah 61:1-3). He reminded us that not all days will be filled with happiness; however, all days can be filled with the joy of the Lord. He encourages us to stay rooted in the Scriptures, always searching for WHO God is. (Isaiah 40).

In October, we went to Shari's Family Visitation & Exchange Center to learn about the center and also hear from Mindy Loushcer, a DHS case manager. She is passionate about keeping children safe and educating parents. She considers it an honor to pray for each of the kids on her caseload.

Helping children is Marty Wallace's passion and God's calling for his life. Marty shared various types of therapies that are available to children who have experienced trauma, including Theraplay, Filial Therapy, CBT (Cognitive Behavior Therapy), EMDR, and Neurofeedback.

Martha Draayer and Dr. Valeria Stokes encouraged us to have conversations about race with our children at an early age. Coping strategies for children who have experienced traumatic racial events could include: journaling, talking through the incident and time-lining it, powering off from triggering social media, connecting with others who understand, and having a voice and becoming an advocate. Above all, they highlighted our need to develop our children's identity in Christ and what His plan is for their lives.

As parents, we must be mindful of our own health needs so that we can be equipped to care for our kids. Darcie Van Voorst, who specializes in body based therapy, shared strategies to help us regulate our nervous system. These strategies can have a healing impact on our mental, emotional, and physical health. Darcie has put together 9 videos where she teaches activities that help calm our body and reduce stress and anxiety levels in parents and children. You can find the videos on our Katelyn's Fund Support Facebook page here: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/882121845564990>. She also emphasized the positive impact that Omega-3, probiotics, vitamins, movement and bright light therapy (10,000 lux) can have on our health.

In March, we had the honor of hearing Danny and Kansas Fergen's beautiful story of how God put their family of 8 together, 4 biological and 4 adopted children. They have witnessed God's faithfulness in the ways He used their biological children to play an important role in the attachment of each adoption. As their family grew they saw God working to shape each of their children's hearts.

Kim Rozeboom, Carter King, and Claire Vander Kooi shared their perspective as siblings of children who joined their families through various avenues: foster care, international adoption and domestic adoption. Despite the differences in their own unique family experiences, all three speakers reflected on how God was present in the formation of their families and how their families impacted who they are today.



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Contact alison@katelynsfund.org
to request your newsletter be sent to
your inbox.

Spring 2023 Newsletter

Katelyn's Fund Picnic



Please join us on **Tuesday, August 8th** beginning at
5:30 pm location at **Children's Park** in Sioux Center, IA

Drinks, hot dogs, and chips will be provided. ***Do not forget to bring your lawn chairs along!***

All families are invited