



Trust in the Lord

written by: Sheila De Jong ~ President

Proverbs 3:5-6 "Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, lean not on your own understanding but in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths".

Each year we listen and ask the Lord, how we can we know Him more deeply and what promises does He seek for us to lean into. Since last fall, I have been hearing the Lord ask, am I enough for you.....do you trust Me?

His word is filled in so many places with verses about trust, stories of those in crushing, unprecedented situations, where the only way forward was to trust in Him (a few examples: Daniel, Red Sea parting, Esther, Gideon, Elijah/prophets of Baal, Moses,so many more examples) It is awesome for us to read these verses and



stories, to see Him work in ways that only He is able and yet harder when we feel we are still waiting, still working through things, still praying, and feeling so pressed. It is easy when things are going well to say we put out trust in Him, to feel His embrace and see His goodness, it is harder in the valleys, in the dry places, in the seasons of waiting in prayer for His promises to unfold.

He asks for us to Trust Him with ALL of our heart, to submit to Him, meaning to surrender, to acknowledge Him and He will direct our paths. He will make a way. We have a limited view of things, so He says, "lean not on your own understanding" but look to Me, let Me, rest in Me, and I will make a straight road for you. I have been asking Him to give an abundance of grace in letting go and having a fully surrendered heart, that He will increase trust in who He is and what He sees beyond what we see and all that He is capable of doing, just as He worked in unprecedented ways in the Bible, He is still working.

My prayer for us as a ministry, for families, for our beloved ones in Haiti, and children all over the nations, that we would not only know Him more, that we would trust Him more. In all seasons and circumstances, in times of great rejoicing, and in deep valleys, all the time, knowing He is the same, right beside us, ahead of us, our rearguard. I am so thankful that He doesn't hold it against us when we try and work things out on our own, but He invites us to lay these things down

Continued on page 2



Continued from page 1

before Him, letting Him lead and work things out, in better ways. This is hard, it takes courage, and it is a choice on our part, to say, it is not on “my own” but it is “in Him”.

May it be a year of growing deep roots of trust in Him, cutting out things we are holding on to, those certain things we have not fully surrendered, or we don't understand, but instead letting Him show us that He is trustworthy, He is enough. He is working for our good, even when we do not yet see it. We praise Him for the ways He shows us He is working, and we hold out hope for the things we do not yet see, trusting He is working, making a way.

We are going to continue to seek understanding and pray through these verses this year – may we know and trust Him more deeply, with full undivided hearts, seeking and surrendering everything to Him and trusting He is more than enough.



Stay Connected



UPCOMING EVENTS



Katelyn's Fund
Annual Picnic

AUGUST 13



Katelyn's Fund
Support Begins

SEPT. 12



Katelyn's Fund
Annual Auction

NOV. 1



Katelyn's Fund
Orphan Sunday

NOV. 10

More information available at www.katelynsfund.org



One Vision Haiti Update

written by: Mark Vermeer

Haiti Update:

Early in 2012, the Board of Katelyn's Fund took its first trip to Haiti to meet the Director and the children that call One Vision ~ Haiti home. We quickly bonded together with a connection that was felt as we shared a mission to make a difference in the lives of children, and to walk alongside the staff of One Vision and give opportunities to the children to meet and accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. Following that initial trip, there was a wonderful season of several team trips each year, and we were able to take many friends and family members along on these team trips, and introduce them to the One Vision family. Throughout this season we were able to set up sponsorships for the children and create many relationships that stretched from our area to Haiti. Sadly, with the complications in Haiti of gang activity, covid, airport closures, roadblocks, and many other obstacles, our last opportunity to travel with a small team was March of 2019. Other areas of the country of Haiti were not as impacted initially as the communities around One Vision, but now it seems the entire country has been affected in some way, and we long to have that season back when we took so many trips during that period of 6 ½ years. Our hearts ache for the staff and children that remain at One Vision and live day today, reflecting a normal life that is certainly abnormal to us here in the United States.

The Board of Katelyn's Fund has had many discussions over the last months and frankly years regarding how the partnership with One Vision may have to adjust and how we are to best keep our wonderful sponsors engaged and feeling informed. To do this, we rely on the communications that come back to us from the Director of the orphanage, then we try to put that information in a written form to keep everyone as up to date as we know how. A recent phone call with the Director was received this past week and we could once again get firsthand information from him on the situation in Haiti.

First, he always wants us to know that the children are safe and doing quite well within the orphanage. While the country continues to suffer under the oppression of the gangs, the area around One Vision has been fairly safe and



continued on page 4...

continued from page 3...

protected as the larger community near One Vision, has had the civilians band together and take a stand against the territorial grab that the gangs have been after all this time in an effort to take city by city and region by region. "We are thankful for the protection that ultimately we know is from the strong arm of the Lord" was one of his statements. This being said, maybe the best way to inform you of what the absence of such protection would look like for One Vision is to be explained with action the Director needs to take to continue to give onsite guidance to the staff and children.

Recently, the Director moved his family out of the country of Haiti to keep them safe. After a period of about 4 weeks helping his family get settled in their new temporary location, he traveled back to Haiti, to resume his daily duties and tasks. After checking in with his parents in Port-au-Prince where they live, he lined up to travel so he could check on his home, and then travel to the orphanage. In short, to take such travel, each person must pay money and go through check points set up by the gangs who are looking for opportunity to steal or capture whatever or whoever they think may help their cause. It is necessary to travel with no cell phone, no money, and to look very "normal" to avoid any attention. He dressed down as a bit of a disguise to look this part, and not draw attention to himself. The form of transportation was a Tap Tap (Haitian taxi type vehicle) with many other people riding too and only one travel companion with him. He was able to get through the check points with no trouble. He went to inspect his home which he and his family left a few months ago when they began to live with his parents. After hearing of a recent gang break in of his home, he needed to gather pictures and evidence to file a report of what had happened. The gangs had cleaned out his home of any valuables, including important things such as a generator, solar panels, batteries, inverter, well pump, lighting, and any belongings left in his home. The security guards that he had in place to protect against such an invasion had been forced to leave for fear of their own safety. Currently his home sits empty and unattended, and he hopes to reclaim it when order is restored to the country. After acquiring the necessary evidence to file a report, he once again traveled by vehicle to check in with the children and staff at One Vision.

At One Vision, as stated earlier, they continue to be safe and continue to work, school, and live a normal Haitian daily life. School will be wrapping up for many of the children by the end of June, with some of the children remaining enrolled until the end of July in order to take the Haitian National exam. They want to ensure the proper educational credit is registered to the kids, verified with the passing of the exam and showing the completion of another grade of school in the middle of such turmoil. The One Vision Director will typically live on site 2 or 3 weeks at time, and he shared how during this past 2 ½ week stay, he had to explain to the children when asked by them, the reason why he could travel to take his family to safety, yet the friends from Katelyn's Fund are not able to travel, and how Katelyn's Fund has not left or abandoned them through all of this. As part of our telephone discussion, when asked how the mission of One Vision has been affected, he simply said the mission remains the same. To bring light and life into the lives of the children by teaching them the sacrifice that Jesus made for each of them, preaching and teaching the gospel to them, and growing a generation that knows Jesus, who will have a long term impact on a country and a world that so desperately needs to know him.

After his stay, he reversed the process of travel described earlier, and when back in Port-au-Prince was able to communicate with his cell phone once again. It was humbling to hear the focus that remains, in spite of the challenges presented to the people of Haiti for so long. So how can we continue to help? Continue to stay engaged. Ask questions of the Board, advocate for being a beacon of hope for them, and please continue to pray for One Vision. This was the primary request from the Director. Pray that the new Kenyan Police forces are successful at restoring order and peace. Pray that the children, the staff, and the Director continue under the protection of God. Pray that provision of food, clothing, and supplies, can continue to be acquired. And pray as it states in Psalm 16 "I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With Him at my right hand, I will not be shaken."

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 Morera Family

Luis and Daley

Adopted Domestically



Our adoption story started 12 years ago when on our first date we talked about how we had both envisioned adopting a child in the future. After seven years of marriage, we embarked on the path to grow our family. However, after a year of unsuccessful attempts and subsequent infertility testing, we discovered that we both had infertility. Despite this challenge, we found comfort in each other, jokingly saying we were a “match made in heaven.” We were told going straight to IVF or at least freezing embryos would be our only option for conception. We spent time in prayer about this, but we honestly both knew God had been preparing our hearts for this decision since we met 12 years ago. We made the decision to begin seriously pursuing adoption. Eventually, we were matched with a young mother of Hispanic heritage who chose us for reasons that touched our hearts deeply. She was drawn to our similar cultural background, particularly my husband Luis's heritage and our commitment to reading scripture in our home. The day our son was born, seven weeks early, was a moment we will cherish forever. Due to his prematurity, our son spent 3.5 weeks in the NICU. As we were out-of-state, far from family and friends, this unexpected stay added a good deal of expenses to an already expensive process. Katelyn's Fund gave us a tangible gift of financial support and an invaluable gift of spiritual support and added peace of mind as they allowed us to decrease our debt from this process. We cannot fully express our gratitude to the Katelyn's Fund and are so happy to share our story.

...more adoption stories continued on page 6

The Mannchen Family

Uli and Liz

Adopted Internationally



For many years, our family has been fighting to pursue a second adoption. Many attempts have failed, leaving us broken and devastated, but through the incredible grace and love of the Lord, we have persevered. He has sent us incredible warriors like the ministry at Katelyn's Fund, who have come alongside us, lifting our arms and heads to the sky and reminding us that we are not alone. It truly takes a village, and they are part of ours. We are so grateful for their friendship and support. We are thrilled to announce that we are bringing home our little girl, "A," from India in the coming months. Praise God!

We have seen God uniquely at work in this process when we were pursuing India parallel to our domestic adoption. When that fell through the Lord asked us to lay it down and trust Him. Within a week, we were matched with our little girl from India who we will be picking up shortly. Sometimes, we have to put down the things in our hands we are clinging to, so God can open up new things inside them.

The Feekes Family

Travis and Jessica

Adopted Domestically



We are Travis and Jessica Feekes. We live in Sioux Center, Iowa with our four girls. God grew our family through adoption and biological. Our oldest was adopted at birth and our next two were biological, and we are currently in the process of finalizing our youngest daughter's infant adoption. We never really talked about adoption as a plan for our family but as God graciously walked us through our oldest daughter's adoption we knew God would make a way for another adoption in our family. Katelyn's Fund has humbly been beside us through both our daughters' adoptions by providing spiritual support, financial support, and post placement support with their monthly meetings and amazing resources! It is such a blessing to our family to be impacted by all the work Katelyn's Fund does for orphan care.

continued adoption stories on page 7...

Ben and Krista Adopting Internationally



We find that our family's adoption testimony and our faith journey are tightly intertwined. We know that we are completing this adoption because of what the Lord has stirred in our hearts. We knew that we had room for more in our home, and that we still very much had hearts for international adoption. We had gotten very comfortable as a family of 3 - and we realized that we absolutely weren't comfortable being comfortable. Our hearts had been broken by the orphanage crisis throughout the world, and we've felt it affirmed in ourselves that we want to continue to build our family through adoption. We want to be a family for additional children who need families internationally.

We read a quote while preparing for this current adoption that we absolutely have not been able to get off our hearts and minds because it speaks so deeply to our desire to adopt: We do not adopt because we are saviors; we adopt because we ourselves are saved.

That sums up our motivation to adopt perfectly. We are no one's savior. Only Christ has the power to do that. However, through the sacrifice of his perfect, unblemished, sinless body, we have been adopted into the body of Christ. Redeemed and made whole - not because of any of our works, but ONLY because of Him and the cross. Christ is the quintessential story of beauty from ashes. We cannot have the resurrection without first the crucifixion. The beauty of the gospel comes from a place of suffering on the cross - and that our Father loved us enough that His son endured what He did on the cross so that we can be saved through Him.

So how can we not go and tell? If we don't tell, who will? Additionally, if we know we have more room and love to give - if we feel it in our hearts to continue to grow our family, how can we not go?

We know that we have more love to give us a family. We very much wish to continue to grow our family through adoption. We very much want to share the gospel with a child who would otherwise not hear it. We know that we are no one's savior, and we certainly don't go into this adoption with a savior mentality. However, we do believe that through His power, beauty can still be written from the ashes of another child's story.

As a result, our current adoption began nearly three years ago when our hearts were stirred again in 2021 to adopt again. We encountered many closed doors early on. However our spirits did not feel at peace to just accept that. We also knew that every closed door we encountered was a lesson. The Lord was teaching us patience and to lean in and fully trust Him and His timing.

So we continued to explore country programs and finally, after much prayer, decided that Vietnam was both a viable option and the open door the Lord was leading us to. Then, in October 2023, it all clicked into place. There was a child who was an orphan who needed a family. The open door was there. It was the right door, it was right where it was supposed to be, and it was opened at the exact right time.

Above you asked us to discuss if there is anything that adoption has taught us that we would not have otherwise learned. Two lessons immediately come to mind:

1. We must try in His timing, not our own. This is a lesson that we seem to have learn again and again. As a result, we thank God for His grace and patience with us. However, the adoption process has most definitely taught us that we can force things ourselves and that that is actually a good thing: He comes through in His perfect timing, and we must trust in Him and His timing.

...continued on page 8

continued from page 7...

2. The adoption process has also taught us complete surrender to Him, and to rely on Him and His strength rather than our own. The adoption process is hard from start to finish - and beyond. The paper chase is hard. The waiting is hard. The additional paperwork stages are hard. Then of course, the adoption itself is hard. Through adoption, we seek to come alongside a child, graft him into our family, and help him to heal from grief, trauma, and loss. We seek to show him the love of a family and the love of Christ. The process requires unconditional surrender and reliance on Him.

We are thrilled to be matched with Lam in this adoption, and we cannot wait to welcome him into our home. We can see the Lord's hand in each step of the process, leading us to where we are today.

We consider it our upmost desire as parents for both our boys to know the love of Christ and accept that for themselves. We discussed in the interview that we know that we cannot save our children. We can pray over them and with them. We can read the Bible daily with them. We can model for them what having an authentic relationship with Christ means. We can make sure we attend church every week at a church with solid children's programming. We can try to live our lives in a way to show that our relationship with Christ starts at home in our hearts and is a seven-day-a-week thing, not a Sunday morning thing.

However, we cannot save them. Only they can make that choice themselves by accepting Christ as their personal Lord and savior. Mason was saved at ten years old, sitting in a chair in our bay window, as we answered his questions and we made sure he was ready to be fully led to Christ and make that decision for himself (followed by baptism as an outward display of his faith.) Our prayer for him now is that he continues to grow in that faith and develop a continued more intimate relationship with Christ as he matures. Our prayer for Lam will be the same now: that we can show Him the love of Christ and that he will come to know him too as his Lord and savior. It is more important than other decision they can ever make for their lives.

As a close second, we also deeply desire that our boys know the love and security of a family. We are so, so grateful that the Lord called us out of comfort zone for Mason and now for Lam. We are so, so grateful for his steadfast love and faithfulness along each step in our adoption journey. We are so, so thankful we will know be able to welcome Lam into our family. We give all the glory to God for continuing to write a beautiful story from ashes.

To close, we would like to thank Katelyn's Fund for three specific ways you have hugely blessed our family:

1. Most obviously, thank you for the grant. It came in at just the right time; just last night, we were looking at finances and discussing our options to cover the remaining expenses. We can't stress enough how much of a blessing this grant is at this time.

2. For your prayers - we truly feel loved and prayed for by your grant committee, and we do not take that for granted either.

3. For the scripture references you shared with us during the grant interview, especially 2 Corinthians 12:9 - And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Thank you for that encouragement. It came at just the right time to be reminded not to rely on ourselves but to lean into Him: and that all things can be used to direct our eyes to the glory of our Father.

Thank you so very much for all that you do for us and other families.

...continued adoption stories on page 9

The Trampler Family

Tyler and Cheri

Adopted Internationally



The Lord led us to adoption over 10 years ago. We knew we would wait on the Lord's timing. We went to an adoption conference in October of 2022 and the Lord made it very clear with James 1:27. We then started pursuing the call to adopt. After knowing we were to adopt a little girl, the country of Hungary is where the Lord let us. Although we haven't met our daughter yet we know the Lord has great plans for her and we pray for her salvation even now as we wait. When we started on our journey it was a huge leap of faith financially to start and Katelyn's Fund has helped so much in this way with the grant we received. We are so blessed and the Lord continues to lead and direct our path for our adoption.

The Braunworth Family

Peter and Alexa

Adopted Domestically



We began talking about adoption when we were just dating. We hoped to have biological children as well, but adoption has always been a part of our dream! After our last child was born, we decided now was the time, and we can't believe we are able to also see this dream come to life. As we've gotten older the desire to adopt and bring someone into all this love just like the Lord has brought us into all of His love has become unescapable. We are convinced that God has adopted us (Romans 8:15) into his family by his salvation. We believe that adoption is one of the best pictures we have of God's love for us. We were outcasts, lost and in darkness. God loved us so much he adopted us into His family and gave us rights as sons and daughters. Choosing to go through the adoption process can give us a glimpse of God's heart for us. We want to grow deeper in our relationship with the Lord and we know adoption will be challenging at times, but are convinced it will lead us to a closer relationship with Him. The scripture tells us "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress

continued on page 10...

continued from page 9...

and to keep oneself unstained from the world.” James 1:27. So, we are called to look after orphans. Through this process we can teach our kids about God’s love and His desire to bring outsiders into the family and we are excited for what this journey holds for us. We have no idea who the Lord has in mind for our family, and we have no doubt it will be challenging, but we are here for it. All in, no turning back.

The most rewarding part of the journey has been the gift of trusting the Lord. He has grown in both of us the ability to just rest and wait, knowing that He sees all, knows our desires, and truly cares for us. We have been extremely open handed this whole time, truly trusting the Lord's timing and His provision. We only want what He wants, and so far His plan has been for us to slowly and steadily walk this journey and share about it with others. We can't wait to see what He does, but truly feel that all the barriers have only been gifts from Him to produce something in us and our family and be a testimony to others of how good the Lord is. He is so kind to allow these seasons to grow us and sanctify us. There will be such a great reward in bringing our baby home, but we are so thankful that we will also come out the other side of this being more like Jesus and knowing Him deeper and more fully.

Owning several small businesses is very rewarding, sometimes financially, but always relationally. Providing good jobs for individuals and families is a gift we do not take lightly.

Being able to influence and rub shoulders and love on people that we wouldn't get to otherwise, is a gift that we cherish. After several profitable years in business, we knew saving up \$55,000-\$65,000 would be a steep hill to climb, but we didn't anticipate it feeling near impossible. Financially, this year has been very very hard. One of the toughest financial situations we have ever been in. It took a turn as soon as we signed our adoption contract.

Our family has a saying, “Never miss an opportunity to be generous.” I feel as though even in this trying financial season we have been generous with what the Lord has given us; always striving to be wise and good stewards of our talents, time, and finances- none of those are ours anyway.

We continue to tell our friends and family what a sweet place this is to be, to be waiting on the Lord, and we really mean that. We have quite the gap to close- about \$26,000 at this point-and because of the place we are in, it will be abundantly clear that it was all the Lord's doing.

All the glory to Him! He has provided just in time, every step of the way, and we don't doubt that He will continue to do that. We have been extremely transparent about this with whoever we talk to, which means He really will get all the glory! He is allowing us to rest in His timing and His provision. We only want what He has for us.

We are finding ourselves in a place we didn't anticipate, a place of needing major financial help, and the grant you've given is truly a gift. While we didn't anticipate needing grants, our savings is growing ever so slowly, and as we are seeing many cases we find ourselves relying more and more on the Lord because we aren't able to match without sufficient funds. Our contract with our consultants is up April 3, and we will need to extend. Then more costs with renewing home studies and medicals, and so on. We are happy and content waiting on the Lord, and also want to be faithful with any and every opportunity He has put in front of us!

We truly believe that the Lord will take care of us and will provide in whatever way He chooses, when He chooses. Applying for grants and loans has been our way of being faithful with whatever opportunity He lays in front of us. We aren't sure why things have gone the way they have this year, yet we are grateful! Having less than we've previously had in a time that we “need” more than we've needed, brings us to fully glorify Him and give Him all the honor and all the praise! We can't wait for that sweet baby to be in our arms. What a beautiful story it will be!

Thank you again, for your prayers, friendship, encouragement, and financial support!

Support Community Information

written by: Marcie Schuiteman ~ Support Team

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6. Throughout this past year’s support meetings, we were reminded time and time again of God’s promise in Proverbs 3:5-6. Throughout the variety of speakers and topics this past year, we were reminded of God’s faithfulness and the importance of trusting His good and perfect timing. **See you in September as we gather again for meetings, come and be part of community!**

September



We began the support year with the touching story of how God brought healing and restoration into the lives of Faye Holsing, adoptive mom, and Candy Cox, birthmom.

October



We learned from Dordt Social Work professors, Leah Mouw and Erin Olsen, about fostering attachment and healthy relationships.

November



We were blessed with hearing from two dads, Jeremy Koerselman and Brandon Huisman, about how fostercare and adoption have impacted their lives.

February



Pastor Mark and Barb Schwarzw shared about how infertility led them to adoption and how God walked alongside them throughout their journey.

March



Ken and Barb Addink, told their story of raising four biological children and twelve adopted children. They highlighted the importance of community and the role others played in their story.

April



Darcie Van Voorst taught us strategies to help support our mental health.

May



We finished with three moms who have walked alongside foster children, Kelsi Ebel, Sheryl Winterfeld, and Nikolyn Kredit. They shared with us some of the joys and challenges they have experienced as foster moms.



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your inbox.

Summer 2024 Newsletter

Katelyn's Fund Picnic

Please join us on **Tuesday, August 13th** beginning at
5:30 pm location at **Children's Park Shelter House**

Drinks, hot dogs, and chips will be provided.

All families are invited