

Growing Branches



Update from *New Beginnings - A Home for Mothers*

Denver, Colorado

April 2005

"Be What You Want to Be... Do What You Want to Do!"

By Rev. Doug Bode

Do you recognize these lyrics from a TV ad for an allergy medicine? It makes it crystal-clear that by using this new medication, you don't have to let an allergy affect your life and prevent you from doing the things you want to do.

Part of the American dream is that practically anything we want to do is within reach provided we want it enough. A career choice can include practically anything, ranging from the ordinary to the extra-ordinary, from the unique to the bizarre.

In our initial conversation with a woman applying to live at the *Home for Mothers*, we try to discover whether she has any goals in life and if she has made (or is making) plans to pursue them. Those who seem to be wandering aimlessly through life may not be ready or willing to work for a fresh start in life, and our program cannot help them with a "new beginning."

We've heard some laudable career goals by our residents: medical assistant, medical billing and coding, paralegal, massage therapy, etc. We try to help them stay on course to "be what you want to be, do what you want to do." It takes some persistence and perseverance on their part to reach their goal so they can take better care of their family.

But there is something else that we try to interject into the process for the residents that's a proper and God-pleasing motivation for whatever they are doing or plan to do. It's as the Apostle John says, "*We love because He first loved us.*" The Apostle Paul put it this way: "*Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.*" Our residents don't always appreciate (or even know) the crucified and risen Savior. Through our devotions and Bible studies we try to add that wonderful and essential ingredient of God-pleasing motivation to whatever plans they may have in their future.

It's really no different for any of us who have recently heard and experienced anew the thrilling words of the angel at the empty tomb: "*He is not here; He is risen, just as He said!*" These are life-changing words from an eternity-altering event: He who died to take away the guilt and punishment of our sins also rose again to completely assure us that one day heaven will be opened to us and we will be transferred from grace into glory.

In a sense, then, we re-shape our whole life so that it has this priority: I will "be what *God* wants me to be and do what *He* wants me to do." There is no finer purpose in life and no better motto than to serve others in love as our beautiful Savior continues to serve us.

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HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

By Rev. Doug Bode

Birthdays. Everyone has them. As we grow older perhaps they may not mean as much. Sometimes we would rather not even think of our birthdays or be reminded of them. However, while growing up and even into early adulthood, a birthday is a pretty special event. It's something worth celebrating.



***Every child should
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For some of our *New Beginnings* residents, birthdays weren't a festive occasion until they came here. One resident in particular had never had a special birthday celebration. There weren't any birthday cards or presents. Her mother never baked her a birthday cake. It was just like any other day.

At *New Beginnings* we try to stress a family approach by eating together, having a family devotion at the end of a meal, enjoying each other's company, and the like. We try to make at least the major holidays a special event.

Birthdays are one of those occasions that we try to make a little extra-special for each resident and her child

In our home when our own children were growing up, they could ask Mom to make any kind of dessert they wanted for their birthday. It may have been chocolate cake, fruit pizza, apple pie – just about anything. This family tradition has been incorporated into *New Beginnings*' life. There have been requests by the residents for cheesecake, pie, mint surprise cookies, special cakes; the list goes on and on! When the birthday girl or boy is a little child, he or she usually gets chocolate cake and ice cream. It's so much fun to watch a one-year-old get the chocolate all over his face and hair — and let someone else do the clean-up!

We also make a personalized birthday card on the computer for each resident and her child on their birthday and sing "Happy Birthday." These are all simple things to celebrate which you and I probably took for granted when we were growing up. *Of course* you would get at least a couple of birthday cards, and *of course* you would have "Happy Birthday" sung to you on your special day. For these women and their children though, this is often a new experience and one they will cherish.

Memories are pretty important in life — especially when they're fond memories of your childhood. Every child should have some fond memories in life, and at *New Beginnings* we try to plant some seeds in residents' minds to include birthdays among the happy and good memories.



New Beginnings
A Home For Mothers



Rev. Doug and
Charlene Bode,
House Parents



Closing Thoughts From Departing Residents

benefit and the benefit of my child. Ultimately, New Beginnings was a blessing and exactly where I needed to be."

"New Beginnings was a nice home to stay in. It was clean; I felt as if it was a safe environment for myself as well as my son... I truly do and did appreciate all that you guys have done for me. I know this is a tough job and

When a resident leaves New Beginnings, she is asked to fill out a report that includes her thoughts about her stay at the home. The following are some of those thoughts from recent residents.

"I learned about New Beginnings through my doctor's office. I was pregnant and found myself struggling to make ends meet. I was welcomed into New Beginnings. They helped me prepare for the birth of my daughter and even drove me to the hospital when the time came. While there [at New Beginnings] I made lifetime friends and became closer to my faith. Living at New Beginnings was like being a big family. It was, all-in-all, a positive experience, and I'm thankful places like this exist because I don't know what I would have done without them."

"To be honest, at times it was difficult. I understand that it's hard to shape a program that fits an unlimited number of cases with situations for each resident. It was good, however, to have such structure and discipline. At times I felt a bit stifled and caged, but realized it was for my



**New Beginnings
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you guys don't get all the respect that you guys deserve. Overall I did enjoy my stay for the most part...This is a great program. Thank you very much."



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New Beginnings

A Home For Mothers

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Most Needed Items at New Beginnings



1. Baby Monitors
2. Double Bed Mattress Pads
3. Vacuum Cleaners

Please call if you are interested in donating any of these much needed items. Thank you!

New Beginnings - A Home for Mothers is a Christ-centered home for single mothers and is affiliated with Christian Life Resources, Inc. The home has been serving residents since 1993. It is supported entirely by the generous support and prayers of those who are committed to sharing Christ and reflecting His sacrificial love.

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New Beginnings appreciates your prayers to our gracious God on our behalf. We also appreciate your gifts. Would you consider helping us out?

Yes, I (we) would like to make a contribution to help **New Beginnings**:

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