



# GROWING BRANCHES

## HERE WE GROW...

Isn't it true that at times one minute can feel like an eternity, and vice versa? Perhaps you felt that way during the final 60 seconds of your high school's state championship football game and you couldn't wait for the clock to run out so you and your team could charge the field in victory. Conversely, after months of planning and possibly years of dreaming about every tiny detail, the actual wedding day arrives and seemingly flies by in the blink of an eye. Good or bad, Ecclesiastes 3:1 tells us *"there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven."* As Christians, we can take comfort in the fact that God is in control of everything – including proper timing.

Here at *New Beginnings*, it is important that we pay special attention to timing. If we are not busy counting down the months and days to a due date, we are busy counting up the days and months of a baby's first year of life. Typically, we have our hands full doing both at the same time! Above all, we make sure to set time aside for devotion, Bible study and church in addition to the feeding times, nap times and play times. Just when we feel as though we've got things under control, God throws us a curve to keep us on our toes.

One such example occurred the evening of May 29<sup>th</sup> when Judy unexpectedly gave birth to her precious son, Darian.



Judy & Darian in the NICU



Darian holding the hand of the Home Manager's husband

## In God's Time



By Heidi Westlund,  
Home Manager


He was born five weeks prematurely. While we will probably never know why she went into labor with over a month before the due date, we do know that it was all part of God's plan. Thankfully, at 3 pounds and 12 ounces, Darian was surprisingly well-developed and healthy. Three long weeks in the NICU later, after adjusting to life outside the womb and gaining weight, Darian was able to come home with his mother.

Soon after Darian's birth, it was time to celebrate another momentous occasion. On June 16<sup>th</sup>, Mia and Ariel officially graduated from Phase 2 of the *New Beginnings'* program! After 20 months of prayer, planning and hard work, everything fell into place for a smooth transition from *New Beginnings* to a home of their own. Mia had saved



Mia & Ariel

enough money to purchase a used car from her full-time and part-time jobs. She had also applied and received approval for subsidized housing. When graduation day arrived, Mia and Ariel moved into their very own two-bedroom, two-bath townhome. Thanks to God's unwavering guidance and support, Mia's life changed from a jobless, cohabitation arrangement with a boyfriend to a lifestyle of self-sufficiency and independence – all in less than two years!

Thankfully, God does not require us to have all the answers. He simply asks that we trust in Him. It is both refreshing and relieving to know that *"in all things God works for the good of those who love him"* (Romans 8:28). 

# HERE WE GROW...

## Through Christian Fellowship

By Heidi Westlund, Home Manager

Mia, Ariel and I had the distinct privilege of attending one of the most creative, enjoyable and delicious church outreach events we have ever experienced on Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup> at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Santa Barbara, California. We were truly honored to be invited as the guest speakers at their 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Ladies Tea to not only enjoy the event itself, but also the hospitality and fellowship that accompanied the entire weekend.

Pastor Proeber and his daughter, Emily, cheerfully picked us up at the airport and took us straight to the nearest beach/park where we enjoyed breathing in the salty ocean air, sinking our toes in the sand and taking in the gorgeous view of the coast. Although Ariel found the crashing waves a little too intimidating, she had a blast on the playground releasing all that pent-up energy after our two-hour plane ride. Afterwards, we checked into our hotel, toured the church fellowship hall and were treated to a delightful dinner at the harbor by Pastor Proeber and his wife, Sue.

Saturday morning we lazily made our way to the complimentary breakfast provided at the hotel and ate outside on the patio in the pleasantly warm morning air. After breakfast, we lingered by the pool for a bit to soak in some California sunshine and admire the tropical vegetation. Once we got back to our rooms, we excitedly got ready for the main event – the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Ladies Tea!



Mia & Ariel at the Santa Barbara Harbor



Fellowship Hall during the Ladies Tea

We arrived at the fellowship hall a little early so we could prepare a display table for *New Beginnings* and meet the attendees as they arrived. The fellowship hall was set up with six round tables finely decorated with beautiful tablecloths, tableware and place settings. Various ladies from the congregation had “sponsored” individual tables and were responsible for the set-up and removal of their décor. Adorning all the tables were lovely handmade invitations and colorfully printed menus that detailed the various flavored teas, finger sandwiches, scones and desserts that would be served throughout the afternoon.

It was truly a remarkably inviting setting, and you could feel the excitement fill the room as ladies of all ages mingled with each other and slowly began to select a seat at one of the tables. When everyone was seated, Pastor Proeber greeted us all, said the blessing and then asked the “waiters” (who happened to be men from the congregation) to commence with serving the tea and sandwiches. Most of the waiters were husbands of the ladies in attendance which made for some pretty humorous exchanges as glasses were filled and food was served. As we dined, we met and shared stories with the other ladies at our table and thoroughly enjoyed our conversations as well as our tea.

When everyone was sufficiently satisfied with their afternoon tea and tasty morsels, we had the opportunity to share our *New Beginnings*’ ministry with those present. It was truly encouraging and uplifting to speak to such an attentive audience. They all seemed genuinely interested in learning about our organization and were supportive of our cause. Mia gave a sincerely heartfelt account of some of her past struggles, her renewed faith in God and her time well spent at *New Beginnings*. When she was finished, I do not think there was a dry eye in the room. Immediately following our presentation, we answered several questions and received lots of hugs!

Later that evening, members Sonja and Alan Todd kept the hospitality alive by giving us a tour of the city and treating us to yet another terrific dinner at the harbor. At church the following morning, we were greeted like

longtime friends in town for a visit. **Thank you very much to Pastor, Sue and Emily Proeber, Sonja and Alan Todd, as well as all the terrific members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church for letting your lights shine in Christian love!!!** 🌸



Left to right: Sonja, Ariel, Mia & Alan

## HERE WE GROW...

## Through Serving Others

By Cheyenne Linde, Volunteer Resident Assistant

*New Beginnings* was my exact idea of a dream job. I knew I wanted to work in a Christian environment after college, and I really wanted to see more of the country. I graduated from the University of Wisconsin – Madison, and Colorado was the top state on my list of places to move.

When I arrived on June 8<sup>th</sup>, I felt immediately welcomed and useful. I love going to church with everyone on Sundays, having devotion every morning, taking the women to their doctors' appointments and on other errands. The residents are such strong women, and I admire them because of their life experiences and am amazed at their dedication to improving themselves in the *New Beginnings'* program. They are pretty responsible when it comes to following the rules and communicating with the staff, and I enjoy the time we spend together just chatting about day-to-day activities and deeper life stories.

I feel fulfilled by helping with the small things, knowing that the women are taking huge steps to become their best selves and the best moms they can be. I pray that one day soon *New Beginnings* will be blessed with the financial support to expand so we can serve more people with Christ's love. 🌸



Cheyenne holding Judy's son Darian at 4 weeks old

## HERE WE GROW...

## Through a Visit to La Crosse



By Mollie Schultz,  
Assistant Home Manager



*New Beginnings'* display at the 2013 LWMS Convention

This past June, the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS) celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> annual convention. I was pleased to join the attendees in La Crosse, Wisconsin for this special event. Amid missionary speakers, a banquet, hymn singing and catching up with long time friends, the attendees of the LWMS Convention could also make a stop by the *New Beginnings'* display booth. And many of them did!

I was very excited to visit with women from all over the country who have supported *New Beginnings* in the past and are looking forward to helping more in the future. "*New Beginnings* has always had a special place in my heart!" some women would say and, "I wish I could do more to help." It became very clear to me that women who live so far away from us have kept us consistently on their minds and

in their prayers. Ladies came by to collect items to distribute during the "Change for Life" program at their church. One came by to tell me that she and her husband have been thinking about becoming volunteer house parents when they retire, and another to explain to me that her special connection with *New Beginnings* started when her loved one became a resident. What impressed me most about all these women is how much love, care, prayers and support they generously pour into the lives of others, and that includes the mothers and babies of *New Beginnings*. Thank you, ladies of the LWMS! 🌸

## Thank you very much...

To all of the individuals, families and congregations who have participated in our "Change for Life" program thus far in 2013!!! With over four months left in the year, there is still plenty of time for everyone else who is interested in helping to make a difference in the lives of our moms and babies to participate. Please contact Casey at (262) 677-5230 or visit [www.HelpNewBeginnings.com](http://www.HelpNewBeginnings.com) for more details about conducting this worthwhile program!



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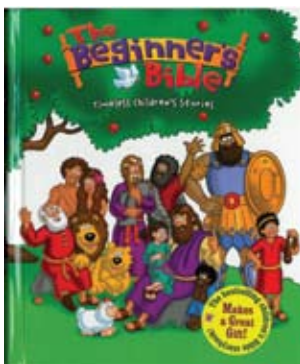
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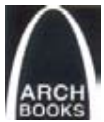
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