



GROWING BRANCHES

HERE WE GROW...

I woke up on New Year's Day to a beautiful, fluffy blanket of pure, white snow covering the lawn, the trees, the rooftops and sidewalks. The fact that I had not expected it to snow made it that much more exciting. Looking out my living room window, I recall thinking how peaceful and perfect everything appeared and how fitting yet remarkable it was that God began the New Year with such a picturesque metaphor – a fresh start, a clean slate, a new beginning. Isaiah assures us that *"Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow"* (Isaiah 1:18). Incredibly, God keeps that promise day in and day out because He loves us so much. Jeremiah tells us, *"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning"* (Lamentations 3:22,23). What a tremendous comfort it is to know that we do not have to wait 365 days or five years or 25 years to start anew.

At *New Beginnings*, we have shared this wonderful news with hundreds of women over the last 20 years and what a difference it has made in their lives, as well as the lives of their children! Most of them arrive carrying the weight of the world on their shoulders, not to mention years of emotional, physical and sometimes sexual abuse. Initially, they are looking for a safe place to stay that is dry and warm. What they find is much more than they ever expected physically and spiritually! Not only are they provided with an opportunity at a fresh start, they are given the building blocks to create one and the encouragement to take that always intimidating, yet truly essential first step.

Although the desperation of their circumstances and need for a fresh start might seem more apparent than our own, if we are honest with ourselves, we are all in need of a new beginning in some aspect of our lives – whether it be with a relationship, career, self-image or even a hobby. Few things are as impactful here at *New Beginnings* as volunteers, guest speakers or supporters who share their own struggles and triumphs with our mothers.

Through Forgiveness



By Heidi Westlund,
Home Manager

Although we are all unique and shaped by our various life experiences, we are also similar in our humanity and can therefore relate to each other on many levels. Surely God knew just that when He sent His son, Jesus, who *"had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted"* (Hebrews 2:17,18). Similarly, God instructs us to *"carry each other's burdens"* and *"as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people"* (Galatians 6:2,10).

What is true for our mothers and babies is also true for each one of us, every single day of the year, every single year of our lives. God loves us. God sent His Son to die for us (John 3:16). God will never leave us or forsake us (Joshua 1:5). How exhilarating those promises are for us and how exciting it is to share that good news with others through our Christian words and actions! 🌸



Kurt, Mollie, Heidi, Tania, Marquita & Myzel, Cheyenne, Bilye & Sidnye in front of the Christmas tree at church

HERE WE GROW...

Through God's Blessings

By Olivia, Resident of *New Beginnings*



Olivia & Ella Sofia

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:4-7)

Motherhood is a life-altering experience. It changes the way you think and how you view the world. Motherhood has done all these things to me. It has changed my relationship with God and has made me a better Christian. Since the birth of my daughter, Ella Sofia, I have learned to rejoice when times are good or bad. God has brought me from the land of doubt and uncertainty with an unplanned pregnancy to a clearer and brighter pasture. Because of His love, I have a little one to walk through this journey of life with. Motherhood has made me more patient and loving. I can rejoice and find blessings in a storm because of this sweet little baby. She reminds me everyday to be thankful, not just for her, but for my renewed walk with God. Motherhood has truly changed me for the better, and I enjoy it and embrace it with all my heart. 🌸

HERE WE GROW...

With the Assistance from Enthusiastic Volunteers

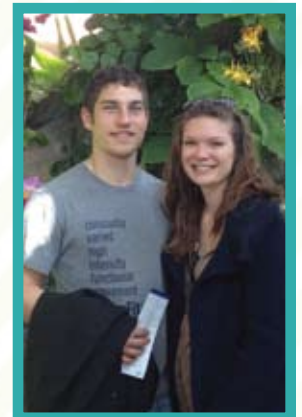
By Arik & Lisa McGathey, Volunteer House Parents

Hello. Our names are Arik and Lisa McGathey. We are members at Grace Lutheran Church in downtown Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where we were married in December of 2012. We met while attending Wisconsin Lutheran College where Lisa studied business and psychology, and Arik studied music theory and composition. Most recently, Lisa worked at a medical billing company, and Arik at a music publisher as well as the choir director at Trinity Lutheran in Caledonia, Wisconsin.

We both were blessed to have been raised in Christian families. From this upbringing, we both felt compelled to use this time early in our marriage to do volunteer work for the church. We found many opportunities on the Kingdom Workers' website. These missions all asked for about a two-week commitment, which we were unable to do because of the amount of vacation time we had available at work. We decided that we needed something that was either shorter or longer. Then we found *New Beginnings*. *New Beginnings* offers a very unique opportunity for the women and children who walk through their doors, and we felt compelled to offer our time and skills to this cause.

Once we decided to make the trip to Colorado, the blessings started piling up. Our apartment lease had ended last December, and we were concerned about coming back without a place to live. Then we happened to find a friend who was studying abroad and would be back in the states for a second semester – an apartment was needed for about six months. God blessed us in finding someone to sublet ours! When we contacted our landlord, we found out that he did not allow subletting; however, he made an exception for us. Then we broke the news to our employers – BOTH offered to give us our positions upon our return from our six-month mission trip! It is incredible how God has worked in our lives to steer us to *New Beginnings*.

We can only hope to offer as many blessings through *New Beginnings* as we have already received and are sure to gain from this special experience. We ask God for guidance while at *New Beginnings* and thank you for your prayers. 🌸



Arik & Lisa at the Denver Botanical Gardens

HERE WE GROW...

Through God's Grace



By Kelsey M. Ryno,
Alumni of *New Beginnings*

My name is Kelsey. I am a daughter, a sister, a friend and a mother.

I was brought into this beautiful world on November 6th of 1991. At one point in my life, I didn't think I'd make it this far. I have experienced many ups and many downs in my journey of 22 years. I have been through a rough depression, abuse and addiction. Between the ages of 13 and 18, I was in and out of my home – from running away to being sent to inpatient treatment centers. When I turned 18, my family kicked me out and my addiction grew worse. A couple months later, I found out I was five weeks pregnant. I had just dropped out of high school, was jobless and homeless. I felt there was no hope. But then I found my hope through *New Beginnings* where I lived from September of 2010 until November of 2011.

New Beginnings taught me many things to help me grow into the mother I know I can be, as well as a good citizen and a good Christian. They introduced me to God and His true plan for me. They taught me that He loves me and, despite all of the sins of my past, He forgives me. It is through Him that I find hope every day, and I have *New Beginnings* to thank for that. They truly opened the door to my new beginning as a mother. I am truly blessed to be a part of the *New Beginnings* family.

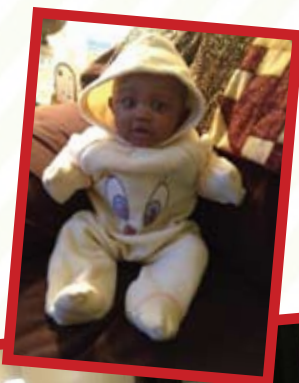
Even though I will officially be graduating from their Mentoring Program this February, *New Beginnings* will always have a special place in my heart. Every woman and child who enters this program truly has an opportunity for a fresh start. I am happy to say that in April of 2014, I will have been clean from all drugs for four years. I have a wonderful job, in which I have already received several promotions and raises in the two years of my employment. My son, Adam, is healthy, smart and happy; he is the reason I stride forth to be a better person every day. I have a wonderful family through my fiancé Terrance and his beautiful daughter Sophia. God blessed Adam and me with them, as the completion to our family. God has truly blessed me in every way, and I hope His healing, through me, can guide others to hope too.

Thank you to everyone who helps make *New Beginnings* possible, and thank you to those who help others find hope through Him. 🌸

THANK YOU!

To all of the congregations, groups and individuals who Donated Christmas presents, gift cards, monetary donations, etc. this year –

WE ARE TRULY GRATEFUL!



Pictured from left to right: Billye & Sidnye; Sidnye; Marquita & Myzel, Tania, Olivia & Ella Sofia, Billye & Sidnye; Billye, Tania, Marquita & Myzel; Billye & Sidnye

New Beginnings appreciates your prayers to our gracious God on our behalf. We also appreciate your gifts.

Yes, I (we) would like to help **New Beginnings**: \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 other \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____ **City/State/Zip** _____

Phone (____) _____ **Email** _____

Please charge a one-time gift to my credit card. **Name on Card** _____

Card # _____ **Signature** _____

Type of Card MC Visa Discover AMEX **Expiration Date*** _____ **Card ID (CVV2/CID) #*** _____

WE PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY: Christian Life Resources respects your privacy and will not give away or sell your contact information. Christian Life Resources is a registered 501(c)3 agency under the U.S. tax code. All donations to the ministries of Christian Life Resources are fully tax deductible.

Where to find the Card ID #? For MC/Visa/Discover: 3-digit code on back; AMEX: 4-digit code on front.

***Required**

- Please contact me about having my gifts enhanced through Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.
- Please contact me about remembering *New Beginnings* in my will or estate plan.
- I want to support this ministry on a regular basis. Send me information on becoming a Clearly Caring Sponsor.
- I do not require an acknowledgment of this gift.
- I want an email acknowledgment of this gift:** _____ I want a letter acknowledgment of this gift.



See our latest pictures, events and updates by liking us on Facebook.



New Beginnings
A Ministry Sponsored by Christian Life Resources
A Home for Mothers

3070 Helsan Drive
Richfield, WI 53076

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
ELGIN, IL
PERMIT NO. 126



4 TIMES A YEAR...

You receive *Growing Branches*. It contains a "Most Needed Items" list. It includes an envelope for your gift of support. We seek your support through this periodical.

PLEASE CONSIDER HELPING US WITH YOUR GIFTS TO NEW BEGINNINGS.

*If you would like to help save costs & receive *Growing Branches* via email, please send your email address to info@homeformothers.com

New Beginnings - A Home for Mothers is a Christ-centered ministry for single mothers and their children operated by Christian Life Resources. 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.

- Contact: **Mrs. Heidi Westlund - Home Manager**
Ms. Mollie Schultz - Assistant Home Manager
Ms. Cheyenne Linde - Volunteer Resident Assistant
Mr. & Mrs. Arik & Lisa McGathey - Volunteer House Parents
- Mailing Address: **PO Box 423 • Aurora, CO 80040-0423**
- Telephone: **303-364-0890 • 1-800-720-MOMS**
- E-mail: **info@homeformothers.com**
- Website: **www.HomeforMothers.com**



A ministry sponsored by Christian Life Resources

MOST NEEDED ITEMS

- 4-6 Brooms
- Bath Towels
- 9 Volt Batteries

For a complete list, go to: www.HomeforMothers.com

When mailing items, please send directly to New Beginnings.

Christian Life Resources provides all fundraising, staffing and administrative services for *New Beginnings*.