

GROWING BRANCHES

*New Beginnings - A Home for Mothers
Milwaukee, WI • November 2014*

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HERE WE GROW... IN MILWAUKEE!

by Brianne Kluge, Home Manager

I can imagine that the move from the *New Beginnings'* home of 20 years in Denver, Colorado, to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was exciting – yet also a bit terrifying for those involved. Upon moving, only God knew who the staff members would be to run the program in Milwaukee, how the program might change, and what potential resources would be available. Staff, however, knew that one thing would remain certain – God's guidance. My favorite Bible verse applies perfectly: in Joshua 1:9 God says, *"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."*

So I am happy to announce: with God leading the way, *New Beginnings* has officially moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, all the way from Denver, Colorado. We are located near Wisconsin Lutheran College and right across the street from Children's Hospital! Our four-unit apartment complex will house a total of four mothers and their babies. The mothers will be residing in two-bedroom apartments upstairs; therefore each mother will share their apartment with another mother. Unlike the location in Denver, the Home Manager and Assistant Managers will not be living on the property. We intend on providing housing for three students attending WLC who will act as Resident Assistants to oversee the nighttime hours. The students will be living in one of the main level apartments. The other main level apartment will serve as a Common Room with a television and computer for the residents to use, a devotion area for daily morning devotions, and a staff office.

The basic structure and mission of the *New Beginnings'* program remains the same:

The mission of New Beginnings is to help a single mother with God's Word to grow spiritually, make God-pleasing decisions, be a responsible citizen in society, and be a competent and loving Christian parent.

New Beginnings is much more than a home for mothers; the program provides mothers with a Christian atmosphere to prepare these women to live Christ-centered lives. It also offers Christian counseling, parenting classes, opportunities for continuing education, and a variety of other resources these mothers need for a "new beginning" in life. We hope that our new location will open the door for continued and growing support, as we connect with the numerous resources available in the area.



Home Manager, Brianne Kluge in front of the new home location in Milwaukee, WI

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HERE WE GROW... WITH YOUR HELP

by *Brianne Kluge, Home Manager*

We thank God for providing us with volunteers and individuals who assist the program through donations, prayers, and volunteerism. As God says in Philippians 4:19, *“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”*

With the help of volunteers, we have been working hard to paint the apartments, so that the mothers can live in a warm and inviting atmosphere. The painting project has been much more time-consuming than we originally thought, but adding some color to the walls has made a big change! We want to thank all of our current (and future) volunteers for their help; we could not do it without you!



Brianne, Beth & Heidi painting

As we continue to prepare for residents, we ask that our supporters take a moment to consider the time and talents that go into making *New Beginnings* possible. Upon their entry, residents are provided with all the supplies that we use on a daily basis including: cleaning products, toiletries, paper products, dishes and utensils, towels, bedding, and much more. We have a baby registry set up at www.target.com. Use the first name: NEW and last name: BEGINNINGS. We want to thank all of the individuals who donate to *New Beginnings*, as you make the process possible! ♦

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New Beginnings hopes to collaborate with Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin to utilize parenting education classes and medical services. In addition, our connection with WLC has opened up opportunities to recruit volunteers from the college. We have hosted two volunteer events so far, in which the volunteers helped with painting the apartments. **Thank you, volunteers!** Also, the location in Denver utilized Christian Family Solutions for Christian counseling via webcam. Christian Family Solutions has a counseling office in Germantown, Wisconsin, which is in our backyard; therefore, we hope to incorporate in-person counseling with our residents in Milwaukee. Our Milwaukee location opens the door for support and networks in the community, which we hope will continually help *New Beginnings* to grow and flourish! ♦

GETTING TO KNOW OUR NEW STAFF MEMBERS... BRIANNE

I have been blessed to be born and raised in a loving Christian family. I grew up in Marshall, Wisconsin, where I attended church and grade school at St. John Lutheran Church (WELS). I graduated from Lakeside Lutheran High School in Lake Mills, Wisconsin.



*Brianne Kluge,
Home Manager*

During my college years, I attended UW-Milwaukee and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, as well as a degree in Honors. During my sophomore year, I studied abroad in London and traveled throughout Europe.

During my undergraduate career, I conducted an independent research project on stress and relaxation through the University and later worked as a researcher at Children's Hospital in the Pediatric Emergency Department. While attending UWM, I worked for Wisconsin Early Autism Project as a child line therapist, and later assisted cognitively-impaired elderly individuals through Homes for Independent Living.

In my free time, I enjoy singing, refurbishing furniture, interior decorating, camping, and taking care of my two beautiful cats: Mufasa and Jasmine. God-willing, I hope to be married someday soon and start a family of my own.

I am beyond excited to help mothers and babies build a foundation for their lives on the solid rock of Christ! *New Beginnings* has so much to offer, and I am blessed to be a part of such a wonderful mission. ♦

GETTING TO KNOW... BETH

I was raised in Sleepy Eye, Minnesota, where I attended St. John's grade school and then Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School in New Ulm. After graduation, I moved to Milwaukee to study at Wisconsin Lutheran College, where I majored in Psychology and graduated in 2008. While there, I was blessed with peers and professors who helped nurture my faith and expand my critical thinking skills. I ran on the cross country and track teams; tutored psychology students; was involved with several clubs, volunteer activities, and jobs related to social work; and traveled to Jamaica, Grenada, and Hungary through various courses.

My husband, Zach, and I have been married for six years, and we spent three of those years in Davenport, Iowa, where Zach attended chiropractic school. We returned to the Milwaukee area in July of 2013, and Zach opened his own clinic this last March in Brookfield, Wisconsin. We are the parents of three energetic girls: Eliza (4), Quinn (2), and Hadley (7 months). I spent the last four years mostly as a stay-at-home mom, but I also taught piano lessons at times and worked as a medical transcriptionist from home, which suited our needs well. However, God had other plans for me, and I was laid off from my job because of the switch to electronic medical records. Within a month, I was offered the job at *New Beginnings*, of which I feel incredibly blessed to be a part.

Although I am still learning more about parenting every day and my children continue to challenge me to be a better mother, I am very excited to help the ladies at *New Beginnings* with the transition into motherhood and teach them essential parenting skills. In addition, I hope to bring the love of Jesus into their lives. ♦



*Beth Shiels,
Assistant Home Manager*

GETTING TO KNOW... RACHEL

Born and raised in Andover, Minnesota, I was blessed to attend Cross of Christ Lutheran Church in Coon Rapids for grade school. The church also served as my home congregation. At 14 years of age I decided to attend high school at Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, Wisconsin, where I spent the greatest four years of my life.

Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota, was my college of choice. I graduated in 2013 with my B.A. in Psychology. During my time there, I was able to gain valuable knowledge on how to counsel through Christ. I also took an interest in weddings and obtained my certification as a Wedding Planner. Working in the bridal industry, I dealt with women, young and old, with self-esteem issues. Helping clients see how beautiful they truly are has been such a blessing.

In my spare time I like to sing, play piano, craft, travel, cook, and enjoy God's amazing creation. I am eager to begin our mission at *New Beginnings*, and help bring women and their children closer to the grace of their Heavenly Father. ♦



*Rachel Enstad,
Assistant Home Manager*

THANK YOU, HEIDI WESTLUND!

by Brianne Kluge, Home Manager

We were blessed to have former Home Manager, Heidi Westlund, fly to Milwaukee for a week to assist with training. Having been the Home Manager for three years, Heidi provided the current staff with a great deal of insight about working with mothers and babies. She discussed the challenges and rewards of working with women who may see the world differently than we do. The norms of residents who come from poverty differ from middle class norms, which serves as a challenge for both residents and staff members. Heidi's understanding of how to address differences in norms and build relationships with the residents was very insightful. She mentioned that her work at *New Beginnings* was rewarding, and we were happy to hear about her experiences! We also had the opportunity to see Heidi conduct an in-person interview with a potential resident. Thank you, Heidi, and God's blessings on your future endeavors! ♦

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

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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.

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