



Shepherd's Watch

December 2020

An executive summary of the Good Shepherd mission



Angels All Around Us

The team at Good Shepherd recently celebrated National Adoption Month by sharing the stories of a few of the families we helped create in 2020. Meet Collin and Bailey, who's prayers were answered this fall when they became the parents of a brand new baby girl, Parker. You can read their full story (excerpted below), along with many others, on the Good Shepherd website blog.

How did your adoption process begin? We looked at agencies and decided our priorities were working with one that was close to home, that felt like family, and was concerned for us and the child we would adopt rather than making money. We talked to Melyssa, our Good Shepherd adoption coordinator, and felt a connection with her right away.

Tell us about the entrustment ceremony. We recently celebrated the entrustment ceremony at Good Shepherd with Parker's mom and I don't know that I could do what she did. She said she knew we were going to love her baby and she chose us 100%. She gave us everything we ever wanted and couldn't give ourselves.

How has having Parker healed you? We can't have a biological child, and we like to think she's helped heal that piece of our broken heart. The days are easier. I have something to hold on to. She's filling a void I didn't ever think would be filled. She's made us a little family and it's better than we ever thought it could be.



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Treatment Foster Care Parent Wins National Scholarship

Congratulations to Robyne, a foster parent in Good Shepherd's Treatment Foster Care program, who was recently selected to receive a scholarship to participate in the Family Focused Treatment Association's annual conference. After 20 years of experience in dealing with youth who have the highest level of need, she says, "There is always more we can do."

She is drawn to serve females with complex traumas, and they often come to her with seemingly no supports at all. That's when her training as a retired school teacher and wisdom from serving more than 50 foster children over the years comes in handy.

"Robyne is recognized as a leader among Treatment Foster Care parents, and a life-long learner. She is a mentor and a role model. We are so thankful to have her as part of the team that walks alongside Good Shepherd to serve youth in our community," said Taylor Lindwedel, family clinician and therapist.

Friends of Good Shepherd Step Up to Make Christmas Merry

At the end of an especially challenging year, when the needs are greater than ever, it seems even more important to make sure no one feels hopeless on the day Christ was born.

Good Shepherd faced the daunting task of providing for close to 300 families, including those in our Pregnancy & Parenting Support, Foster Care, and Maternity Shelter programs.

"Our friends have come through for the children and families we serve. It's allowed us to remind them that there are people who care, that they are not alone," said Good Shepherd Development Coordinator Julie Rudden.

One hundred individuals supported the Christmas campaign through monetary donations. Groups and businesses who contributed include St. Francis of Assisi in St. Louis, St. Peter Church in Kirkwood, the Curia of the Archdiocese, St. Paul Church in St. Paul, Jefferson Bank in Creve Coeur, and Galanis Eyecare in Shrewsbury.

"This year has been unlike any other. We are so thankful for those who stepped up and allowed us to continue our ministry at Christmastime," said Rudden.

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Welcome to Kathy Folwer

On December 1, Good Shepherd Children & Family Services welcomed Kathy Fowler, MA, LPC, as Executive Director. The board of directors conducted a nation-wide search before selecting Fowler due to her deep knowledge of the agency and clinical expertise.

Fowler began her career with Good Shepherd in 2005 as a case manager and therapist before rising to a senior leadership role. She briefly left to share her skills with another nonprofit before returning to what she says "feels like home."

"Good Shepherd is where I fit and belong, and I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and get to work alongside our amazing team," said Fowler. "The services we provide are crucial, especially in these challenging times. It is an honor to connect children with families, support youth as they navigate the foster care system, and help parents who are struggling."



OUR MISSION

In response to the call of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, to help those in need, we connect children with families and keep families connected.