

HOPE IS POWERFUL.

When people think about the darkest times in their life, they often describe the times as being “hopeless”: the feeling that there is nothing beyond the bad times the person is experiencing. No hope and no future. Many times, Agape’s first contact with vulnerable children and expectant mothers in crisis starts with them being at a place of no hope. Agape seeks to provide services that reflect the love of God. Services that point to something better. **Proverbs 23:18 says, “There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.”**

Agape serves vulnerable children and expectant parents every day. All of those services provide healing from the trauma of abuse and neglect, but they also provide hope. **The gift of hope opens doors to a future that seemed impossible before.** Hope that is provided in the name of Jesus, and mirrors the unconditional, Agape, love of God. I want to share two stories that show the hope provided, through your support, by Agape.

FOUR TO FOREVER

The phone call said that they needed a foster home for four children, all under the age of four. That seems hard to believe, but the reality was more unbelievable. This sibling group was made up of two sets of twins. They said they would need a home for three of them immediately and the fourth would join the others when that child was released from the hospital, where the child was recovering from abuse related injuries.



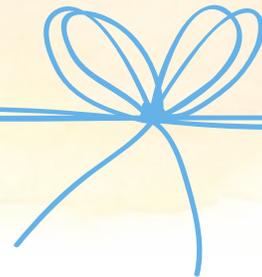
We called one of our foster homes to see if they would take two of the children. The foster mom responded, **“You are not going to separate those babies!”** They rearranged some furniture and their lives and brought hope to four sweet children whose world had been turned upside down by abuse. Less than a week later, the fourth child was released from the hospital. This family balanced doctors’ appointments, along with the usual busyness that comes with new foster care placements. The foster family was doing a great job and the children were doing well in their home.

After a few months, the foster mother called the Agape social worker to share that all indications were that these children would need an adoptive home. She stated that their family wasn’t the best fit for four young children for adoption, but she had talked with someone from her church who would be a good adoptive home when the time came.

Our Agape foster care director, Amy Corwin, met with the friends from church, and they agreed to begin the process. After completing the foster parent training and the home study process, the plan was looking more and more like adoption would be the direction for this case. But there was a twist: a younger sibling was on the way and would need a foster home as well. This new family agreed that the baby should join its siblings in their home. Today, all five of these children are in a safe, Christian home that is likely to be their home forever.

The future for these children looks very different today than it did the day they came to an Agape foster home. They are safe, their needs are being met, and there is a plan for their future. There is hope!

There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off. - PROVERBS 23:18



NINETEEN AND ALONE

Samantha (not her real name) is 19 and on her own. The day she called Agape was a day with very little hope. She was 20 weeks pregnant and someone had stolen her purse and her wallet. She had no identification, and she had no money. Her rent was due and she was about to be kicked out of the place where she was living. Desperate, she called Agape looking for help.

When our maternity worker, Riley Cowell, met with her, they talked about her family and her support system.

Samantha said, **“I really wish I had a mom or dad who was able to walk through this with me, but they are not available.”** For this young woman, her greatest need was not money or identification, but a relationship--someone to walk beside her in her situation that looked hopeless.

Agape helped her with a safe place to stay and helped her get a replacement driver’s license. Samantha, with Agape’s help, signed up for services to support pregnant mothers and started working on housing and job applications.

The day she found out she was approved for housing, she texted Riley to let her know. Samantha was excited but also thankful. She texted, “Thank you for your continuous help and support. Without it, I would have been in a shelter. Getting this apartment wouldn’t be possible without Agape’s help. From the bottom of my heart, me and my daughter appreciate it!”

As exciting as it was to read that text, it also broke my heart. As a father, I love to get texts and phone calls from my kids when they have accomplished something and are excited. Samantha had just accomplished the challenging process of getting housing and instead of calling her mom or dad, she texted Agape because we were available for her and we provided hope.

Samantha now has her own place to live and a job. She is no longer homeless or hopeless. Now she is hopeful. She is making plans to parent her daughter and to be a mother that will be there for her daughter no matter what happens down the road.

THE GIFT OF HOPE

This doesn’t happen without you – you are a part of each of those stories. Your support of Agape provides resources that are used to bring hope to the hopeless. Agape’s services to expectant parents regularly begin in places of despair.

Can you help Agape bring hope to expectant moms, like Samantha, who have nowhere else to turn?

Agape has seen significant growth in its foster care program in the last two years because of your support, but there are many more children who need hope. **Can you help more children go from uncertain futures to safety in loving, Christian foster homes?**

Your gift of hope will help meet a need today, but the hope you provide may last a lifetime and the love of God shared with them might provide hope for eternity. I hope you will consider using the envelope provided or going online to www.agapeforchildren.org and making a gift that gives hope.

Steve Duer
Executive Director

