

AGAPE



Annual Report 2023

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Number of Maternity
Cases Grows

5

Impact of
Foster Families

6

Annual
Report

LiFE



Life is at the Center of it All

I don't know about you but I love to hold a baby. I love the way they snuggle up into you. I love the way they make cute baby noises (okay, some of them might not be cute noises). I don't know about you but when I am standing holding a baby, I can't be still. I start swaying side to side and also patting that diapered bottom in rhythm with my rocking.

Why do babies bring us such joy? I think it is because they represent life and hope. We see the brokenness of the world all around us. The presence of a child is a reminder that life brings hope. With each birth, there are new hopes, new dreams, and new futures being imagined. All because of a new life.

There has been a great deal of talk in our country over the past several years about life. Court decisions were made, laws were passed, votes were taken. Life was at the center of it all.



At Agape of Central Alabama, we see the brokenness of the world everyday. But we also see hints of life.

We see an expectant mom who was in crisis because of domestic violence show

amazing resilience as she protects herself and her child and embarks on a journey to provide a safe and stable home for her children.

We see foster families walk with abused and neglected children through healing from their trauma.

We see foster families commit to children, not just for a season but for forever through adoption.

We see adoptive and foster families love not only children but the biological parents of those children as well.

We see Agape staff show Jesus' love through the way they serve the vulnerable with grace and truth.

Each of these hints of life that we see shine light into a dark and broken world. The result is we see hope for expectant mothers. We see healing for abused and neglected children. We see children reunified to safer situations or adopted into forever families - each outcome providing belonging forever.

The Gospel of John begins by describing Jesus' entry into the world:

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it."

- JOHN 1:4-5

At Agape, we talk about reflecting the love of God. We desire to shine His light into the darkness we see because we know the love of God brings life - a life that is not overcome by the darkness it has.

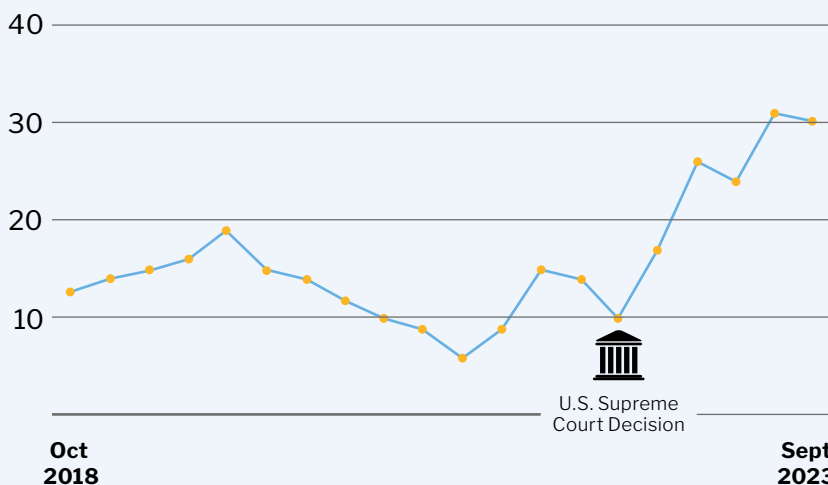
When I hold a baby, I am compelled to movement or action. Much the same way, Agape is compelled to action to help expectant mothers in crisis and children in foster care. Your participation in Agape's ministry through your support, and your prayers create opportunities where life changes. As you read over the next few pages, you will see lives changed and darkness overcome through life giving action.

For the children,

Steve Duer
Executive Director

Pregnant Women Served Each Quarter

Oct 2018 through Sept 2023





Expectation
HAS BECOME REALITY!

At this time last year, Steve wrote about expecting to serve more expectant mothers. Expectation has become reality. Agape is serving more expectant mothers in crisis than ever before. We have been able to serve a record number of expectant mothers because of you! Many of you committed to giving monthly. Others made one time gifts that were larger than gifts you had made before. You allowed Agape to show each mother who reached out to us and each unborn child she was carrying the love of Jesus.

Based on looking at the number of pregnant women at the end of the fiscal year, we may not have reached the peak. It is very likely we will serve more expectant mothers in 2024 than we did in 2023. Thank you for your continued support! You are giving more than life when you support Agape; you are supporting opportunities to thrive!

MATERNITY SERVICES IMPACT	FY 22	FY 23
Pregnant Women Served	36	65
Pregnant at End of Fiscal Year	16	23

In May, our maternity team got a call from a woman who found herself in a difficult situation. She was pregnant and parenting a 10-year-old child. Her crisis was that her living situation was dangerous because of domestic violence.

While every mother Agape serves is unique, this mother really seemed a bit different from the norm. For starters, she was 36 years old and had a college degree. She also had a mindset of wanting to help others who had a similar situation.

Her social worker assessed her needs and was helping her with her housing needs and transportation issues, but finding a safe and affordable home was proving difficult. Our staff encouraged the mother to reach out to her extended family to see if they would give her a temporary place to stay while she was on a waiting list. Her aunt offered to let the expectant mother and her child move in until a more permanent solution was secured.

After months of waiting, she was recently notified that she had been moved higher up on the housing waitlist. She was overjoyed at the news and could finally see a brighter future for herself and her children.

She now has a job that is helping others. She is excited that this job has promotion opportunities and gives her a chance at it being a career and not just a job.

Throughout her journey, this expectant mother remained determined and resilient, even in the face of adversity.

She now has a brighter future for herself, her 10 year old and her soon to be born child.

This is just one story of the many expectant mothers who received services from Agape this year. People often point to Agape’s services and how they help give life to the babies being carried by the expectant mothers. But we see our services as being life giving for the mothers as well. This thought has been affirmed by statements from expectant mothers this year:

“Agape saved my life” - Another parenting mother who reached out to Agape because of domestic violence.

“I am making plans to enroll next fall” - A young mother who made an adoption plan who asked her Agape social worker to accompany her on a college visit.

“She showed us how Jesus is” - A young mother who told us she “didn’t really believe in Jesus.”

Your support of Agape makes you a part of each of these stories. You were a part of giving life!

MATERNITY STAFF



Riley Cowell
Maternity Program Supervisor
(Montgomery)



Grace Richardson
Maternity Social Worker
(Birmingham)



Kelly Curry
Director of Clinical Services
(Birmingham)



Aminta Alvarez
Maternity Advocate
(Montgomery)

A Sacred Opportunity

We often see babies when we think about adoption. It is a sacred opportunity to be in the room as a birth mother and an adoptive family talk about a child they both love. That is a special and memorable day full of beauty and brokenness. But as with any child, what happens after you leave the hospital is as important as what happens at the hospital. Agape is committed to walking alongside families as they are on their journey of adoption.

Agape's adoption staff provides key services to families to help with the life long journey. Of course, those services start at the beginning of the process with adoption specific training and preparation. As one of our adoptive fathers put it, "You aren't born with adoption education."

ADOPTION SERVICES STAFF



Caitlin Inman
Director of Adoption
Services



Amy Dummier
Adoption Social
Worker

THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

Agape provides therapy services to help with some of life's challenges, especially those that involve the complexities of adoption. Agape's therapeutic services team is made up of people with experience with adoption related issues. Agape's therapy services give priority to Agape adoptive families, but they are open to families who have adopted through other agencies.

Once a match is made, Agape staff facilitate a meeting with the birth mother before the placement so that a relationship can be built and expectations are clear to all parties. Both the adoptive family and the birth mother are supported by their own staff person at these meetings.

At placement, our adoption team provides hands-on support. After the adoption is finalized, Agape's staff are still there facilitating ongoing communication with birth mothers and providing ongoing support to the family as needed.



ADOPTION IMPACT

Domestic

6

Babies placed with Christian adoptive families

Intercountry

Provided home study and post placement services for

19

FAMILIES

THERAPEUTIC SERVICES

157

Sessions provided to children and families

Please join us in celebrating these families who celebrated adoptive placements this fiscal year!





FOSTER CARE

Life can change in an instant.

An Agape foster family in the Wiregrass area thought they were finished fostering. They had served many children very well, providing for the needs of the children in their home.

Then a phone call came.

The call was from the biological mother of the child they had served almost five years ago. This mother was reaching out to the family in desperation. Her situation had deteriorated and her child would be needing to go into foster care again. She trusted the Agape foster family and if her child needed to be in

foster care, she wanted the child back with this family. Without hesitation, the foster family agreed to take the child back into their home. Agape and the Department of Human Resources worked out the details to make the placement official.

Once the child was settled back into their home, the family said it was like she never left. even though she is a teenager now. The family is helping the child heal from the hard things she experienced while she was with her mother. This child has once again found safety and security in a Christian foster home because of this family and Agape.

This story is just one of the 120 lives that were touched through Agape's foster families and foster care staff during this fiscal year. But this impact doesn't happen without you. Your support creates safety and security for vulnerable children and opens doors for the life we would want for children.



FOSTER CARE TEAM



Amy Corwin
Foster Care
Director
(Montgomery)



Angie Blackwell
Foster Care
Social Worker
(Birmingham)



Angie Brabham
Foster Care
Social Worker
(Wiregrass)



Olivia Fletcher
Foster Care
Social Worker
(Tuscaloosa)



Angel Hill
Foster Care
Social Worker
(Montgomery)



Jessica Rush
Foster Care
Program Supervisor
(Birmingham)



Melissa Sproule
Live the Promise
Coordinator
(Birmingham)

FOSTER CARE IMPACT

120

Children Served

21

Children Reunified
with Family

21

Children Adopted
by Foster Families

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM



Baron Goins
Director of Church
& Community
Relations



Caroline Addison
Community
Outreach
Coordinator



Meg Denson
Office Assistant
(Birmingham)



Stacy Royal
Office Manager



Caroline Morse
Bookkeeper

Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR
OCT. 2022 - SEPT. 2023



Each year, Agape is reminded of the goodness and faithfulness of God and His people. Every need that we expressed was met, often in ways that abundantly exceeded our expectations.

Fees for services account for just 19% of the revenue that covers Agape's expenses. Without the support from faithful individuals, businesses, churches and organizations, Agape would not be able to impact the lives you have seen in this newsletter. Every supporter gives in his or her own way, but each gift provides hope to vulnerable children through the services of Agape. We couldn't operate without the church that includes Agape in its budget or hosts an Agape Sunday; the business owner who supports Agape by providing free or reduced cost services; the friend of Agape who is a table captain for a dinner in her area, the



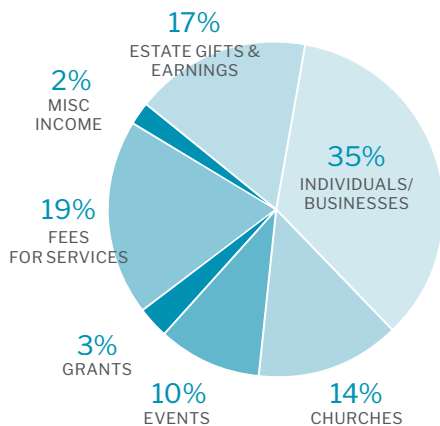
faithful Care Club member who makes a monthly gift; the sweet lady who serves as a pecan representative at her church; the small group that decides to sponsor a child at Christmas or to make sure he has everything he needs for school, and the retirement community that creates a way for their residents to bless children and expectant mothers. We are thankful for each gift that mirrors God's heart for the vulnerable.

This year, we were blessed by a friend of the agency who left a significant estate gift in his will to make sure Agape can care for vulnerable children for years to come. Agape is honored to be a part of his legacy!

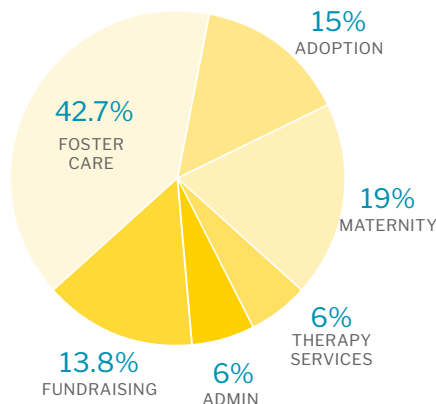
Helping vulnerable children is the focus of our daily expenses. In Fiscal Year 2023, Agape saw a significant increase in the expenditures for expectant mothers. This was due to the significant increase in the number of mothers we served.

These are unaudited totals. Agape undergoes an independent audit annually. If you would like to review an audit report, please contact Steve Duer, Executive Director.

REVENUE



EXPENSES



AGAPE EVENTS

We are so thankful for the continued support of Agape events. These events help Agape meet the needs of vulnerable children by raising funds and building relationships with supporters. We continue to be overwhelmed by the sacrificial support you so graciously pour out for those whom Agape serves.

We just wrapped up our 7th Annual Pulling for Kids Clay Shoot Classic at Selwood Farm with 35 teams and some wonderful volunteers participating. It was a wonderful day for Agape and the vulnerable populations we serve! We are looking forward to the 8th Annual Pulling for Kids, October 22, 2024. We hope you are making plans to participate as a sponsor, a shooter or a volunteer.

Agape's dinner events continue to play an important role in connecting with friends and making new friends. We love sharing how you, through your support of Agape, are impacting vulnerable children, Agape families and our staff. At these dinners, funds are being raised, families explore being foster and adoptive parents, and people commit to praying for Agape's ministry. We hope you will be able to join us at one of these events in 2024.

Upcoming Agape Dinner Dates

- Connecting Hearts Montgomery- February 27th
- Love Matters Tuscaloosa- April 23rd
- Raising Hope Birmingham- Stay tuned for details!

We would love to talk to you about being a table captain at one of our dinners. Table captains are essential as they invite others to join them at an Agape dinner to introduce them to the ministry and encourage them to get involved.

Events are a great way to get involved in the ministry of Agape. Will you consider being a part of an Agape event in 2024? There are multiple opportunities throughout the year to sponsor, attend, volunteer, or pray.

By supporting Agape events, you partner with Agape to help further the mission of creating permanency for vulnerable children. Your support makes an impact in so many lives throughout our communities. For more information about getting involved in Agape events, contact Baron Goins at bgoins@agapeforchildren.org.



For the last 13 years, the Saturday before Mother's Day has been the Agape Run For A Mom. This event honored birth mothers, adoptive mothers, and mothers in general while we all ran, walked, volunteered and had a wonderful time together. After much discussion with the Agape team, we have decided we want to find a new, fresh way to honor birth mothers and bring more awareness to their needs. We have some wonderful plans that we will be sharing with you as we approach May of 2024.

As we wrap up the Run For A Mom era, we want to say a great big thank you to everyone who participated. Thank you to our sponsors, volunteers, runners and our host, Vaughn Park Church of Christ. Without each of you, Run For A Mom would not have been as special as it was.

Thank you!

AGAPE

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AGAPE

of Central Alabama

BIRMINGHAM • MONTGOMERY • TUSCALOOSA • WIREGRASS

FOSTER CARE • ADOPTION • UNPLANNED PREGNANCY ASSISTANCE

www.agapeforchildren.org



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