

“New moms know that the first year of motherhood is a ride that no theme park could simulate: the lack of sleep, the intense love for your child, the wishing that these days of babyhood would never end, the praying that they will, and the mother-child bond that is irrevocably cemented into your heart and soul.”

LIFELONG FRIENDS

Born Through Adoption

Joi's Story

A little more than nine years ago, my husband and I began a journey that our feeble minds and weary hearts could not have imagined. After completing piles of paperwork, writing the “Dear Birthmother” letter, and putting together our profile of pictures, we began the “waiting” stage. After years of infertility, miscarriage, heartache, and loss, I couldn't imagine how I could wait any longer.

As we drove to our first waiting family group meeting, I remember how nervous I was. I was full of questions that I didn't know how to ask. But as soon as I walked in, I saw a smiling face and instantly felt a connection. Over the next several group meetings, my husband and I developed a friendship with Donna and Tim White, and we always sat together at the meetings. Our friendship grew during the months we were in the waiting families group, and we even volunteered together to help with the annual Bethany Family Picnic.

On March 25, 1999, we received “the call.” We had been chosen by a birthmother! I couldn't believe that the wait was over and my child was on the way. Instantly, my heart felt a sharp pain of sorrow for Donna. I knew what it felt like to wait, to want, and to know that you would give anything to hold that precious child God created just for you. How would I tell her? God had knit together a very special bond between us and I was worried for her heart. I knew that she would be so happy for us, but I also knew the pain of waiting. But God had a plan that was so amazing that none of us could have worked it out as perfectly as He did.

As we sat in the Bethany office holding, cooing, and just being overwhelmed with love for our precious little Jacob, a scream rang out through the office. At first, I was terrified. Had something gone wrong? But the scream didn't sound like a fearful scream. A few moments later, Bethany's director told us that Tim and Donna had just been

chosen by a birthmom, and they were getting twins! We brought our precious treasure home on June 4, 1999, and Tim and Donna brought their girls home just five days later. Only God could do that.

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We shared the same new experiences as good friends do, yet our friendship transcends parenting. My non-adoptive mom friends don't understand when I am offended by a callous comment about adoption or a mother's decision to make an adoption plan for her child. And then there are the questions we all have in our hearts about how our children will process their stories of adoption. It is a great comfort to know that we have each other to confide in, to share ideas, and to support in prayer. Our children, Jacob, Chapple, and Hannah, will always know that there is someone else who will listen and understand the heart of adoption.

Our children have literally grown up together. The White family has been an important part of our family and, if Jacob has his way, they always will be. Jacob has been smitten by Chapple since birth. They have been “engaged” since they were three. One night as I was reading to him at bedtime, he said, “You know, Mommy, when Chapple and I get married we're going to adopt kids too.” Maybe they will. Then God can reveal to them this wonderful, incredible journey called adoption.

Donna's Story

It's unbelievable to think that more than nine years ago, with God's guidance, we made the wonderful decision to adopt. Tim and I were excited, nervous, and a little scared. After the initial paperwork was mailed, we wanted to be a part of every meeting that was offered for waiting parents. I remember looking around the room and realizing that we all had something in common: We all prayed and yearned to be parents. There was one couple who participated in a lot of discussions and seemed very friendly. After one of the meetings, we began to talk and realized that we had a lot in common with Bill and Joi Wasill, not to mention that we lived down the street from one another.

We started talking regularly and became each other's support through the waiting process. It's difficult to describe the bond we developed almost immediately. Even though our stories of infertility were different, we each knew what the other couple was going through. To have someone truly understand that heart-wrenching feeling was a blessing from God.

I vividly remember receiving a call from Joi telling us they were invited to meet a birthmother. We were so thrilled for them. It was the next step closer to becoming parents. I remember that she indicated they waited only nine months for this call and, by that time, we had waited almost a full year.

Believe it or not, we were not sad about our wait. We were definitely anxious for ourselves but absolutely thrilled for our friends. We could not wait to hear about every step as though we were going through it with them.

After what seemed like a long wait, their little Jacob was here and they had their placement ceremony on June 4, 1999. On that same day, while Bill, Joi, and baby Jacob were still at Bethany's office, Bethany's director received a phone call that we were chosen to

be parents of twin baby girls. Through the hands of Bethany and our children's dear birthmothers, God blessed both families on the same day.



As soon as Chapple and Hannah came home, they had to meet their best friend, Jacob. For the first five years of their lives, they played together almost every day. They developed a bond somewhat like their parents.

At eight years old, they are now going in three separate directions with their hobbies and interests. They may not see each other as often, but when they do, it's an immediate connection as if only a day had passed. This is also true with me and Joi. We do not speak with each other every day anymore, but we both know that we are and will always be there for each other.

We are family. We are part of God's family. He placed us together for many reasons, and we thank Him every day for that blessing.

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