

the Children's Voice

A Publication of The Kentucky United Methodist Children's Homes • July/August 2020

THE POWER OF *Belonging*

All Tina needed was to know she belonged. Read her story on page 4.

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August 30, 2020

OFFERING OF HOPE

— for 5th Sunday —



Bringing Hope to Children Since 1871



From the President's Desk

by Julie Hager Love,
President/CEO

Just then a religion scholar stood up with a question to test Jesus. "Teacher, what do I need to do to get eternal life?"

He answered, "What's written in God's Law? How do you interpret it?"

He said, "That you love the Lord your God with all your passion and prayer and muscle and intelligence—and that you love your neighbor as well as you do yourself."

"Good answer!" said Jesus. "Do it and you'll live."

Looking for a loophole, he asked, "And just how would you define 'neighbor'?" - Luke 10:25-29 (MSG)

Jesus answers this question with the story of the Good Samaritan: a man traveling was attacked by robbers and left to die. After being ignored by two Jewish religious leaders, he was cared for by a Samaritan, an outsider to Jewish culture. Through this story, Jesus asks us to consider the question, "who is my neighbor?"

As I am writing this, we still find ourselves in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout this time, you have joined with many others and been our neighbor. From masks, to cleaning wipes, to prayers and cards, to continued donations, we have known your love and care.

As one of the youth in our residential care recently wrote, "Thank you for all the gifts you give us. We love them and we love you!" We are so thankful and blessed that during this time of so many crises in our world, you continue to remember and love those we serve.

I'm also mindful that sometimes we are like the religious scholar and we might try to "look for a loophole" to avoid serving others. But Jesus' love is radical - it is for everyone. We are to love and care for *all* our neighbors.

One of the ways I remember this is by reading Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's "Letter from

Birmingham Jail" multiple times a year. It is a convicting document that challenges me to remember that my actions and words must always be lived in the light of the Gospel.

At KyUMH, you are working hand in hand with us to live in the light of the Gospel. Our mission is to care for young people who come from a diversity of backgrounds, many who have first-hand experience of being taken for granted and overlooked. Some have faced racial prejudice; some have suffered from economic hardships.

Thank you for supporting our staff and the youth and families we serve. In the words of Dr. King, "We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

President/CEO
Rev. Julie Hager Love

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or mail to one of our campuses:

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Nicholasville, KY 40356
(859) 523-3001

Mary Kendall Campus
201 Phillips Court
Owensboro, KY 42303
(270) 683-6481

Accredited by:



Our Belief

We believe every individual is an individual of worth, entitled to God's gift of wholeness of life.

The Kentucky United Methodist Children's Homes is accredited through the national Council on Accreditation (COA).

We serve persons regardless of race, ethnicity, economic status, sex or religion.

Meet Your Development Team • (859) 523-3001



Jessica Fleck

Volunteer and Campaign Coordinator

Jess joined the Development team about three years ago. She's a licensed minister in the Christian and Missionary Alliance church and recently obtained a doctorate in ministry. Jess loves caring for and supporting volunteers. She often says, "volunteers help our kids see love in ways they never knew was possible. They make a big difference!" She also enjoys leading the Nicholasville and Lexington campus chaplains and mentors. Additionally, she's committed to helping the Capital Campaign to move forward.

Get in touch with Jess to learn more about volunteer opportunities or how to contribute to our capital campaign!

Did you know you can
SHOP-TO-GIVE?



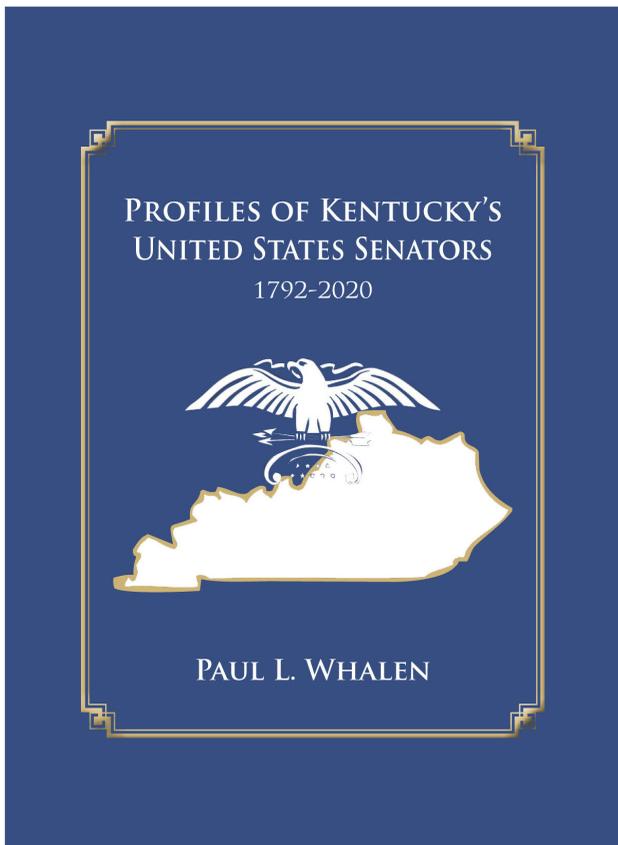
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You shop. Amazon gives.

When you sign up with **Kroger Community Rewards** or **Amazon Smile**, Kroger and Amazon will donate a portion of your purchase.

Sign up online at kroger.com/communityrewards and smile.amazon.com



Originally created in Western KY by a pastor, it's "the only sauce guaranteed to save kids!" Used for dipping and barbecuing. Great on chicken, pork, fish, and much more. Order online at kittawasprangs.com



Scheduled for release in the Fall of 2020...

PROFILES OF KENTUCKY'S UNITED STATES SENATORS — 1792-2020
by Paul L. Whalen

Since 1792, a total of sixty-six men have represented the Commonwealth in Kentucky's two Senate seats. Through the years, proud Kentuckians have been leaders in that body, including many big names such as Henry Clay, John J. Crittenden, Alben Barkley, and Mitch McConnell, to name a few.

In his book, *Profiles of Kentucky's United States Senators*, author Paul L. Whalen presents biographical essays, with portrait photographs, from everyone who has represented Kentucky in the US Senate since its inception. The book also includes interesting "First and Onlys" in for Kentucky US Senators, Senate Salaries since 1789, and US Senators from other states who were born in Kentucky.

This is the perfect library addition to anyone interested in Kentucky's rich political history, which provides an insightful look at the men who shaped our nation's history through the years.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR - Attorney Paul L. Whalen is a resident of Fort Thomas, Kentucky, and is past chair of the KY Conference of the UMC Commission on Archives and History.
6x9, 352 pages, \$29.95 — Note: a portion of author royalties will benefit Kentucky United Methodist Children's Homes



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THE POWER OF Belonging



by Rebecca Hurshman,
Communications/PR Coordinator

Tina arrived at the Kentucky United Methodist Children's Homes (KyUMH) very guarded. She had good reasons. **Tina suffered from emotional abuse from her mother and physical and sexual abuse by her father** as young as four years old.

Tina felt the only way to protect herself was by lashing out. Her mother sent her away to a treatment facility at age 10. **"I never felt like she wanted me,"** Tina says. She moved from facility to facility trying to stay away from her mother. At age 14, she arrived at KyUMH.

And then she received a handmade quilt that changed everything.

For the first time in her life, Tina felt like she was wanted. "It meant someone

cared enough about me to make this for me," she says.

It took time for Tina to learn to trust the caring staff around her. **Through consistent counseling, Tina opened up to her therapist.** She was able to process the pain of her childhood and establish life-long friendships with her peers and staff.

"KyUMH was the best thing that ever happened to me."

With newfound confidence, Tina flourished. She enjoyed attending the local public school and participated in athletic and social events. Tina was highly involved at a Methodist church in Lexington, singing and traveling with the church choir. She worked in the

KyUMH dining hall and at a shop in Versailles.

"I had a lot more opportunities to do things I wanted to do," Tina says. "The town I grew up in was not great. KyUMH saved me from teenage pregnancy or drug addiction. I'm so grateful I didn't fall into those traps."

After graduating from high school, Tina was one of the first young people to participate in KyUMH's independent living program. She moved from an on-campus apartment to an

apartment in Lexington when she was 19 years old. **She then went to college** and graduated with a degree in computer programming.

Now, Tina is married and mother to three children. "My experience at KyUMH helps me in my daily life," she says. Through daily behavioral challenges, Tina says she knows how to properly discipline her children, trying to "make my household different than mine was growing up, without the screaming and hatred."

After all these years, Tina says **"KyUMH was is probably the best thing that ever happened to me."** She dreams of working with children at KyUMH in honor of all the staff who were so committed to her.

And she still has the quilt that changed her life.



Tina's middle and youngest children.

It's been a tough year.

Now more than ever, it should be normal to seek professional help to manage stress.

Seeing a mental health professional can help if you or someone you love is facing:

Overwhelming grief, hopelessness, sadness, or thoughts of suicide

Obsessive or compulsive behaviors

Persistent anxiety that interferes with daily activities or sleep

Loss of a friend, family member or coworker

Abuse or traumatic experience

Addiction

Trouble managing anger or rage

It's okay to reach out even if your situation doesn't exactly match those listed here!

Mental Health Resources:

KyUMH Evolve Counseling Center
Owensboro, KY
(270) 683-6481 x 209
evolve@kyumh.org

Online Counseling: betterhelp.com
Non-Emergency Substance Abuse:
FindHelpNowKY.org
Directory of Counselors:
psychologytoday.com/therapists

Emergency Hotlines:
National Suicide Prevention Hotline:
1 (800) 273-8255
Crisis Text Line: Text MHA to 741741

Finding Unconditional Love



Spiritual Life at KyUMH helps youth discover Jesus' healing love. Our chaplains reflect on their experiences with our youth.

“As I think about the lives of the young people who pass through our care, I wonder if we really take time to thank God for the honor that is ours to work with, and to share with these young people. After working for over 15 years as staff, supervisor, and as a medical assistant, my life has been changed by these many young people.

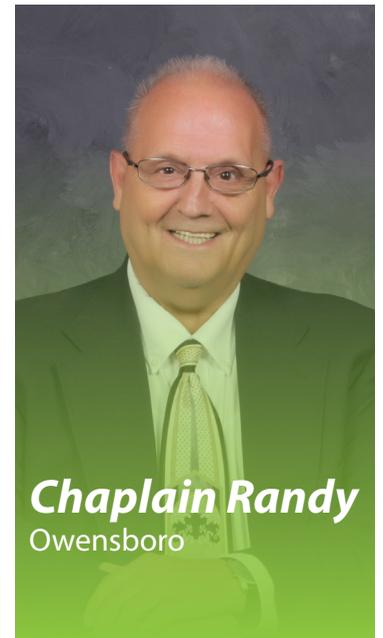
These young people have experienced more difficult and terrible things than most adults have in their lifetime, yet, they keep searching and hoping that there is something better for them.

I hear the Words of Jesus, “Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.” Through my eyes I see the anger, the disappointment, and sometimes bitterness that the residents have, but there’s more to them than these things.

Many of them desire to know a reason to hope, and that’s where I feel my calling is with them as I meet with them weekly. In the beginning they are uncertain about me, and wondering if they can trust me. For me to break the ice with them, I will tell them

a corny joke. I feel that laughter is like a medicine, and if I can help them to smile, or laugh a little then I can begin to minister to them through the Bible, and through my life before them.

God has been gracious in our ministry with them, we have led over 40 young people to the Lord, and baptized over 30 of them. Doesn’t make them perfect in their behaviors, and decisions they make, but it does make a difference. In Faith Group they can find a reason for hope. Through this Chaplain’s eyes they have blessed me beyond measure.”



Chaplain Randy
Owensboro



Chaplain Kiki
Lexington

“I decided to work at the KyUMH because I wanted to give youth hope and let them know there's a brighter future for them.

Sometimes in life things can get really hard and confusion can arise. Having someone to walk alongside you through the tough time can be comforting and just what someone may need. My hope is that I can be there

for the residents and show them that I care about them.

I really enjoy the grace and pace in which this KyUMH is run. From what I’ve seen, each leader is very thorough and unhurried when making decisions both big and small. This shows me that the heart behind this agency is genuine, sincere, and intentional. The passion and love for these young

people's growth, health, and future is inspiring.

Lastly, I appreciate the communication that takes place for the safety of the residents. KyUMH is seeking to communicate clearly the vision and mission and is for the health and betterment of each and every person connected to it.”

“Before moving to Kentucky to embark on my seminary journey, I spent a great deal of time volunteering with underprivileged children and youth within my hometown of Princeton, West Virginia. I also spent time in the summers coordinating youth mission trips to various group home facilities throughout the Appalachians.

It had always been my hope and dream to start an after-school program/ children’s home in my hometown. Being a chaplain at KyUMH has provided

me not only the chance to serve wonderful youth, but it has also provided me with the ability to learn more about the inner workings of a non-profit facility, so I can hopefully one day achieve my dream of opening one in West Virginia.

One of the areas that I enjoy most about working at KyUMH is seeing how God is at work within the lives of each of our kids. Each week as I go about leading chapel, meeting one on one, hanging out during mealtimes, interacting with mentors and volunteers and

praying/connecting with each one of our kids, I am inspired and amazed at how far they’ve come and their willingness to share and learn about the gospel of Christ! I am blessed by the opportunity to get to know, learn, and minister to each one of our amazing kiddos!

Our kids can always use, and certainly appreciate your prayers, especially during this unusual summer season.”



Chaplain Kalin
Nicholasville

How you can pray for our youth:

- Keep them in mind as they deal with changes to their weekly routine due to COVID precautions, especially as they miss seeing volunteers and mentors.
- Pray for them as they learn to live and grow in relationship with one another.
- Say a prayer for them as they learn what it means to grow closer to God and deeper in faith.



FEATURED FOREVER FAMILY

The McNeils

A beautiful adoption story unfolding despite COVID-19.

by Steve and Victoria McNeil

We are Steve and Victoria McNeil and we along with our three children currently reside in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. We met when we were in college and dated for three years before we got married in 2004. **We have always wanted to adopt since we were first married**, but we wanted to have biological children first and then wait till they were older to adopt.

Very much to our surprise we found out we were expecting our fourth baby back in the spring of 2019. Unfortunately, we miscarried, and we were brought to our knees.

We looked to God to give us grace and strength that only He could provide. Not only did God comfort us in our time of grief, but He also spoke to our hearts and **we realized we have more love to give.**

It was only a month and a half later that Victoria joined a Facebook group to follow some college friend's adventure of hosting an orphan from Colombia. Little did we know how much that Facebook group might change the course of our lives.

We started researching the hosting organization, thinking that our first step would be hosting an orphan in the summer. However, **we were continually drawn back this 10-year-old boy that did not have a family** of his own.

We decided to step out in faith and started re-imagining our lives with an older adopted child. We started our adoption process on Labor Day weekend 2019 and **we are now that sweet boy's chosen forever family.**

Before COVID-19 hit the U.S., we were scheduled to travel to Colombia either in May or June, but along with everyone else our plans were altered.

It was frustrating and heartbreaking to be so far away from our son in such a devastating

time with so many unknowns. The only thing we knew to cling to was God's Word and His promises. We knew that God was still writing our family's story and that He was so faithful to bring us this far into the adoption process that He wasn't going to abandon us now.

"It is an honor and privilege to add another sweet boy to our family."

This "extra" time allowed us to prepare our home for a fourth child. **We also were given the opportunity to create family videos to send to our son as a way of correspondence.**

We are so happy to announce that we have "tentative" travel dates! Steve and I should be able to travel at the beginning of September of 2020.

Our children are our greatest blessings and we count it an honor and privilege to add another sweet boy to our family. So many doors have been opened throughout our



adoption process and now we can't wait to tell him how much we love him and are able to hug on him forever. Our friends and family are our constant support and they already love him like their own.

At the very beginning of our process, when looking for a social worker to help us with our home studies, we found the incredible Mary Kendall Adoption Program. We could not have done this process without Jeannie Howard at Mary Kendall. **Jeannie has represented our family so well and went above and beyond for us.** We are forever grateful for her love, dedication, patience and support she has shown us throughout our entire adoption journey.

If God has laid adoption on your heart, please don't give up! Please give God a chance to write your story. You will not regret it. In fact, you will be amazed how God will change you for the better in the process. **We are all called to love the fatherless.**



New brother
arriving soon!



MARY KENDALL
ADOPTION PROGRAM

Angels Needed

— A COVID-19 Update —

by Melinda Ryles-Smith
Vice President for Development

So far, by following CDC guidelines, we have been able to keep the virus out.

However, we are experiencing financial challenges. The usual fundraisers that we rely on have been cancelled. More concerning is that the ability of churches to support us through the Offering of Hope for Fifth Sunday has been diminished. In-person services are either not possible or are being severely limited in capacity. Bulletin inserts used to announce the Offering are currently discouraged. Despite this,

there are hopeful ways to move forward for our kids!

With your help, children who have experienced tragic abuse can have a new beginning.

You can help bring the peace of financial stability for the kids by making a commitment now.

You can give a gift either monthly, quarterly, or annually through our Angel Sponsor program. Under normal circumstances, our Angel Sponsors serve as

guardians to our children and help us care for them between Offerings. Now, with the disruption of COVID-19, our need for you to engage in this way is critical.

You can choose your amount of your gift, or choose to support a specific area of interest.

The enclosed envelope can be used to begin your Angel Sponsorship or you can go online to kyumh.org/donate/sponsorship to participate.

Your gifts will help us fill the gap and provide stability for the kids! Thank you for your faithful support.

Leadership Skills \$250/mo

Give one week a month of training in relationship building and problem-solving.

Healthcare \$125/mo

Give one week a month of professional counseling, medical and dental care.

Education \$75/mo

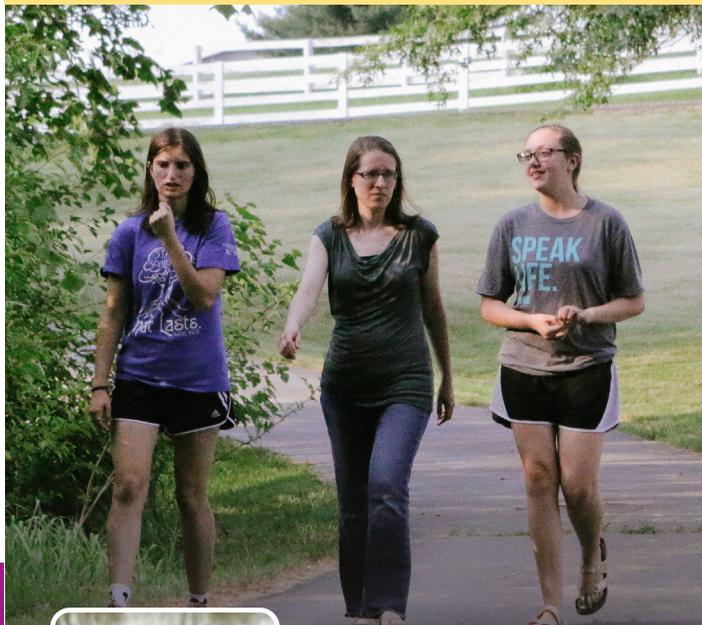
Give two days a month of individualized education.

Daily Needs \$50/mo

Give five days a month of food, housing and clothing.

Spiritual Life \$30/mo

Give three days a month of Christ-centered spiritual mentoring.



We're hiring!

Do you or someone you know want to make a difference where you work?

The Kentucky United Methodist Children's Homes (KyUMH) is seeking passionate, mission driven individuals. Our goal is to help our clients find healing and build a brighter future through professional therapeutic interventions.



SCAN ME

View open positions and apply online at kyumh.org/careers



"I'm grateful to be a person the boys and girls can depend on... Our team is committed to them."
- Steven Roy,
with KyUMH 13 years

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What will your legacy be?

Charitable giving through your will is a stress-free way to invest in Kentucky's next generation.

Clip and mail this section using the enclosed envelope to learn more about how you can empower KY's most vulnerable youth!

Please send me information on:

Charitable Annuities Giving in my will Capital Campaign

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Birthday: ____/____/____

Email: _____



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Freddie Westrick
Charles Westrick

BIRTHDAYS IN HEAVEN

John David Eubank
Johnny & Sherree Eubank

Bobbe Fultz
Jared Mattingly

Martha B. Henry
G. Edward Henry

FATHER'S DAY

All Men of Bethany UMC
Valley Station UMW

All Fathers
1st UMC Greenup- Molly Leslie Circle

All Men of Prairie Village UMC
Valley Station UMW

1 YEAR ANNIVERSARY AT KYUMH

Rev. Julie Hager Love
Carla Barr
Robin Campbell
Melinda Ryles-Smith



1115 Ashgrove Road
Nicholasville, KY 40356

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Follow us online for updates on our events

Many of our annual events have been cancelled or postponed due to COVID-19

Stay up to date at
kyumh.org/events
or facebook.com/KYUMH

WISHLISTS

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we need supplies to keep our kids clean & occupied!

Nicholasville Campus

- Lysol Disinfectant Spray
- Clorox wipes
- Appropriate teen novels
- Art Supplies
- Laundry Detergent Pods
- Deodorant (men's & women's)
- Shampoo and Conditioner
- Body Wash
- Underwear (new; adult sizes)
- Socks (new; adult sizes)
- Gift Cards (Kohls, Walmart, Chick-fil-a, Burger King, Target)
- Magazines (cars/vehicles, sports, teen, fashion)
- Bath towels, wash cloths
- Toothbrushes
- Hair gel and hair spray

For more information,
call (859) 523-3001 or info@kyumh.org

Mary Kendall Campus (Owensboro)

- Paper Towels
- Lysol Disinfectant Spray
- Clorox Wipes
- Body Wash (Women's)
- Toothpaste
- Bath towels, wash cloths
- Hair conditioner
- Basketballs and volleyballs
- Gift Cards (Kohls, Walmart, restaurants)
- Bulletin board supplies
- School supplies
- **Composition notebooks/ journals** (please no spirals)
- **Art supplies**
- **Magazines and books** (appropriate for teen girls)

For more information,
contact Roy Hicks at (270) 683-6481, ext. 221