

the heartbeat of agape

Fall 2020



Misunderstood

By: Leanna Simpson, Executive Director

From a young age, I remember watching my family, my peers, those around me and seeing how they often misunderstood who I was, misinterpreting my words and my actions while not understanding my heart. It was

through this that I decided to not talk. The reality of opening up my heart and then being “misunderstood” was too painful...so I retreated into silence. I continued on this course for 10 years. Through these years, I learned some things, not only about myself but about others. I watched people. I observed that they also had fears that dictated their behavior. I learned that in their own way, they also felt alone and wanted to be understood. I watched how it played out in their lives.

I realized that **there is nothing lonelier than living a life seeking acceptance from others...**People are

fleeting, their love changes, they are not always loyal, and they are not constant. This reality brought me to the cross, where I chose Christ. Only in Him could I feel completely known, loved, and accepted. At Agape, we see and serve the lonely and the misunderstood every day. They come for a physical need and we are allowed to meet it. **Any person without Christ is lonely,** whether they understand this fact or not. As we are allowed to serve in this space, we are able to listen and be the hands and feet of Christ. **The reality is we can only reach the unborn if we unconditionally love the mother.** This is living out the gospel...and this is the work that we are honored to do.

I would encourage each of you today to face your greatest fears. Name it. Look at it. Acknowledge it. And then take it to the cross, my friend. It is only at the cross that you will find the hope and healing that you seek.

Operation Christmas Cheer 2020

We're so excited to launch our annual Operation Christmas Cheer program, but we need your help to make it happen! Sponsor and spread the joy of Christmas by donating a stocking filled with goodies:

- \$20 Walmart gift card
- \$5 coffee gift card
- Fuzzy socks
- A bag of candy
- A pampering item such as lotion, a candle, nail polish, etc.

If you would like to donate an Operation Christmas Cheer stocking, please email director@agapedsm.com with your name and contact information.



We Give Thanks!

- We are very grateful to Lutheran Church of Hope for choosing Agape as the recipient of a \$5,000 grant! We are so blessed to have church partners who support and come alongside us as we offer help, hope, care and compassion to all we serve.
- We are also grateful to have been chosen as a recipient of the Baptist Convention of Iowa ministry grant for 2020. Thank you for supporting us as we serve more and serve better for the cause of Christ!
- Since our Virtual Gala in September, we have raised \$224,455.72 toward our \$450,000 budget. With the expansion of our services, your contributions are more valuable than ever before. If you would still like to contribute to our 2021 budget, it's not too late! Please visit our website to donate online, or mail your contributions to our office. We do not take a single dollar for granted, and are always mindful of the sacrifices you're making to ensure every child is born and every parent is equipped to provide and parent well.



Leanna (center) & Taryn (right) accepting a grant check from BCI board member, Pastor Todd Stiles.

Donations can be mailed or made online:

Agape Pregnancy Resource Center
2550 Martin Luther King Jr Pkwy
Des Moines, Iowa 50310
AgapeDSM.com | (515) 255-0243



Serving Agape through the Decades

By: Taryn Vander Ploeg



A group of women, known as "The Sisters of the Basement", volunteer every week to oversee our Tiny Hands Boutique and Helping Hands Pantry.

Over the last three decades, their volunteerism has ranged from reception, to handing out flyers, to organizing the basement sales, and overseeing our boutique and pantry.

When asked why they serve, they said:

"It's not about me, but it's about God's work and I can see God working at Agape." - Jeanne, 29 years

"I enjoy being a part of something that is equipping women to take care of their children. I love the complete ministry that Agape is and that there are all kinds of opportunities for volunteering and getting involved." - Naomi, 15 years

"I gained appreciation for Agape and understood the importance of the ministry over the years and especially during the times we are in now." - Becky, 12 years

Coming here and helping was part of my healing after the passing of my husband. Watching others work for

something and be rewarded for their accomplishments is so encouraging." - Joan A., 9 years

"I love the work this ministry is doing. It has never lost its focus but instead has only grown its footprint and impact in the community." - Evie, 7 years

These ladies have shown that they all share a passion and heart for the ministry, for helping families, loving babies, and using the talents that God has given them!

Thank you "Sisters of the Basement" for serving Agape well and more importantly for serving Christ!

To get involved or volunteer today, go to www.agagedsm.com and go to Get Involved!



(Left to right) Becky, Joan S., Evie, and Jeanne; (Not pictured) Naomi & Joan A.

agape 
PREGNANCY
RESOURCE CENTER

Serving Des Moines and the surrounding area for over 35 years, offering education and quality services to help our clients make informed decisions. We are fully-funded by the generosity of businesses and individuals in the community.

Donations can be mailed to:

2550 Martin Luther King Jr. Pkwy.
Des Moines, IA 50310

515.255.0243

www.agapedsm.com/involved
accounts@agapedsm.com



@agapeDSM

Hours:

Mon - Wed

9am-12pm & 1-4pm

Thursday

9am-12pm & 1-7pm

Closed Friday-Sunday

Services offered at no charge:

- Pregnancy Tests
- Ultrasounds
- STD Tests
- Parenting Classes
- Case Management
- Telehealth
- Group Classes
- Tiny Hands Boutique
- Helping Hands Hygiene Pantry
- Post Abortive Healing

Ways to get involved:

- Donate
- Provide wish list items
- Contribute to Endowment fund
- Volunteer
- Plan/host a service project

Did You Know?

We also provide support and counseling to fathers, whether or not the mother is a client.



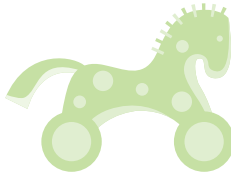
Board of Directors Corner

Pat Davison

Pat Davison, beloved board member of Agape Pregnancy Resource Center, passed from death to life on Thursday October 15, 2020. Pat left an eternal impact through her dedication to Agape and her leadership on the Board of Directors since 1990.

Pat and her beloved husband George were personally impacted by Agape's services through the adoption of their son. She was encouraged throughout her years of service by how God used each person in this ministry to further its mission! Her unending reliance on her Savior, her love of laughter, and her gift of encouragement were like a bright beacon of light for so many of us.

We are so thankful for her service and for her legacy as part of this ministry! We take full assurance knowing that she is resting now in the arms of her loving Savior.



Host a Baby Shower for Agape!

Your support has a big impact on the lives of young moms and their babies. Host your own "Baby Shower Drive" this month on Agape's behalf! We have everything you'll need to put it together. Learn how you can host your own Agape Baby Shower Drive at agapedsm.com/involved.

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In This Issue

- It's Operation Christmas Cheer time
- We're so thankful!
- Meet The Sisters of the Basement
- Tribute to Pat Davison, Board Member
- My Agape Story: Carly

My Agape Story: Carley

Carley was raised in a refugee camp on the border of Thailand and Burma. She was surrounded by fencing and her entire life was about survival and fear. She had no hopes, no dreams, and no goals.

She was brought over to the United States at the age of 9, where her father died shortly thereafter. Her mother worked three jobs and had little time for Carley or her siblings. Carley, by the age of 12, was left to run the household and take care of her siblings. She did not know what it felt like to have a childhood full of friends and activities. She felt as if her life was still about "survival".

When she found out she was first expecting, she and her husband were very scared and they felt like they needed help and support. They found Agape on the internet. When they started to take the parenting classes, they learned so much! She learned that she can become a better parent and started to gain more confidence in her skills. She learned about discipline and how to raise her child differently than how she had been raised.

"Agape showed us that a happy family needs both parents. My husband learned that it is okay to do more than work all the time but he learned that playing and having fun with his children is also part of being a parent. I thank God that He brought me all the way here to meet Agape."



Carly with her husband & 1-year old daughter.