

THE GATE POST

Winter 2011



GATEWAY WOODS
Apostolic Christian Children's Home

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THE LORD IS FAITHFUL- REFLECTIONS

By Joe Feller, Board Member

It seems like only a short time ago that I received a call from Jeff Fritz asking me to consider being a member of Gateway Woods' Board of Directors. I remember being quite sure that they could do a lot better than this simple tire dealer. I was interested right away though, because the ministry at Gateway had captured my heart ever since I had become the LaCrosse, IN Representative a few years before. It probably was even earlier than that as I can recall memories from when my dad, Lynn, had served on the Board during Gateway's early years. My wife Jackie and I discussed and prayed about the position. The Lord then gave us peace, allowing us to accept the responsibility and blessing of being a part of the Gateway Woods Board.

Now, eight years have come and gone and a lot has happened during that time. I have been blessed by so many brothers and sisters who have become part of my life due to Gateway Woods. I was able to see the beginning of the school as I started on the Board. With tremendous support and with God's leading, we added two new Residential homes and converted our Oak House to help the lives of expectant teen mothers. What a blessing that has been! I remember wrestling through that decision with the Board and a prayerful and faithful Gateway Staff. We also officially began doing adoptions at Gateway during my time on the Board.



Three residents browse through some magazines in the school library.

A PEEK INSIDE

Regulations Update • Scholarship Opportunities
Houseparent Testimony • Career Opportunities • Perfect Love

I think that it was through our Houseparents that God taught me my most valuable lessons of faith and trusting in Him. As a Board, we made the difficult decision that it was time to move forward in expanding the Residential Program with the Cypress and Pine Houses. The big question was how would we get so many more willing and qualified couples to lead the new homes? There was a time when my faith was too weak to believe we would fill this additional need.

Adding these two homes was crucial in growing our ability to obey our mission of serving God by helping troubled children and families. One thing I found in my time on the Board was that when we stepped forward in faith, God repeatedly provided faithful and dedicated people to meet our needs. I am sorry for the times I doubted.

I have come to understand what I believe to be a basic truth through all of this. Gateway Woods has been given to the Apostolic Christian Church by God. Our Brotherhood has been repeatedly blessed by this responsibility and charge. I believe that Gateway Woods is God's charge to us as a faithful Church to support. He could have raised this ministry up in any denomination but I believe He chose the Apostolic Christian Church and has asked us to be obedient and faithful in honoring and glorifying Him and His precious son Jesus in this ministry. He will give other groups their own charge; this one is ours. When you get the privilege to watch up close what goes on at Gateway and to see the effect it has throughout the Church and on hurting children, like me, you can only be thankful.

One of the things I will miss as I step off the Board is hearing John Stoller talk about the Foster Care program. I came home meeting after meeting, inspired by the heart wrenching situations of many of these children. I was moved by the faith and dedication of the foster parents and our Gateway Woods Caseworkers, and my heart was always warmed and touched by their love and commitment!

I owe a special thanks to Jeff and Tina Schumacher, as well as Jeff and Carla Fritz for keeping me in their homes so often. Most of



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all, I will greatly miss my Board Brothers and the Gateway Staff as I finish my term. It has been one of the great privileges of my life to know so many of them. It was the great unwritten benefit that I was not told about when I accepted the position. I have often commented to my wife and others how meeting believers from all around the Midwest and spending time together getting to know them well, reminds me of my young group days. We had some tough struggles to deal with and decisions to make, but the bond of the saving blood of Jesus has always kept us together with a love and respect that is hard to come across outside of those who have been adopted by our Heavenly Father.

2011 SCHOLARSHIPS

Every year, Gateway Woods awards scholarships to students enrolled in undergraduate or postgraduate work leading to a degree in a social services field. The scholarships are available to any member of the Apostolic Christian Church or friend who attends on a regular basis.

A description of the scholarship and application are available on our website: GatewayWoods.org/supporters/scholarship or by contacting Ross Feller by phone (888) 443-4283 or email ross.feller@gatewaywoods.org. Applications need to be submitted by June 15, 2011.

BE NOT DISMAYED; FOR I AM THY GOD

By Jeff Schumacher, Administrator

Wow! What an amazing start to 2011. In the last Gate Post I asked for your prayers as we were experiencing some difficult times with the child welfare system here in Indiana. Many of the

transitions I wrote about are still ongoing, but we are getting a much better sense of where the State is headed with the proposed regulatory changes.

The rules regarding rates appear to be set and we have been informed of what they will be going forward. With these rules in place, we at least know what we will get reimbursed for the children and families that we serve. The second area of concern that I mentioned in my last article addressed the rules around how we are licensed. This included issues relating to staffing ratios and structure. These rules have not been finalized yet and we are patiently waiting.

Through all of this, it has been inspiring and comforting to watch as the Lord has continued to provide all that Gateway Woods needs. I have been studying the book of Isaiah and was reminded in chapter 41 that God has always been in control, is currently in control and always will be in control. What an incredible God we serve!

We are looking forward to some resolution to the licensing issues and we would appreciate your prayers that the Lord will bless our desire to serve by bringing us appropriate referrals.



“God has always been in control, is currently in control and always will be in control.”

THE FRUITS OF OUR LABORS

By Dustin and Mandy Hodel, Houseparents

Shortly after we came to Gateway as Alternate Houseparents, we had a new resident come to live with us in Hickory House. We were excited and nervous about the journey that we were about to share with this girl.

We noticed right away that she had a tough, hardened exterior but on the inside she seemed to have a soft heart. Through the months as we worked with her we saw that tough shell slowly fall away and inside we found a heart that desired to live life a better way. Our relationship with her continued to grow and she continued to put forth a lot of effort to keep growing. She also understood that, even though she had made significant progress, she still had work to do in her life.

In time, she learned not only to make good choices, but also to bless others. One area she loved to help in was the kitchen. She would usually be found helping prepare the meals at suppertime. I remember one weekend she was getting ready to go home on a pass and she wanted to make her mom's favorite snack to share with her at home. She didn't want to make it so she could have what she wanted; she wanted to make it so her mom could taste something she loved. It was touching to see her want to serve her mom.

After she moved home permanently, we kept in touch. Around New Year's she sent us a note thanking us for all we had done for her and taught her. She wanted us to know that she was thankful that she had the opportunity to come to Gateway and learn practices that will help her throughout life and will help her to make choices that will be beneficial in the long run. She said it in her own special way by saying,

“...I want [Dustin] to know that I'm thankful for you and Mandy helping me get through everything I needed help with, and you should know that you have a great wife that can cook great desserts!”

It was touching to see a young person make an effort to thank us and bless us with her words. We don't always see the fruits of our labors, but it was good to see a little return from the time we invested with her. We are encouraged.



Dustin and Mandy Hodel with their three children Liberty, Caden and Josie.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES AT GATEWAY WOODS

We are very thankful that God continues to provide us with the right staff. Here are some career opportunities waiting to be filled.

Job Title	Job Duties	Qualifications
Assistant Houseparent	Assist Houseparents in a supportive role as a third adult in the household helping to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the residents. Work closely with brothers and sisters whose hearts and lives are dedicated to a common mission with an eternal reward.	Be at least 21 years old and have good communication skills, teamwork skills, self-motivation and flexibility. Be sensitive to the special emotional and physical needs of Gateway Woods' residents and have a dedication and love for young people.
Illinois Adoption Manager	Oversee program start-up and development of Licensed Child Placing Agency in central Illinois. Perform adoption home-studies and other adoptive placement tasks. Promote Gateway Woods' adoption services to churches and the community.	Have a Master's Degree in Social Work from an accredited school and three years work experience in social work administration OR a Master's Degree in human services field and five years of work experience in human services administration.

PERFECT LOVE

By Rachel Klopfenstein, Foster Care Caseworker

Working in foster care has opened my eyes to things I had taken for granted throughout my life. Growing up in my biological family I had confidence that, no matter what I did, my family would stick with me. In fact, I didn't even think about the fact that they COULD abandon me. Not only would my family stick with me, they would have unconditional love for me. Despite my rebellion, and the trouble and heartache I caused, my parents

never wavered. I was safe expressing anger, rage and even hate towards my parents, knowing they would not reject me.

Through my work in foster care I see what a different life many children face. A child who is angry and rebellious typically does not last long in a foster home. Foster parents put up with only so much and then request the child be moved to a different home. At times these behaviors are extreme and we can understand the foster parents feelings. Other times though, children are removed from foster and pre-adoptive homes due to typical childhood behaviors.



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These children need someone in their lives who will love them no matter what they do. They need someone who will stick with them, even when their anger is ugly and unpleasant. It can be discouraging to realize our capacity as humans to love and care for others. Despite our best efforts, we often fail to stand with the people who need the most love and care. Their problems seem overwhelming and we feel incapable of meeting their needs.

John 3:16 states,

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

God not only loves us, but He gave up His life for us! Despite our inadequacies, God loves us and offers us hope and belonging. It is so encouraging to realize that Jesus is the one who will meet all of our needs. Not only will He meet my needs and your needs, He will meet the needs of each child in the world.


“The LORD God is my strength, and He will make my feet like hinds’ feet, and He will make me to walk upon mine high places.” Habakkuk 3:19

SERVICES

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14505 Klopfenstein Road
P.O. Box 151
Leo, Indiana 46765

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