

grace

FALL 2021

REPURPOSED



SAVING *grace*

Dear friends,

SUMMER JUST FLEW
RIGHT BY AND SUDDENLY,
HERE WE ARE KNEE DEEP
IN AUTUMN LEAVES.

Time seemed to stand still in 2020, but I've found this year to be moving way faster than my mama heart can handle. Maybe it's because my youngest child—who was four years old when SG was founded in 2009—is now a senior in high school. She will soon be off to college, no longer sleeping safely down the hall from mom and dad.

Did you know Saving Grace has a senior in high school this year, too? It's hard not to think about "Grace" as I make plans with my daughter, or find myself awake at night, with anxiety about her future weighing heavy on my chest, even though I try so hard to pray it away. I can't begin to imagine my daughter facing homelessness at this time in her life—with no support, no one to call when she's excited about something new, or to run to for advice as she navigates adulthood.

At Saving Grace, we often say "we are ALL in this TOGETHER". I'd love to focus for a moment on what "this" is in that mantra. This is the messy, gradual work of generational change that is accomplished bit by bit, as YOU step in with your support for "Grace"—filling the gaps left by unspeakable trauma and neglect which are passed down from generation to generation.

Even after "Grace" is welcomed home, it takes time for her to feel safe enough to let her guard down. Her body's trauma response has been heightened in reaction to crisis—which is every day when you're homeless. My friend Keri Corn says, "Take time to heal so we don't have another generation of trauma passing itself off as culture." The young women we serve are in a cycle of trauma that has become the very culture in which they exist.

What I love about YOU and your continued support is that YOU aren't looking for a quick fix for "Grace." YOU encourage her to take the time it takes to find healing, learn a new way of doing things, and create a new value system to break generational cycles.

Thank you for the love and support you are to "Grace", her mentors, and our team. We truly are all in THIS together. I love you and I hope you know how much your support means to all of us.

God's grateful girl,

Becky Shaffer

Becky Shaffer
Founder & Executive Director



GIVE "GRACE"
A PLACE TO
CALL HOME

Saving Grace is 100% community funded through generous people like YOU! A gift of just \$37 provides one day of support for "Grace" as she works hard to change her life!

Your gift will be MATCHED up to \$50,000 until December 31st! Your end-of-year gift for "Grace" will be MATCHED dollar for dollar by another generous donor!

Give now at
savinggracewa.org/give
or by return envelope.

When you're finished reading these beautiful stories, would you share this newsletter with a friend?

@TWCARTERSPHOTOS

INTRODUCTION

Oh, Great Grace

If you've been in the Saving Grace family for a year or more, you probably remember Ash.

This amazing young woman—with her bright smile and spunky fashion sense—made quite an impression on this community in the spring of 2020. Many of you even gave generously to help fund a driver's education scholarship for her last summer!

Like many of the girls who come to live at Saving Grace, Ash experienced so many incredible "firsts" as she took steps toward independence in the SG program. This was the first time she would have a bedroom of her very own, the first time she would attend summer camp, AND the first time she'd be allowed to make decisions for herself—just to name a few.

At Saving Grace, we believe that empowering girls to create lasting generational change requires plenty of space to make decisions—big and



small—with direction and guidance to help her achieve her personal goals. This means that "Grace" gets to practice adulting in a space where it's safe to fail and try again—always keeping our relationship with her separate from the consequences of any decision she's made—good or bad.

That's why when Ash decided to leave the program abruptly earlier this year, our team—along with her incredible mentors and SG housemates—lovingly supported her transition and continued to sister her from afar.

"It took leaving for me to realize that people at Saving Grace actually loved me enough to miss me. People in the past have forgotten about me when I left. The continued contact from SG staff, mentors, and residents blew me away. I realized that I was really loved here." shares Ash.

Just a few months ago, Ash reapplied to the program and was welcomed home with open—and excited—arms! "I knew immediately it was a mistake that I left, but I didn't know how to emotionally navigate coming back." says Ash.

"The situation I was in after leaving Saving Grace just got worse and worse. At the same time, everyone at SG just kept loving and encouraging me. That's what gave me the courage to leave the situation I was in and reapply to the

program. I'm so thankful to be back!" says Ash.

"Since returning, Ash has really blossomed and is working to become the best version of herself." shares Program Coach, Tracie. "She has taken every piece of advice and every opportunity offered to her in the Pink Shirt Phase and has officially moved up to Freshman Phase in the program! She's excited to start college so she can have a career that will allow her to successfully live on her own." says Tracie.

Ash is currently attending college at Full Sail University and hopes to get her BA in Computer Animation. After graduating, she aspires to work as a freelancer in Animation and possibly as a tattoo artist. She is a true creative in every way!

To each and every person that gives, serves, prays, and loves BIG within the family of Saving Grace, we can't thank you enough! It's because of YOU that this homecoming and dream for the future was made possible for Ash. Thank you!





PROM IS A RITE OF PASSAGE FOR EVERY YOUNG PERSON ACROSS THE NATION—FROM BEAUTIFUL DRESSES, TO PHOTO OPS, TO DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY—IT’S DEFINITELY AN EVENT TO REMEMBER.

But for girls without a safe and stable home life, prom is among many experiences that are missed. There’s no dress, no date, no snap-happy parent asking for “just one more picture.”

At Saving Grace, we know the value in making happy memories. We believe that good experiences can heal bad experiences—so with the help of our generous friends at Field Agent, our wonderful community partners at Beautiful Lives Bentonville, our fierce mentors, and YOU—we hosted our very first Saving Grace Prom!

“GRACE” GOES TO

prom

PRESENTED BY FIELD AGENT



Prom was such a magical experience for me. I felt so comfortable to be myself around the people that I've grown to love as my family, and it's a memory I will always hold onto.

-Grace



Our sincere thanks to everyone who helped make this safe, fun night possible for our girls. You gave “Grace” the prom night of her dreams, allowing her to create happy memories that will last a lifetime!





HALEY'S story

But what photos can't reveal are the deep emotional, physical, and developmental traumas that this brave young woman has had to overcome to get where she is today—a first generation college student with big dreams of becoming a teacher!

Yet, like many girls who take refuge at Saving Grace, dreaming of the future didn't come easy for Haley. When you are scared and alone, constantly wondering "where will I sleep tonight?", the future just doesn't seem all that important. Today is all that matters.

Haley shares, "When I first came to Saving Grace, I really didn't have a dream for myself. I just wanted somewhere safe to lay my head at night and not worry about someone hurting me."

Eventually, I realized that I had a dream of becoming a teacher, and then gained the confidence and realized that I could do that, too, if I really tried."

And try she did!

Although Haley had graduated from high school before coming to Saving Grace, our program

team identified some gaps in her education—social and learning barriers that would keep her from achieving her newfound dream. Haley shared with us that prior to coming to Saving Grace, no one had ever taken the time to address these gaps so that she could pursue higher learning, and eventually a real career of her choosing.

That's where YOU played a big role in Haley's story! Last summer, our community of generous donors gave to send Haley to Learning RX. This comprehensive 1:1 tutoring program addressed her individual education needs at just the right pace—providing her with the extra assistance she needed to THRIVE!

"Everyone who gave to send me to Learning RX helped me accomplish my dream." Shares Haley. "Because of them, I can finally breathe and comprehend things easily. Knowing that people in the community believed in me and wanted to provide this program for me meant everything. I'm so thankful for that and wouldn't be where I am today without them."

We can't thank you enough for supporting Haley and helping her dream BIG! Not only did she apply herself wholeheartedly to her educational goals, she's also been a leader and mentor to other girls in the house.

"I have helped new girls feel welcome and comfortable. It's super hard when you first move in, not knowing what's going to happen. It helps to have the support of someone who's been in your shoes." shares Haley.

In her early days at Saving Grace, Haley forged a strong bond with one Saving Grace staff member, Tracie, who later became her program coach. "My fondest memories of Haley are the times we spent together in her early days

at Saving Grace when I was a Resident Assistant." Tracie shared.

"Even though she loves to sleep in, she would sometimes get up early to have coffee with me. Later, when I became her program coach, I watched her grow into a responsible young lady." She said.

"Part of the reason Haley succeeded at Saving Grace is that she was willing to be honest with us when she was struggling and was always willing to take our advice. I'm so proud of Haley's hard work and positive attitude as she overcame the obstacles from her past and pressed forward to reach her goal of independence."

Haley has transitioned from Saving Grace to attend Arkansas State University! We're so proud of all that she's accomplished, and we invite you to pray with us as she continues taking brave steps toward generational change. Go Haley, go!



@ASHTONRAILPHOTOGRAPHY

MENTOR FOR LIFE



men·tor·ing *verb*

The act of supporting and encouraging someone to become the person they want to be.

One of the sweetest days for me is the day “Grace” meets her mentors. It’s the start of a new relationship. The beginning of an opportunity that could change everything for “Grace.”

When our mentors show up, it’s not in the board room, business-professional kind of way—although that happens, too! This mentoring is the down-in-the-trenches, doing-life-together kind. This is the sitting-at-the-table-with-Jesus-breaking-bread kind of mentoring!

To mentor at Saving Grace is to truly step into the messy and the beautiful—and mentor for life!



INTERESTED IN
MENTORING
FOR LIFE?

We'd love to have you join our mentor team. Email us at serve@savinggracencwa.org

I'D LOVE FOR YOU TO MEET SAVING GRACE MENTOR, JOY, AND HER MENTEE, GLORIAJANE! THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING FOR THESE TWO.



Wendi Snider-Seidel,
Program Director
Saving Grace NWA





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Legacy OF GRACE

At Saving Grace, we believe God is calling us to serve deeper and wider in our community and our world—empowering even more young women to build and nurture healthy families.

Your Legacy (or estate) gift to Saving Grace will provide countless young women with an opportunity to thrive in their adulthood, as positive contributors to the community for generations to come!



Save the Date

Our 13th Annual Butterflies & Blooms Luncheon will take place on Thursday, April 28th, 2022! We hope to be back in person with more seating, more friends, and more stories of “Grace!”

Contact us for more information
about leaving a Legacy gift.

give@savinggracenwa.org
479-636-1133