



Since its inception, Thornwell has been a partner to the local church and important part of our ministry. We share the same heart—to love God and love others—and a long history of service to children and families.

Thornwell began in the heart of a young pastor in 1875, and they have continued the legacy of hope and healing ever since. Today, they are an interconnected community of experts, advocates, and caregivers who spend their lives committed to helping children and families in need through a family-centered continuum of care.

Their mission is to prevent child abuse and neglect, to build up and reunite families, and to support healthy communities in the name of Jesus Christ.

Churches like ours make it possible for Thornwell to provide a three-year-old kindergarten program at their Child Development Center. And it's your meaningful gifts that are changing the lives of children and families like three-year-old Gracelyn and her mom, Stacey.

Gracelyn was born with Down syndrome, meaning she has an extra chromosome, which changes how her body and brain develop. Stacey shared, "Most parents assume their kid will graduate high school, even college, get married, and so on! But when you have a special needs child, those things feel more like wishful thinking than anything else."

You can imagine, then, being a mom like Stacey—doing her best to overcome the challenges that seemed destined for Gracelyn's life. It was a priority for her to find a high-quality learning environment that would not just care for Gracelyn's basic needs, but care for her emotional, physical, spiritual, and academic needs—and as a child with special needs.

Thornwell's Child Development Center Director Jenn Adams said, "It's important to us to work with each family's unique circumstances and Gracelyn's condition makes her no different. We have strong partnerships with regional therapists who visit the center to meet with Gracelyn to ensure she's exercising her mind and body at her own pace."

Teachers and therapists work alongside one another, also with mom and dad, to ensure consistent and comprehensive care. This type of support also means Stacey can maintain a healthy work life to support her family and not miss work for therapy appointments. Today, Gracelyn is in a traditional classroom with accommodations to support her growth.

Stacey said, “Thornwell has turned our wishful thinking into dreams for the future. Gracelyn will be a joyful and productive Christian woman in this world! Thank you for giving her a chance! Thank you for giving her a future!”

As we work together with Thornwell, we can serve many more children and families like Gracelyn.

<<Insert your church’s specific call to action to support partnership with Thornwell (l.e. financial contributions, in-kind donations, or volunteering/service.>>

Thank you for your compassionate hearts, steadfast support, and constant prayers for Thornwell and the children and families we, together, serve. We couldn’t do it without you!