

Thornwelllife

BUILDING TOMORROW'S FAMILIES | 2024 VOL 1



FOUNDATIONS IN REDEMPTION: You've helped reunite families
-also- Because you helped, hungry families were fed...and **MORE!**

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Dear Friends,

For more than 148 years, Thornwell has stood on the foundation of Christ and the vision of our founder, The Rev. Dr. William Plumer Jacobs. From that day in 1875 when William and Mary Jacobs took in those first orphaned children until now, Thornwell has remained a source of help and hope for children and families in crisis.

As we look forward to another year of fruitful ministry in 2024, we are thankful for friends like you. Through your prayers and financial support, we can continue offering life-transforming programs and services to scores of children and families this year.

I thank you for your past and ongoing partnership with Thornwell. It is through your generosity that our foundation remains strong. Together, we make a tremendous difference every day in the lives of those who need us. May God bless you for all you do!

On behalf of children and families,

Rev. Myron Wilkins, *President*



Filling Bowls and Hearts

Hunger affects families in terrible ways. It can lead to poor development of children, chronic illness, and difficulty working and going to school and is very traumatic. We believe that no parent or caregiver should have to choose between paying the power bill and putting healthy food on the table.

Because of your remarkable generosity, hundreds of families were fed!

Single mom, Allison, has twin twelve-year-olds, Cooper and Ava. She was out of work this past summer and desperate for help. One day, while driving past Thornwell's campus, she saw the roadside banner for Thornwell's Summer "Grab-N-Go Meals" program – an initiative started in 2020 to ensure children aren't going hungry when school's out.

To date, you've supported us in serving more than 200,000 meals and counting – THANK YOU!

"I knew it was an answer from God. The sweet ladies [at the Dining Hall] didn't judge me. They just handed me bags of food for my kids," said Allison. "I breathed deeply that day for the first time in weeks."

Allison was also given a flyer for "Gleaning Day," a neighbors-helping-neighbors initiative dedicated to supporting families facing summer food insecurity by providing fresh farm produce, canned foods, and healthy meal options. Spearheaded by Thornwell's extension ministry, **LushAcres Farm**, and in partnership with the **City of Clinton**,

Presbyterian College, and the **United Way of Laurens County**, Allison and others like her were able to pick up 150+ boxes of fresh LushAcres crops and canned goods at locations throughout Clinton.

Because compassionate people like YOU choose to be the hands and feet of Jesus, Thornwell and LushAcres Farm have had a long history of sustaining communities. It's awe-inspiring to witness the transformative power of your generosity!

And it doesn't stop there...your support of LushAcres Farm led to the harvest of more than 1,100 pounds of fresh produce donated to local food banks. It equaled 450 dozen eggs and 100 pounds of grass-fed meats!

Your kindness gives hope to those who may have lost it, inspires others to act, and strengthens our resolve to make a difference daily. Thank you!



Foundations in Redemption



Foster care is hard, but holy work.

Every day, your prayers help prepare for full-circle moments in which families reunite after they've worked to learn and heal.

For Christina and her daughter, Lilly, theirs is a story of growth, love, and reunion made possible because **YOU** cared.

"In October, our family got put back together again just two days before Lilly's 11th birthday," said Christina with tears in her eyes.

In February 2023, Christina said she was struggling to find her way back to God. She lost custody of Lilly, who went to live with her Godparents, Jason and Rebecca Honeycutt. If their name sounds familiar, it's because the Honeycutt family was featured in the previous edition of *Thornwell Life* after completing our Strengthening Families program last spring. They wanted to be the best support

system for Lilly ("Leslie" in the last issue for privacy), and they also encouraged Christina to participate.

Because of your remarkable support, Christina was able to participate in last fall's Strengthening Families class. Though, she wasn't originally thrilled to be there.

"When I entered this program, I had an, "I don't really care" attitude. I didn't think it would work, I didn't think that any of this could help," said Christina. "Throughout these last 14 weeks, not missing any classes, I learned how to be a better parent. I thank Rebecca and Jason for getting us here."

With the support of her mom, Nancy, who also joined the class, they learned how to communicate better, using positive affirmation and focusing on safety so Lilly would always know she was loved. After nine months without her daughter, Christina said one lesson really stuck.

“You never take a day for granted. That's the top thing I learned: You never take a day for granted.”

Christina said that as she found her way back to God and her family and worked hard to be a great mom, everything changed for the better. One day in October, she got a highly anticipated call.

“It was like God was on the other end or something,” said Christina. “The caseworker said, you can get your baby today if you want [her]. I said, ‘What do you mean if I want [her]? I’ve wanted her for nine months.’”



Lilly and Christina spent Thanksgiving and Christmas together with their extended family. The Honeycutts remain a special part of their lives as “co-parents” for Lilly. Rebecca recently helped lead Lilly to Jesus; she was baptized last fall.

Because of YOU, Christina is strengthened, supported, and encouraged to be a mom to Lilly. Your faithful giving laid the foundation for a reunion, allowing Christina to hope for their future.

“[This year, I want to] grow even closer together, to be stronger in God. Grow as close to Him as I can. Grow as close to my mama and my daddy as I can,” said Christina. “Like I've always been raised to believe, you're not promised tomorrow.”

Marie's Story: Rediscovering Hope

When twin sisters Marie and Layla were born, they tested positive for narcotics.

As a result, they were immediately placed into foster care. Their foster mom, Julie, was glad to help the infants. A few years later she would adopt them. As a single mom, Julie always worked hard to ensure each daughter felt loved, supported, and important.

However, as the twins grew, Marie constantly questioned herself, fearing she wasn't good enough.

By middle school, Marie stopped caring about her schoolwork, showed signs of trouble with friends, began vaping and consuming alcohol, broke the rules, and experienced emotional breakdowns. Julie was desperate to help Marie and was eventually referred to Thornwell's A.R.C. Residential program.

Because you believe ALL children should have a safe, loving environment where they can learn and grow, Marie discovered her pathway to healing.

Her first three months at Thornwell were challenging. Marie was tough and had built up walls. She needed time to adjust. She was met with love and patience and would slowly build trust. She found a breakthrough in having a routine and began developing healthy relationships. Marie found a place where she felt she belonged and thrived.

Last school year, Marie's academics improved tremendously. She participated in a gateway group for substance abuse on campus and recently graduated the program. She now has tools and resources to use when she feels the urge to "escape."

Because of YOU, Marie rediscovered herself in a healing environment that offers love, support, and therapeutic intervention!



Today, Marie is known as a leader within her cottage and regularly visits her mother and sister. As she progresses, Julie and Layla remain partners in Marie's healing and are preparing for her eventual return home.

Stories like these happen because you helped lay a foundation for healing and hope!

Want to read more heartwarming stories like this? **SCAN THIS QR CODE** to visit the Thornwell Blog!



THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

Your love and dedication to Thornwell made an enormous difference in the lives of children and families in 2023. We joyfully welcome you to help again in 2024!



SAVE THE DATE!

The LushAcres Farm Spring Festival, coming this April!



There are many reasons to leave Thornwell a gift in your will!

The right planning can provide you and your loved ones with tax income and benefits.



Did you know that when you give a gift in your will, you could:

- *avoid capital gains on the sale of your home or investments?*
- *build your income for retirement?*
- *create an inheritance for your children and help children Thornwell serves?*
- *have a tax-efficient way to sell your business?*
- *receive high fixed payments for life and even some tax-free income?*



 SCAN ME

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Making a gift to Thornwell in your will could help you achieve your goals! To learn more about the benefits of making an estate gift, contact Info@thornwell.org or visit Thornwell.giftlegacy.com today!

THANK YOU for considering a legacy gift from your estate! As little as 2% of your estate can make a positive, lifelong impact on children and families in need.