

Personal

Callie



My daughter, Callie, is a normal nine-year old girl in every sense. She's involved in Miracle League baseball, Girl Scouts, plays in the orchestra at school, and loves Hannah Montana, Jonas Brothers, and High School Musical movies, (typical fare for girls her age!). It's hard for me to say why she is so loved, because it's the same for her as it is for the other kids – she's one of our family, and we love her, and that's that! She talks about getting married, living in an apartment, and having lots of friends – not so different from the rest of us, I would say. It just so happens that she has Down syndrome, but she is not her diagnosis.

Kate

When Kate was born, we decided as a family that the extra 21st chromosome she was born with must be extra "unconditional" love that God gave her to show us how to love unconditionally. After 8 ½ years, that still rings true.

Kate has so many favorite things to do, including: playing golf with Dad, shopping with her sisters, going to movies and UK football games, as she motions "First Down Kentucky". She loves to have friends over and has her own calendar of social events.

We have learned far more from her than we will ever teach her. She is the independent child that teaches her babies her sight and spelling words and reads her first and second-grade books to them. She shows them her cheerleading and dance routines from the three recitals she has performed. She is currently enrolled in PREP classes for reconciliation and first communion.

God has truly amazed me in all that He has been able to accomplish through her. We are all different people as we have learned to see things through her eyes and appreciate the "little things" in life and accept people at face value as a "soul" instead of placing judgment on them. No matter what kind of day we have in our house, one thing is for sure...Kate will always greet you at the door with a hug and kiss, announce that you are home to everyone, and then ask if you had fun today. Somehow, I think that might be how God wants the rest of us to treat each other too...With a Spirit of Love!



Stories

Bobby

I don't like to believe that God gave me a child that has Down syndrome. I believe that God gave me Bobby, as he did Emily, and as my children, they are both gifts to me. I believe that Bobby happens to have Down syndrome, and that it is a special part of him, as is his emerging sense of humor, his contagious laugh and his big brown beautiful eyes.

I read this quote the other day by a scientist, and I found it so true...

"As the director of the Human Genome Project, I have led a consortium of scientists to read out the 3.1 billion letters of the human genome, our own DNA instruction book. As a believer, I see DNA, the information molecule of all living things, as God's language, and the elegance and complexity of our own bodies and the rest of nature as a reflection of God's plan.

-Dr Francis Collins



Olivia

Olivia has been in my life since I adopted her. Why did her biological mom choose to give birth to my daughter, even though she had a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome? I am so thankful to her mother that she chose to give my daughter life. I am also saddened at times that she does not get to experience such a wonderful girl.

I would not trade this life for the world. People tell me all the time how blessed Olivia is to have me as her mother. They don't understand. I am the one that is blessed. The Lord has blessed me with the most precious gift. I only hope that I can do right by her and give her all she needs and deserves.



Ava Personal Stories



Her beauty takes our breath away. She is two-years old, and like many other children, she knows colors, shapes, numbers, and letters. She is capable of wrapping grown men around her little finger (specifically, her father and two grandfathers). Her nine-year old sister thinks she is the best little sister in the world. She can dance and sing and she thinks she can run. She has brought more celebrations, growth, joy and pride into our family than anyone could ever imagine.

This is Ava, our gift from God. We are madly in love with her and her possibilities are endless.

Megan



Our family views her as a pioneer in the next civil rights movement – acceptance of persons with intellectual disabilities as an essential part of a diverse community – with a right to inclusion in post-secondary education, competitive sports, independent living and full employment!

At age 19, my daughter graduated with honors with a high school diploma along with her peers. She is enrolled in an associate degree program at the community college so that she can become a certified Occupational Therapy assistant, which has been her goal since age 13. She independently interviewed to volunteer for a private Occupational/Physical Therapy and Speech clinic. She did so well that in addition to her volunteer time observing

Occupational Therapy sessions, she is now employed part-time and learning skills as an office assistant. Last but not least, she enjoys a full extra-curricular schedule, including competitive cheerleading and swimming with Special Olympics, playing the piano, and learning life skills, such as cooking and managing her check book in readiness for independent living!

I am grateful to have been given the privilege of being her mother. She has taught me more about the presence of goodness in this world than I could ever teach her!