

When God Made Us a Family

The Story of How God Brought David to Us

by Shilpa, David's mom

Long before we knew David, long before we knew how our family would come together, God knew.

Looking back now, I can see His hand in places where, at the time, I saw only waiting.

When I was a teenager, I already had a desire in my heart to adopt someday. I didn't know where that desire came from or what it would mean for my future. I certainly didn't know how God would use it.

But God knew.

Years later, I married Ryan. Like many married couples, we dreamed about having children.

Year after year passed, but we weren't able to have a child.

There were fertility treatments available, including IVF, but they were invasive and incredibly expensive. That was not the only reason. That wasn't the road we felt we could take.

We believed that we didn't have to compromise our convictions in order for God to build our family.

There were certainly questions.

But underneath those questions, there was faith.

I believed that God had a plan for us.

People would ask us when we were going to have children. Somehow those questions never made me angry. I can't say I understood what God was doing, but I had this deep trust that our story wasn't finished.

God had not forgotten us.

A Prayer I Didn't Understand

Eventually, I met a friend who had adopted a child, and adoption came back into my mind.

But when I looked into adoption, it seemed more expensive than IVF treatments.

Still, I had this strange feeling in my heart.

I remember thinking:

Maybe someday a woman will come to me and ask me to take care of her child.

Even I thought that sounded impossible.

That doesn't happen in real life, I thought.

So I didn't chase it.

I didn't know how to make it happen.

I simply continued living, praying and trusting God.

What I couldn't see was that God didn't need me to figure out how it would happen.

He was already working.

Faith Has to Become Action

Later, Ryan and I became involved with the pro-life movement.

I believed deeply in protecting unborn life. But as I became more involved, God began challenging my own heart.

I found myself asking:

I'm telling women to choose life. But what am I willing to do to help them after they choose life?

It wasn't enough for me simply to say that children deserved life.

Was I willing to open my own life?

My home?

My heart?

That's when I began thinking seriously about foster care.

People warned me:

"It will break your heart when the children leave."

I thought I understood.

I told myself, why would it be so hard? We know from the beginning that foster children aren't ours. The goal is reunification.

I had no idea what God was about to teach me about love.

Then Came the Little Boy

We became licensed foster parents.

One day, our agency called about newborn twin girls who needed a home. They said they would call me the next day.

I waited.

But the next call wasn't about the twins.

Instead, they told me about a two-week-old baby boy who needed a home.

Would we take him?

I said yes.

He was tiny.

He had terrible thrush and colic, and those first nights were difficult. He cried and cried.

We got him medicine, and within a few days he began feeling better.

Then we started seeing his personality.

He became this sweet, happy little baby.

And before we realized what was happening, the little boy had completely captured our hearts.

I would look at him sometimes and pray: "God, I wish he were mine."

There was something about him I couldn't explain.

I had always imagined that if Ryan and I had a biological child, he might look something like the little boy.

But God had another purpose for the baby boy.

Eventually, we got to know his dad, and his grandmother.

And then came the day we knew would eventually come.

The baby boy was going home to his dad.

His last day living with us was Christmas Day, December 25, 2024.

I thought I had prepared myself.

I hadn't.

My heart broke.

Sometimes I would go into the bathroom by myself and cry.

Suddenly I understood what other foster parents had been trying to tell me.
You don't love a child less because you know they may leave.
You simply love them.
And when they leave, that love doesn't disappear.
But even in my heartbreak, God was doing something I couldn't yet see.
We had formed a wonderful relationship with the baby's father and his family.
So the little boy continued coming into our lives.
His dad would ask us to care for him on weekends and sometimes for longer periods.
At the time, I thought God had allowed us to love the little boy because he needed us for that season.
Looking back, I realize something else.
We needed him too.
God used him to open our hearts and prepare us for what was coming next.

God Sent A Baby Girl

Two days after the baby boy left our home, on December 27, another call came.
A little girl needed a home.
My heart was still hurting.
I didn't know if I was ready to do this again.
Part of me wanted to protect myself.
But faith sometimes means saying yes even when you know that yes may cost you something.
So I said yes.
And a baby girl came into our lives.
Her beginning was difficult. She had been through so much in the hospital, including withdrawal.
I worried about what her future might look like.
But then we watched God work in her life.
As she grew, she became this joyful, intelligent, beautiful little person.

She changed the entire atmosphere of our home.

And the little boy continued visiting.

He loved the baby girl.

On weekends, we often had two little children in our house, only months apart.

We took them to church.

We played.

We laughed.

We were exhausted.

Our hands were full.

And I thought: "Maybe this is what God had planned for us."

But once again, God wasn't finished.

"I Need to Ask You Something"

Then came Memorial Day weekend.

The dad arrived to pick up the little boy.

He walked into our home and said:

"I need to ask you guys something."

I said, "Sure."

He told us that the little boy's birth mother was pregnant again.

I was shocked.

Then he told us why he had come.

The birth mom wanted him to ask us a question: "Would Ryan and I consider adopting her unborn baby?"

I could hardly believe what I was hearing.

Because years earlier, before foster care, before the baby boy and girl, before any of this...

I had carried this strange thought: "Maybe someday a woman will ask me to take care of her child."

I had dismissed it because it seemed impossible.

But standing there that day, I realized that something I had carried quietly in my heart for years was unfolding right in front of me.

God had remembered.

Of course we said yes.

The baby was due in September.

But I guarded my heart.

I had already learned that loving a child could hurt.

And this adoption wasn't guaranteed.

So I prayed.

Learning to Surrender

The birth mom invited us to an ultrasound appointment.

We went.

Seeing that tiny baby on the screen was incredible.

There he was.

A little life.

A little person whose future none of us could completely see.

But God could.

The months that followed were difficult.

Sometimes the mom communicated with me. Sometimes weeks passed without hearing from her.

There were uncertainty and drama surrounding the situation, and I often felt like I was simply trying to encourage her and keep moving forward.

Eventually, I told her that we needed an adoption agency involved. I wanted everything done properly, and I wanted everyone—including her—to have support.

She agreed.

That was when Lutheran Family Service became such an important part of our story.

And through Lutheran Family Service, God brought Kari into our lives.

Kari was our social worker, but throughout this journey, she became so much more than simply the person handling our adoption paperwork.

She was amazing.

She was attentive, compassionate, organized, and always on top of everything. During a time when so much of our lives felt uncertain, Kari helped us understand what was happening and what needed to happen next.

She answered our questions.

She listened to our concerns.

She communicated with everyone involved.

And when situations became complicated or emotions were running high, she helped guide us through them with patience and wisdom.

Then one day Kari called.

The birth mom wanted to see profiles of other adoptive families.

My heart broke.

I had allowed myself to imagine this baby as ours.

And suddenly, I might have lost him before I had ever held him.

But I knew this wasn't about me.

This was about a child.

So I told Kari: "Whatever happens, this baby needs to be safe and loved. I will not stand in the middle of that."

Kari handled even those difficult moments with kindness and honesty. She cared about everyone involved, and most importantly, she wanted what was best for this little baby.

Then I told Ryan.

And I cried.

Ryan reminded me: "God has a plan for this unborn child."

He was right.

So we prayed.

And our prayer became: "God, not our will, but Yours. Whatever You want for this child, let Your will be done."

That was difficult.

Because surrendering something to God doesn't mean you suddenly stop wanting it.

It means saying: “God, I want this desperately—but I trust You more.”

So we released it.

And waited.

The Phone Call

About a week later, I was outside mowing when my phone rang.

It was the birth mom.

She was in the hospital.

The doctors believed the baby would need to be delivered soon.

Then she asked me:

“Are you ready?”

Soon afterward, Kari contacted me.

And Kari continued walking beside us through all the highs and lows.

Now the birth mom had made her decision.

She had chosen us.

Ryan and Shilpa would be the baby’s parents.

I could hardly believe it.

God had opened the door again.

And Then There Was David

On August 25, the birth mom went into the hospital.

I spent much of the day there.

There was waiting, uncertainty, excitement and nervousness.

At one point, everyone thought the baby wouldn’t come anytime soon. The mom and her friend asked if I could go get some food.

So Ryan and I left.

We had barely got to lunch when the phone rang.

The baby had been born.

After all those years of waiting...

after all those prayers...
after infertility...
after foster-care classes...
after meeting the little boy...
after the heartbreak of saying goodbye...
after fostering a baby girl...
after Memorial Day...
after the ultrasound...
after the uncertainty...
after surrendering this child completely to God...

David was here.

His first days weren't easy.

He began showing withdrawal symptoms and needed to stay in the NICU.

Once again, we couldn't control what happened.

Once again, all we could do was trust God and wait.

David remained in the hospital for about five days.

And Kari continued walking beside us through David's birth, the hospital stay, the adoption process, all the paperwork, and eventually the journey toward finalization.

Looking back, I don't think God only answered our prayers by bringing David into our lives.

He also provided the right people at the right moments to help us get there.

Kari was one of those people.

There are people who enter your life because they have a job to do, and then there are people whose kindness becomes part of your story.

For our family, Kari became part of the story.

And then the day finally came.

We could bring David home.

When God Made Us a Family

The adoption journey after David's birth still had challenges.

There were complicated relationships, difficult decisions and boundaries that eventually had to be made.

Adoption isn't a fairy tale.

It begins because something in this world is broken.

But God has an extraordinary way of bringing redemption into broken places.

He doesn't waste the pain.

He doesn't waste the waiting.

And He doesn't waste the people He places along our path.

Finally, on July 1, 2026, David's adoption was finalized.

Legally, he was our son.

Forever.

We will always be grateful to Lutheran Family Service and especially to Kari for the care, dedication, and compassion she showed our family throughout David's adoption.

And when we will tell David the story of how God made us a family, Kari will always have a special place in it.

But when I look back, I realize God had been building our family long before that courtroom.

When I was a teenager and adoption was placed on my heart—God knew.

When Ryan and I couldn't have children—God knew.

When adoption seemed financially impossible—God knew.

When I wondered whether a woman might someday ask me to raise her child—God knew.

When we became foster parents—God knew.

When that phone call came about a two-week-old baby named the little boy—God knew.

When I fell in love with him and cried when he went home—God knew.

When Iris came through our door only two days later—God knew.

When David's father walked into our home on Memorial Day weekend and said, "I need to ask you something"—God knew.

When we saw David on that ultrasound—God knew.

When everything seemed uncertain and I cried because another family might be chosen—God knew.

When Ryan and I finally prayed, "Not our will, Lord, but Yours"—God already knew the ending.

And when that tiny baby boy finally entered this world—God knew exactly where his story was going.

Looking back, I realize I spent years thinking we were waiting on God.

But perhaps God was preparing us.

He was teaching us how to love without possessing.

How to open our home.

How to surrender.

How to trust when we couldn't see the next step.

And how to recognize His faithfulness when the answer finally came.

David, someday when you are old enough to read this story, there is something we want you to know.

You were prayed for before we knew your name.

We didn't know your face.

We didn't know when you would come.

We didn't even know how you would come.

But we trusted that God had a plan for our family.

And He had a plan for you.

Your life is precious.

Your story matters.

And the circumstances surrounding your beginning do not define who you are.

You belong first and foremost to the God who created you, who knew you before any of us did, and who loved you before we ever had the privilege of holding you.

We thought we were searching for a way to build our family.

But all along, God was building it.

One person.

One prayer.

One heartbreak.

One unexpected phone call.

One act of surrender at a time.

And eventually, all those roads led us to you.

David, you are our son.

You are loved beyond words.

And every time we tell the story of how you came into our lives, we are reminded that some of God's greatest answers don't come the way we imagined.

Sometimes He writes a story so differently that only when we look backward can we see how beautifully the pieces fit together.

This isn't simply our adoption story.

It is our testimony.

A testimony of waiting.

A testimony of surrender.

A testimony of love.

And most of all, a testimony of God's faithfulness.

This is the story of When God Made Us a Family.