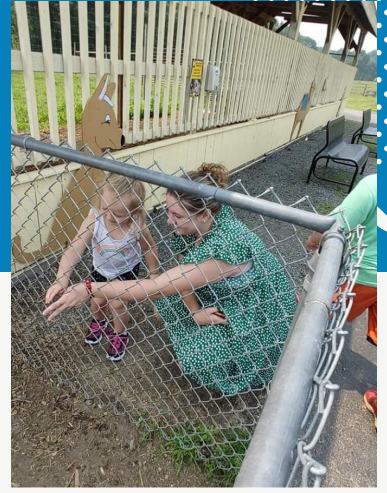


# The Heartbeat

Monthly Newsletter of Life Saver Ministries/. August 2021



What an amazing season of ministry we have seen this summer here at Life Saver Ministries! We have had the honor of sending over 30 children to Christian camp experiences by way of scholarships funded by you, our amazing supporters, and by the generosity of the ministry of Sacandaga Bible Conference. We have had the honor of seeing children have incredible experiences at camps new to our scholarship program including Word of Life and Camp Pattersonville. Some of you may have read in our e-update about some amazing testimonies of lives touched and eternities impacted through these amazing encounters with the Creator and the beauty of His creation. I am always in awe at the way kids are glowing after a week away at camp--like their souls have been enlivened by the beauty of full immersion in an environment of life and love, in hearing the Truth of God's Word, in knowing how deeply loved they are by their Creator and Lord, and how they will find no greater treasure than faith in Him. I love the way this aspect of our ministry has grown over the years as we truly do seek to be a lifelong resource for the women and families we serve; these camp scholarships make it possible to bless both parent and child as we provide an opportunity that would otherwise not be a reality for these families. To see children who have come from some horribly difficult circumstances be able to just be a kid for a week is so incredibly powerful; as one mom shared with me that her 12 year old son has had a horribly difficult year, been very isolated and depressed and been a source of discord and chaos in their home. To be able to be a ministry that this mom referred to as "a lifesaver" is such an honor as it gave the family a much needed break, gave the boy some much needed hope, and gave our ministry a much prayed for opportunity to connect with those who need the hope of Christ the most. Another young boy who attended overnight camp for the very first time, with a considerable amount of both trepidation and medication, took a leap of faith and ended up having an absolutely amazing time that his mom said he would NOT stop talking about for the week after. This boy has faced incredible difficulty that began in the womb by developing in the body of a heavily drug addicted mother, being neglected as an infant and ultimately abandoned were it not for his "mom" taking custody of him and being there every step of the way through mental health issues, behavioral challenges and the issues of life we all face. Another mom shared with me that her teenage son accepted Christ at camp and was absolutely overjoyed with his camp experience after a horribly difficult year of his father abandoning the family, being forced to relocate and learning to live life in a way completely foreign in so many ways. What an incredible gift to say to these moms that we are a resource for you, we are here for you, you are not alone and, when necessary, to use words to do so while the actions of consistent love and steady presence speak volumes about the God we serve. To all of you who prayed, who gave, who took part in this incredible effort, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts and want you to know that lives have truly been changed by these incredible opportunities. This life affirming, life saving work is extraordinary whether it involves a life in the womb, a family on the verge of crisis, or a young person in desperate need of hope, and we both rest in and labor for the truth that this God we serve truly has the whole world in His hands.

Abbey Ballard, Ministry Director

## Pictures worth a thousand words...

The pictures atop this page share some beautiful ministry moments (from L to R) as our dedicated volunteers spend time with precious little ones in our childcare ministry, a happy camper masters the rock wall at Sacandaga Bible Conference, happy kids get an up close and personal view of a camel on one of our Mom and Me excursions, and our amazing volunteer Hannah Lent spends some time introducing one of our little ones to baby goats...all made possible because of YOU!

# Ladies and Gentle Men

Somewhere along the way, gentleness became misconstrued as weakness and what a disservice that has been to humanity; in our recent parenting classes, we have been diving into what gentleness means and what it does not mean. Many of the ladies we work with come from upbringings that include a variety of scenarios including fatherless homes, abusive father homes, heavy handed discipline, a complete absence of discipline and a plethora of other categories that range on the scale of dysfunction. What we seem to have figured out quite readily is that gentleness is so very misunderstood. How can I be a gentle parent and yet a consistent disciplinarian? How can I enforce consequences without acting out in anger and frustration? These are great discussion points that allow us to dive in to some deep waters. Most of the mothers we serve are flying solo through the parenting years. Some have men who wander in and out of their children's lives periodically; others have regular visitations established with their children's father(s). Others have male partners in the home who are unsafe and unsavory. So you can imagine how interesting the conversations become. What we have been talking about specifically is the issue of raising sons to be better than those who went before them, raising sons who are gentle, loving, and understand the value of people. Raising sons who have the deep and abiding strength of a gentle spirit, that indomitable force that is the calm in the storm for their home, their children, their community, their world. We have a strong current to swim against, but I believe we can truly transform the lives and legacies of so many people, both adult and child, by continuing to teach the mothers we serve how to be rooted in the Heavenly Father, how to be unshakeable in the storms of life and to raise children who have mastered gentleness as real strength. May these children we have under our wing truly break the cycles of bondage created by generational dysfunction and soar into a life and eternity as God designed, for I can think of no better work and no greater need in the world right outside our doors.

## In loving memory, til we meet again...



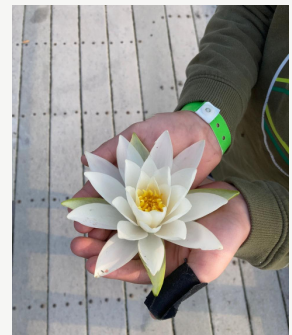
A beloved friend of the ministry passed into glory earlier this year and left behind an incredible impact that continues to ripple through the hearts and minds of those who knew and loved him. Eric Kass was a member of one of our supporting churches, Duanesburg Reformed Presbyterian Church, and he always provided such encouragement to me personally in ways that only Eric could. He was a man who used words mindfully, who spoke gently, who thought deeply and who was an absolute giant of the faith. At his memorial service, he was fondly remembered by his children as being that steady, calming presence, that one who always listened, that force that God used to weave together the tapestry of life that they all shared together. He was a man whose life embodied the kind of force that I can only describe as having the same quality as deafening silence, because who Eric was had the kind of spiritual power that you would expect to have sound behind it that would cause the earth to shake and mountains to move...and mountains did move because of the steady, calm, quiet and unrelenting faith that he embodied, faith rooted in Christ alone. I learned after his death of circumstances in Eric's earlier days that were unspeakably painful, circumstances that could have caused him to be so bitter, so defiant, to shake his fists in rage at the cruelty of this life, at God Himself, but instead, Eric chose love. Eric chose peace. Eric chose the fruits of the spirit every day and I am honored to call such a man a beloved brother and friend who I know we will all see one day. Until then, may we all allow our hearts to be reigned by the Prince of Peace and allow our power to be best manifested through loving, gentle, unrelenting pursuits that reflect our Creator to a world that desperately needs Him.



## Before & After



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What an amazing improvement to our back deck here at the Solutions Center! If you ever heard the words "bane of my existence" in my vocabulary, it was likely in reference to the deck that is pictured in the picture at left as we helped it along for several years with repair attempts and were finally able to replace it with beautiful vinyl decking thanks to our generous supporters including the precious kids from the Baptist Church of Northville who "Pounded Pennies" and brought in coin donations for their Vacation Bible School in 2019. This project was unable to be completed last summer so we were able to beat the deck up for one more winter and really get our money's worth out of it! What an amazing improvement and thank you all so much for giving toward our "house" projects to ensure that we can have a place to call home for this ministry!

Nothing is so strong as gentleness,  
nothing so gentle as real  
strength.

~St. Francis de Sales

