

“Just a South African Girl Living in an Alabama World”

“If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.” – African Proverb

Community is a beautiful thing and we most certainly are better together. Without community in Christ, July and August events would have tough to tackle alone, for any individual. Thinking back over the past two months, I'm reminded of the scripture in Romans: **"For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."** - Romans 12:4-5

In the hustle and bustle of serve days, food delivery, fundraising campaigns and event coordination, I appreciated a much needed phone call from one of my food delivery recipients, Mrs. Betty, in mid July. Oh boy, was she excited! Mrs. Betty thinks of everyone before herself. With the new school year around the corner, Mrs. Betty couldn't wait to hear how Grace Klein Community friends were working together to love on children in her surrounding community this year.

We intended to promote a school supply drive throughout July, but with the busyness July brought, the drive slipped off our radar. Our minds may have been pre-occupied with other projects, BUT God was orchestrating everything, so perfectly, through community.

Shortly after speaking with Mrs. Betty I received a Facebook message from another community member, Diana Martin, sharing that she had just purchased notebooks, crayons, sharpies, highlighters, Crayola markers, folders and glue to donate to Grace Klein Community to bless a family in need. She hadn't even made it home yet before she texted. Her excitement was contagious! Diana encouraged Grace Klein Community to share a post on social media encouraging others to consider doing the same. Little did I realize that Mrs. Betty's phone call and the message from Diana were *just* the beginning of what God was stirring up.

In late July, I began receiving emails from single mamas, missionary families and foster parents in their utmost vulnerability sharing their struggles and desperate need for school supplies for the new school year. How did they receive my contact details? A stranger, now community friend, had shared my email address, trusting in the Lord's provision for these mamas who had come to her for assistance. I'm so thankful she did!



Through word of mouth, community rallied to gather supplies from their overflow, grabbing an extra set of pencils at the checkout counter, spreading needs via social media, and taking full advantage of the BOGO items at Publix. Couples with no children of their own were delighted to bless others for the new school year. Another family, in their chaos of experiencing a very recent house fire, *still* put others before themselves and loved on a family of four children as the Lord led.

Shelby Pediatric Dentistry and Precision Chiropractic hosted school supply drives from their office locations, encouraging patients to help gather items for families in tough financial situations. We enjoyed seeing the two businesses “battle it out” in their challenge to collect the most school supplies to love on families. Seeing the excitement in the hearts of every individual who contributed in one way or another was so encouraging!

Grace Klein Community friends reached out to The Rotaract Club, who at the time, were hosting school supply giveaways at various libraries, asking if they would consider sharing from their overflow. God surprised us when The Rotaract Club responded with excitement, graciously willing to share in their abundance of supplies, providing Grace Klein Community with 45 sling bags filled with various school items.

Together we loved on 77 children by providing much needed school supplies before the start of the new school year.

I'm honored to be on the receiving end of emails, phone calls and the visits from mamas when they collect items for their family. The love, the joy, and stories shared are truly encouraging to my heart.

I think of the mama in her beautiful purple dress, her smile, her excitement and her enthusiasm for life. Yet God gives us the privilege of seeing beneath the surface. During your time with the Lord this week, be praying for the lady in the purple dress. She has lost almost everything due to a contested divorce and is fighting to care for her two children, both under the age of 6. The struggle is real.

Pray for the missionary family whose two teenage boys are struggling to transition back into life in America after 2 years serving in the Philippines as a family. Pray for courage and boldness in Christ as they step in to be the hands and feet of Jesus in their school.

Here's a sweet testimony from one mama who received supplies for her children:

"Thank so much for sharing and blessing my family. Your kindness is not unnoticed! With the stresses of my current situation and finding myself not as financially sound, this offered both physical support and financial relief but also hope that there are still folks in the blessing business! Thanks for all you do!!"

God is AMAZING. Not only did he provide for 77 children here in Birmingham, He had the children at Kwathu Children's Home in mind too. Mighty Oaks Homeschool Cooperative and Cedar Grove Child Development Center were behind the scenes collecting school supplies to send to Zambia to love on the children at Kwathu. Friends, Rebekah Lowrey and Ashley Baker, arrived in Zambia on August 15th, surprising the children with the many blessings from above!

We serve a faithful Father! **"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."** – Isaiah 55:8-9

There is so much comfort, peace and joy in knowing the Lord. My heart is in awe of all He has done and continues to do.



Will you get on your knees for me?

Join me in giving thanks to the Lord for He is a Mighty and faithful Father. Together, let's continue to share testimony of His continued goodness, giving Him all the praise, honor and glory He deserves.

Thank you for your love and support!