

# The Precious Thread of Adoption

*Adoption is a beautiful thread that runs through our family. Having an adopted sister and nieces, and now a beautiful adopted daughter.*

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*Our wider family and church family have cheered, prayed, cried and celebrated with me at every step of this journey.*

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Having always hoped to marry and to welcome biological and adopted children, I found that life did not quite follow that pattern. Rather, there I was at almost 40 – single, childless and with years of happily caring for an ailing grandparent and father behind me – standing on the threshold of a church hall at a Home for Good information event.

Trepidatious as to what may lie ahead and still struggling with the question as to whether being a single parent was the best next step, I couldn't believe it as I walked in and immediately recognised one of the social workers! Just six months after starting the process, I passed approval panel and matching began. It is such a struggle to view so many profiles. I poured over the pages of family-finding magazines and was drawn to a baby with piercing blue eyes, a distinctive facial abnormality: and, the information revealed, several other medical conditions. I knew that my experience as a children's nurse would be of benefit. I believed that God could use me to help her. We were matched two months later and my daughter Annie came home for good.

That was almost three years ago now and life has certainly been a rollercoaster since then. Within the first year, Annie had to have three major surgeries including a complete heart repair. In her second year of being home, she was diagnosed with a rare genetic condition, autistic traits as well as both visual and hearing impairments. Yet, every single day, Annie amazes and astounds me with her courage, zest for life and the love she shows others. Every mini milestone is celebrated as an athlete would an Olympic medal.

Our wider family and church family have cheered, prayed, cried and celebrated with me at every step of this journey. Annie's foster carers are now part of our family and we have been doubly blessed by being in touch with Annie's two half-siblings who have been adopted by a lovely family. Our church has been so blessed by Home for Good resources and continue to learn how to support Annie well. I'm the biggest advocate for adoption and try to encourage anyone who is even considering fostering or adoption to be bold in exploring it, step out in faith and contact Home for Good!

It's only when you look back that you can see how far you have come. I can see now why Annie needed me to be a single mum so I could pour every ounce of energy I have into caring for her and how, in our church family, she has so many people who love her, showing her true unconditional love. The saying goes that we're blessed to be a blessing. Well, I feel so incredibly blessed that Annie is now home for good and am so thankful that Home for Good started me on this amazing journey.

Sarah Lyle, Adoptive Mum  
Submitted by Home for Good

