



AGAPE
— of north carolina —

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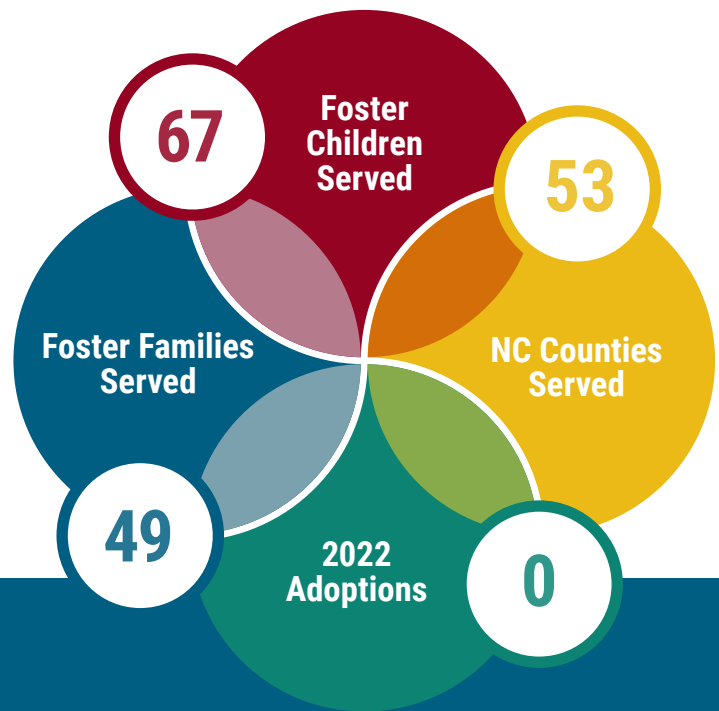
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ANNUAL REPORT

AGAPE of NC exists to provide professional social services as a compassionate Christian outreach to strengthen children and families.

YEAR-END UPDATE

As of December 31, 2022



WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR **HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO ALL OUR DEDICATED SUPPORTERS AND PARTNERS** WHO HAVE MADE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IN THE MINISTRY OF FOSTER CARE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR OF 2022.

Your unwavering commitment and generous contributions have helped us create a nurturing environment and provide essential resources for countless children in need. Together, we have been able to advocate for the well-being of these vulnerable children, offering them hope, love, and stability. Your compassion and support have truly made a difference in their lives, and we are profoundly grateful for your partnership in this vital mission. Thank you for standing with us and empowering us to make a positive change in the lives of foster children.

7th ANNUAL WORTH IT! UPDATE

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters and partners, we exceeded our donation goal so we can Raise Awareness, Acknowledge the Devastation, and most importantly, Take Action against the trauma North Carolina's children endure.

TOTAL DONATIONS: \$158,223!
OUR GOAL: \$140,000



100% OF MONEY RAISED HAS GONE TOWARDS ONE OF THESE AREAS:

- Staff training / Family training
- Trauma responsive resources
- Trauma Responsive Programs for our children
- Travel expenses for therapy or needed treatment
- Miscellaneous expenses related to the affects of TRAUMA



HISTORICAL REVENUE



Words from our Agape of NC Foster Families

“Jesus gave the parable of the Good Samaritan as an example of sacrifice for the sake of others.

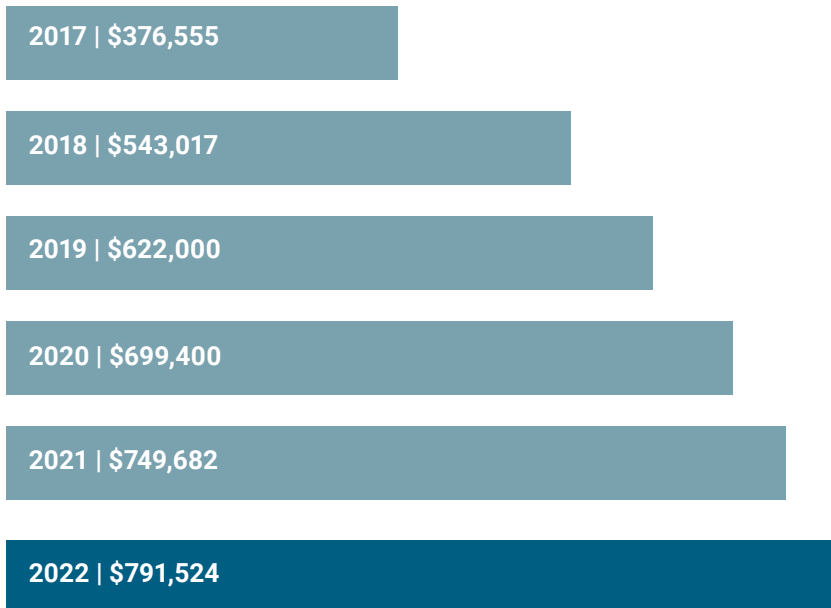
Agape has also shared their determination of making sure they set that example for the families that come under that umbrella. I say thank you Agape for your accountability to your families.

The awesome words of encouragement that is much needed when some of the puzzle pieces aren't quite fitting together is greatly appreciated.

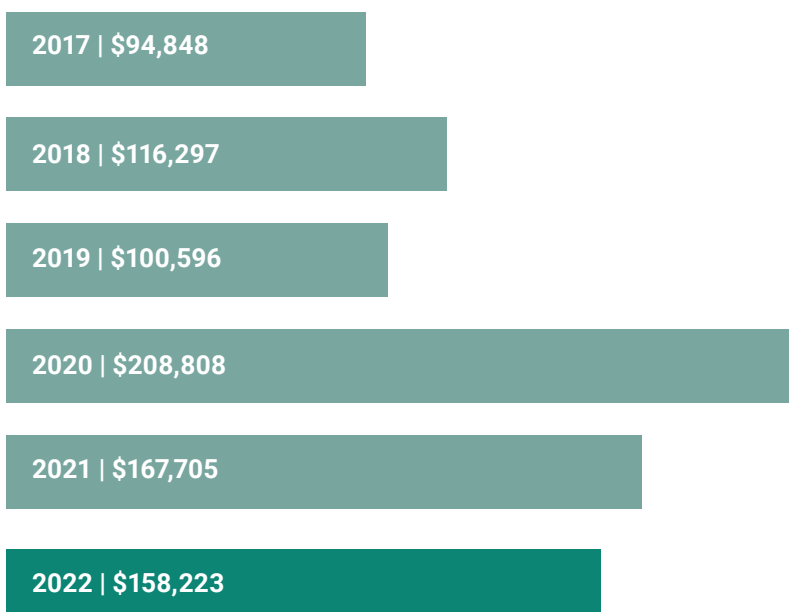
The word of encouragement helps to turn the piece around where it will eventually fit.”

THE
JACOBS
FAMILY

DONATIONS & REVENUE



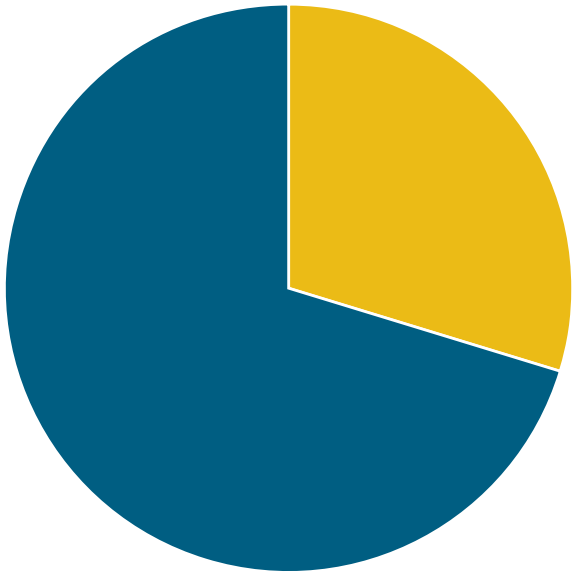
WORTH IT!



WHERE

DID WE GET OUR MONEY?

\$235,750
DONATIONS



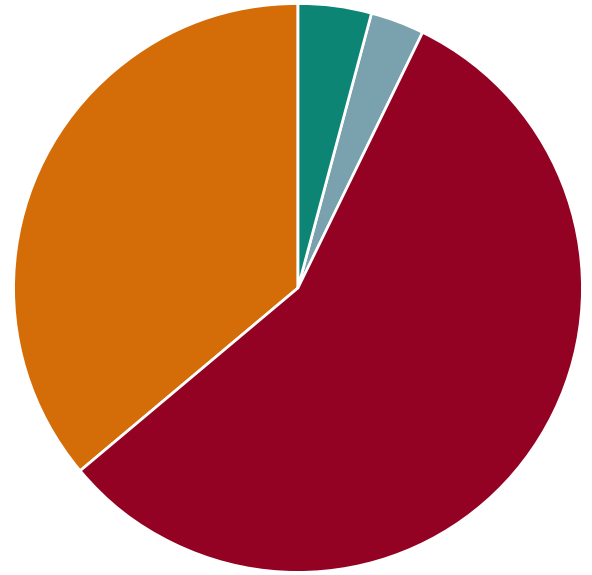
\$555,774
SERVICE REVENUE

HOW

DID WE SPEND OUR MONEY?

\$33,861
GENERAL

\$25,094
FUNDRAISING



\$284,032
STAFFING

\$448,537
PROGRAMS & SERVICES



“The team at AGAPE has been invaluable in our journey as a foster family. The support and understanding they’ve shown us have allowed us to exhibit the same to the kiddos who’ve come through our home.”

THE **PIERCE** FAMILY

Agape Foster Family

FOSTER FAMILY SPOTLIGHT: THE FORTIER'S

By: Tanya Fortier

OUR NAME IS THE FORTIER FAMILY AND IF WE COULD SUM UP OUR FAMILY IN 1 LINE IT WOULD BE, **'WE ARE NOT THE AUTHOR OF OUR STORY: GOD IS. HE IS AND HAS WRITTEN A STORY OF FAMILY FAR BETTER AND SWEETER THAN WE COULD HAVE IMAGINED.'**

Keith (Agape of NC's Director of Development) comes from a family who fostered for nearly all of his growing up, and from a young age I was drawn to babies, particularly those who needed care. I remember checking out a library book at age ten about babies and asking my mom, **"What happens if there are babies whose parents can't take care of them? Who helps take care of those babies?"** During our time dating & being engaged we frequently dreamed about what our family would look like & talked of maybe having 3 to 5 kids & hopefully one day adopting. We got married and just did the natural flow of life: bought a condo, had our first baby, and then a year later had another, and then a year later, another! When our youngest was born, our oldest was still not yet 3, and everyone, I mean, everyone, was very bold in declaring that 'We must be done!' with children. Despite having the three kiddos we somewhat envisioned for ourselves, we both had this deep resolve in us that the family God had for us was incomplete. **It just brought us back to our conversations about adopting & felt like God nudging our hearts to just take the first step.**

We had no idea how we would adopt. But we felt called to take the first step, so we called our local DSS office. We started paperwork that week and were in training the next month. From the start, Keith was open to the idea of fostering or adopting, but I was pretty certain I wanted only to be licensed as an adoptive home. The idea of welcoming children into our hearts and home to re-release them felt like it would be too hard for me and our young kiddos. Yet, through the ten weeks of training, God worked on my heart and spoke to me that He wanted



me to allow Him to parent me in this way, so I could parent these future kiddos in the same way. We felt deep reassurance that despite intentionally turning toward hard & inviting the potential pain of loving a child who may leave into our home, we knew that is exactly where Jesus would be & that He promised to meet us in the midst.

Our training was almost nine years ago. In our years of fostering, we cared for over a dozen children, 3 of whom are now Forever Fortiers. Jason Johnson sums up our time best when he says,

"It is the mercy of God that He doesn't show us everything that will unfold on our journey the moment we say yes to it. All the good would be too unbelievable and the hard would be too unbearable."

The pain, not just of loving these kids and letting them go, but of being intentional to sit in their loss and their pain with them, has been far greater than we ever anticipated. Yet, simultaneously, **the depth of joy & blessing we have experienced is far deeper than we ever dreamed.**

Raising someone else's children can be awkward, uncomfortable and unnatural in many ways. Loving these children in our home, knowing their family misses them terribly. Encouraging them to attach, even though our family is only temporary. Dealing with the effects of their trauma, even as we support the parents who are caught in it in the first place.

Meeting parents for the first time and walking in with their child in our arms are some of our most significant memorable moments. Looking into their eyes and promising them we are on their side and rooting for their success. Expecting their resentment, understanding that our role in their child's life is uncomfortable for them, and being surprised by being greeted by gratitude.

We have prayed that God will allow us to see these families as God sees them: made in His image and worthy of love, respect and grace. **We can say with complete honesty & joy that our children's biological families are now a part of ours.**

We have deep, authentic relationships with family members of each of our children who are now adopted. One specific special relationship is with Adalyn's birth Momma. *(This is shared with her Momma's permission.)*

Adalyn was placed with us as a newborn from the hospital. I will never forget carrying her in her baby car seat into her visit with Mom, just six days postpartum, asking if I could give her a hug.

I thought about all the emotions and physical/hormonal losses her body was going through, and we hugged and cried together in the tiny little visiting room.

That was nearly six years ago and was the start of a beautiful relationship. Adie's first Momma visited with her almost every week: I'd walk her into the DSS office, chat with Roberta about how she was doing, and update her on how Adie was doing, sharing



milestones & photos. **Through those weekly visits, we built a genuine relationship of supporting and loving**

her daughter together. When Adie was about 18 months old, there was a significant court hearing over the case. Roberta, Keith, and I, along with all of the attorneys and social workers were in the courtroom when the judge asked if Roberta was ready to begin. Roberta asked if she could approach the stand, stood up, and shared through many tears that, unbeknownst to anyone in the room, she intended to sign over her parental rights that day to our family. She shared about the love and care she knew Adie received in our home and the love and care we had for each other.

She told the judge, 'I just want you to hear me say these things so that nobody thinks I am giving up on my daughter. I am not. I am doing what I think is the best thing for her: and that is to have 2 Mommas who love her very much and a home who can love and support her throughout her life.'

There wasn't a dry eye in the house. The judge said he had never seen a relationship like that from unrestricted foster homes with a birth parent. He said he looked forward to having us all in his courtroom to celebrate her adoption day. On May 31, 2019, Roberta, our family, and our village all filed that courtroom together to celebrate the additions to our family. **It was the judge's last adoption before his retirement of 28 years, and he said it was the first adoption he processed where the birth mother was present alongside the family for the adoption.**

"What the enemy intended for separation, judgment, and pain, God did, and continues, to fully redeem for His glory!"

In short, our years of fostering were full of 'yeses' when it would have been significantly easier to say 'no. It stretched our understanding of what family means. So much of fostering and loving families who are broken is hard, awkward, and uncomfortable. Yet it has brought new relationships and a depth of our relationship with God that we wouldn't have found otherwise. **Our family looks far different than maybe we would have imagined 15 years ago, but we wouldn't trade this life, this family - permanent and temporary - for the world.**

Our experiences in this world have changed us; and changed us for the better. Being a part of continuing to see God's kingdom come here on earth as it is in heaven for these children and these families continues to be a calling over our lives. So, despite our home being at capacity (literally and figuratively!), continuing this calling through our work at Agape is both a privilege and a joy.





THANK YOU

FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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