

## Methodist Home for Children **Sunday**

# MISSION MOMENT

Good morning and thank you for this chance to talk about **Methodist Home for Children** and one of its special families.

I am going to tell you the story of Michael and Sylvia.

When the story begins, they are parents of four: Two grown daughters named Sarah and Candace, and two teenagers named Rachael and Josh.

Family has always been the center of their lives. But now it's about to get interesting because three more kids are moving in, and they're not just any kids.

- They're young teenagers: a 13-year-old girl, her twin brother, and their 11-year-old sister.
- They've lived in foster care for three years.
- For most of that, the girls have lived apart from their brother.
- And each one of them is dealing with the hurt of abandonment.

Michael and Sylvia are reuniting the siblings with plans to adopt all three, and this story is about their first weekend living together, all under one roof. Michael starts a game of Monopoly to encourage some family bonding, and everybody's in. The players are soon buying properties and setting up hotels, and everything's fine until one person lands on another person's property and refuses to pay. A fuss breaks out and escalates into shouting. Then somebody jumps up, and the whole board goes flying into the air, with all of its pieces. The three foster kids scatter in different directions, and the game is over.

Michael sits back, a little shocked, and the room goes silent. A few seconds pass and his teenage daughter Rachael asks: *Do you still think this is a good idea?*

Michael can laugh now when he tells the story. It wasn't so funny at the time, two years ago, but every foster and adoptive family probably has some version of this:

- wondering what just happened after a blowup.
- wondering what unknown hurts and resentments lie hidden ... and when they might flare again.
- wondering, *is this a good idea?*

But when others may doubt or even walk away, Methodist Home for Children staff and foster parents like Michael and Sylvia say *yes*. They say *yes* to children:

- who've never been on vacation.
- who've never had easy access to food.
- who've never had a bed of their own.
- who've never heard a parent say, *I love you*.

For Michael and Sylvia, *yes* meant working harder when their child-rearing years were winding down and their life together was about to get easier. It meant normalizing the lives of Jessica, Hugo, and Allie; getting them into basketball, football, volleyball and soccer; even changing jobs for Michael to be around the house more. It meant many, many difficult and exhausting days.

And this is why, they say:

Jesus Christ laid down His life for us.

How could we not open our lives to His children when we have more to give?

Not all of us have the skill or temperament to do what Michael and Sylvia have done. It truly is a calling for them. But there are other ways we can say *yes*:

- We can pray for these children and families in the care of Methodist Home for Children.
- And we can make a gift using the MHC Sunday envelope provided here.

Last year, thanks to the grace of God and the generosity of churches like this one, Methodist Home served nearly 1,400 children and families. Now you know one of these families.

- You know that they love through heartache and joy.
- You know that the joyful moments outnumber the painful ones.
- And you know that God carries them through.

Your gift today will bless others like them, so that children may grow in grace with hearts healed and open to love.

I thank you on behalf of these families and Methodist Home for Children.