

# Her Story



Shocked, hopeless, and disappointed - only a few of the feelings I experienced staring down at a positive pregnancy test. Generational patterns were something I spent my entire life vowing to break. But as we all know, life doesn't always go as planned. I am 33 weeks pregnant at 18 years old, and I am placing my daughter in an open adoption.

Coming to this decision and being certain of it was not easy. In fact, the journey here was the most devastating yet valuable and rewarding of my life. Coming into womanhood was something I often day dreamt about. I was always told that it meant so much more than turning 18. And only 4 months after I did, I learned I was going to be a mother. I remember that exact moment. Staring down at those two pink lines shook me to my core. Reality hit me. I connected consequence with action. Not until then did I transition from being a girl to a woman.

There was no way to avoid consequence. I had 3 options. Each would forever alter the course of my life, and each carried a unique path of consequence; each offered a different kind of heartbreak, and a different future for my baby and I. Looking at that pregnancy test, I knew it confirmed a new life had begun - more than an inanimate object. It was my future confronting me, and I knew my choices now demanded consideration of someone else. These choices would impact me for the rest of my life.

I immediately panicked. I wish I could say God spoke to me in that moment and that I had some grandiose revelation - that abortion was never something I considered. Unfortunately, as these stories too often go; that was not the case. Juggling a turbulent and abusive relationship with the reality of this situation was the last thing I anticipated or wanted. With pressure from my long-term partner at the time, and wanting not to disappoint my family, I picked up the phone and made one of the hardest calls of my life.

The appointment was set for March 17th, at 9:00 am at a Planned Parenthood in Charlotte, NC. The days leading up to the appointment were the worst of my life. I remember preparing myself. Making pitiful attempts to justify what I was about to do. No matter how hard I tried to deny the truth, I knew I was preparing myself for the killing of an innocent human life. On the morning of that appointment, I laid on a cold bed in a small dark room in the back of a Planned Parenthood facility, where the walls were plastered with pro-abortion quotes and news articles recognizing them for being the "heroes" of our time.



The ultrasound technician asked if I'd like to see my baby. I replied yes. I was 7 ½ weeks pregnant at the time, just in time to take a pill and leave all of this behind me. I quickly learned it wouldn't have stayed in the past. These traumatic events latch on and we carry them for life. As I sat in the office, the doctor told me, "It's OK to be sad and to still be sure. You know this is the right thing - you're too young to be a mother."

She then handed me a large white pill and a small cup of water, promised me counseling resources, and reviewed instructions for the four other pills I was to take at home to complete the procedure. I put the pill in my mouth. The moment the pill hit my tongue, I knew I didn't have the heart to go through with it. I spit it out, and left with my daughter that day. I've never looked back.

Choosing to stay pregnant after that experience was the easiest decision I've ever made. That being said, I understand how easy it is for a woman to feel like she has no other option. Abortion has been far too normalized, and adoption is not the most attractive option to most women who find themselves in crisis pregnancies. I know because I was that woman.

Leaving the clinic that day, there were people outside with signs, protesting the killing of unborn life. It was then that I made up my mind about which side of the fight I was on. I knew abortion for what it was. I knew it had nothing to do with a woman's right to choose, but everything to do with making money off the backs of vulnerable women.

Adoption wasn't something I'd yet considered. I had refused to even entertain the thought. Just hours after I left that clinic, my stepdad called me. I was nervous he might be disappointed in my decision to continue my pregnancy. I had been plagued with self-disappointment already, and I wondered how I could make this situation go away.

But his reaction was quite the opposite. He knew I wasn't prepared. He told me to give my baby a real shot at life. We both knew what that meant - and it wasn't with me. This was not the life I wanted for myself, but most importantly, wasn't the life I wanted for my baby. He and my mom welcomed me home, and committed to helping me through my journey.

I knew I wasn't capable of giving my daughter the life I so desperately wanted her to have. That broke my heart. But that also ultimately led me to Lamb of God.



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Four years ago, my mother briefly had a conversation with Grace, the founder of Lamb in the bleachers of the high school gym her daughter and I both attended. Having nowhere else to turn – despite not knowing anything about adoption – my mom called Grace, who welcomed me with open arms and was more than happy to help.

Not long after, I gave her a call myself. I knew this was not something anyone could force upon me. This was a decision to make on my own terms, and in my own time. Grace immediately met me for lunch and spoke to me about the home. I was hesitant about leaving family again, and was unsure of adoption and all that it entails. The amount of compassion and patience I was shown during this time was immeasurable. It wasn't until May that I was 100 percent set on my decision.

I knew I needed to be somewhere where people would understand what I am going through – somewhere that I could receive the resources and care I needed now more than ever. Grace immediately thanked me for trusting her to help me on my journey, and only weeks later I found myself at the house's doorstep with three large suitcases. I was committed. I knew this new home was the best place with the best resources for me. My first day there, I had a meeting with Sarah, Grace's niece, who is with the adoption center of San Diego. Despite only being 17 weeks pregnant at the time, I begged Sarah to allow me to look at parent profiles. Flipping through them, I saw Ryan and Ely and immediately fell in love. Without hesitation I said, "It's them."

I will never regret choosing them to raise my daughter. They will be amazing parents and I trust them with my entire heart. Without Lamb and their resources, I never would've found them.

This home has provided me with more than I could've ever asked for – more than I deserve. Not a day goes by that I am not thankful for the place I live at, the job I have, and the support that surrounds me. Lamb provides wrap-around care, physically and emotionally. If I ever need anything all I have to do is ask. I have been blessed with opportunities I never could've dreamed of.

Through Lamb, I've met one of my greatest mentors, Dr. Jeff Rutgard. He has taken me under his wing and has given me the opportunity to assist in cataract removal surgeries in Mexico every couple of weeks as volunteer work. This has led to more doors opening in my life. I'm more determined than ever to pursue a career in the medical field while advocating for the prolife movement. Between working full time, volunteer trips, spending time with my daughters' adoptive parents, and planning my future, I have been supported by everyone and in every way needed at Lamb of God.

Grace once told me, “Often the catalyst for the greatest successes in our lives are the most difficult times we face.” I know the hardest part of my story is yet to come, though I look forward to what the future holds.

I will not and cannot let my daughter down. This home has made it possible for me to stay strong during this difficult time and has allowed me to provide my daughter with something money cannot buy - a chance. Getting pregnant saved my life. I know my daughter saved me from myself, and from the roads I was walking down. She saved me from being simply OK with existing. In teaching the value of living beyond myself, she has already taught me more than I could've ever taught her.

I've been blessed with amazing people at Lamb, lifting me up and showing me compassion. Without them, my life would not be as joyful as it is. Lamb has provided the tools to have a structured life, with frequent counseling provided by the home, transportation when needed, help with doctors' appointments, and countless other forms of assistance.

I could not have ever predicted finding myself in this position, but I've learned that those situations we least expect ultimately build our character, and give purpose to life. I not only feel that I have a purpose, but also that I've been guided by God's hand, and have made lifelong friendships. I hope to someday give back to those who have lifted me up during this time.

To quote Jordan Peterson:

“To stand up straight with your shoulders back and accept the terrible responsibility of life is to decide to voluntarily transform the chaos of potential into the realities of habitable order. It means adopting the burden of self-conscious vulnerability and accepting the end of unconscious paradise of childhood, where finitude and morality are only dimly comprehended. It means willingly undertaking the sacrifices necessary to generate a meaningful and productive reality ... to act to please God.”

I have promised myself to live by these rules every day. I am surrounded by all of the love, compassion, and resources needed to get exactly where I want to go. I deeply appreciate everyone being here and listening to my story. Most of all, I appreciate those who have made this organization possible. Thank you for your time.

'Her Story' was shared by the birth mom at the  
2022 Annual Spaghetti Dinner.