

**Well Done, Ruthie** ~ Tod Bethea

*Well done, good and faithful servant!* ~Matthew 25:23

This verse represents a mission for each of us; that at the end of our earthly days we might be worthy of receiving this accolade from our heavenly Father. I have been blessed in several instances to have observed this type of lifestyle. One of the greatest examples came to me in the form of a horse. Her name was Ruthie. Ruthie spent most of her 30 years serving children, with the last four of these being at Steadfast. A few months ago, we had to say good-bye to this sweet mare. Ruthie was a small Morgan/Arab cross horse with a beautiful chestnut coat and a full mane and tail. She patiently took care of inexperienced riders but also challenged those who were ready for more. Her gorgeous mane was braided and ribboned countless times by adoring little girls. I have observed her with a young man who didn't feel welcomed anywhere else, but trotting on her back he sat up tall because with Ruthie he felt at home.

I've watched a little girl with low self-esteem shine with pride while she was astride Ruthie, prancing across the arena with matching hair bows. Ruthie could do it all and was an integral part of the startup for the Steadfast ministry. We miss her deeply, but we also celebrate all that God has done through this lovely little mare. Well done, Ruthie girl!



## Your financial gift extends

*Joy instead of Sadness  
Peace amidst Chaos  
Empowerment overcoming Defeat  
Belonging redeeming Loneliness*

Please join us on this  
Steadfast Journey

**Contact Info**  
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**Eastanollee, GA 30538**  
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# STEADFAST

-Family Farm-

564 N Broad River Road  
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# THE STEADFAST GAIT

## NOVEMBER 2022



### A Better Plan

Tod Bethea

It all started a year and half ago with a GREAT plan to build Peace Pavilion.

This would be a multi-purpose area with an open work/event area, storage, a small kitchen, tack room and, get this, TWO real bathrooms! It would give us a place to continue events or sessions in inclement weather...and real bathrooms! Deana poured over every detail so that the building would best meet our ministry needs. But, to begin we needed blueprints. I was experiencing a forced vacation due to COVID so I decided to learn CAD and constructed the blueprints myself. We had it all figured out and were ready to proceed, but for more than a year pretty much nothing else happened. As anyone who's tried to build in the last few years knows there are a lot of roadblocks. We prayed that God had a better plan because we were definitely not feeling peace about Peace Pavilion. I was getting extremely frustrated and was tempted to respond in a worldly way that would not in any way glorify God. This project was just not happening according to my plan. Fortunately, I have a rather calm outside demeanor which usually serves to hide my complete lack of patience. More than once I have noticed Deana stifling a laugh when people say "your husband seems so calm." Through this particular season she patiently listened to my rantings and we continued to pray for Peace Pavilion and peace in ourselves. We thought God might have a better plan. Then a couple of months ago, things suddenly began to fall into place. Through some excellent recommendations we became associated with a group of building professionals who were coming together for a common goal, the realization of Peace Pavilion. They were working hard, communicating with each other, and making strides to get the job done. Donations of building supplies were coming in. Volunteers were dropping by after work to contribute their time and expertise. It has been a beautiful thing to witness. I think I appreciate it so much more because of the struggles we faced in the beginning. The project is not yet complete, but we are now enjoying the journey He has on. God did have a better plan.

Jeremiah 29:11 *For I know the plans and thoughts that I have for you,' says the LORD, 'plans for peace and well-being and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope.*

God does have a better plan and it is a plan for good. When we follow His plan, this is when we find true peace. We are hoping His plan will lead you to Peace Pavilion at Steadfast Family Farm.

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## 3 am Kindness EnKounter

~ Deana Bethea

It was 3 am and I was NOT sleeping! Finally I decided to give up, get up, and do something. What followed, I believe, was a divine appointment with a mass of internet information on "Kindness." Scientific studies have uncovered amazing correlations between acts of kindness and improved emotional and physical health. Here are a few of the benefits that can be reaped from a simple act of kindness:

1. Kindness brings connection which helps alleviate isolation and depression.
2. Kindness has shown to increase self-esteem, empathy and compassion.
3. Kindness can decrease anxiety and stress and improve mood and relationships.
4. Kindness boosts your immune system and can lower your blood pressure.
5. Kindness can help slow the aging process.

Interestingly, Kindness works on both ends of the transaction with the same positive effects for both the giver and the receiver.

I hear story after story from our kids (and parents) at Steadfast about trouble with Bullies and Bullying. There are also numerous studies that have found correlations between the Bully issue and self-harm and suicide. At 3 am, the simple thought bombarded me, "The world just needs to be more kind!" Then I found this encouraging information:

1. Kindness is teachable!
2. We can develop habits of kindness just like we build any other type of habit such as exercise or healthy eating.
3. Developing habits of kindness can improve attitudes and behaviors and reduce emotional distress.\

From this 3 am encounter our Steadfast Summer Fall Curriculum on Kindness has been developed. In the near future, we will also be offering Kindness Encounters for visiting groups from the community. This is "kind" of exciting because Kindness is contagious. Truly, the world does just need to be more kind and we are praying for a whole new pandemic wave...the Kindness kind.



## A Story Well Told

~Misty, Eli's mom

Eli was our first apprentice at Steadfast. Now he is one of our Storytellers, learning leadership skills and sharing the story of the Joy, Peace, Empowerment, and Belonging that we have in Jesus. Eli recently had the opportunity to visit Washington DC. I received this photo and text from his mom. It is shared with her permission.

"Eli went to the Nation's capitol today. He felt burdened to pray. The chaperone said he asked a few people if they wanted to pray with him but they were afraid to. Eli just quietly walked to the foot of the stairs and knelt. He looks so small but God can do amazing things no matter how small you are. Thank you for encouraging and teaching my child. If you ever wonder if God is truly working through you and your ministry, believe me, he is and that work has extended all the way to the foot of the stairs at the Nation's Capitol."

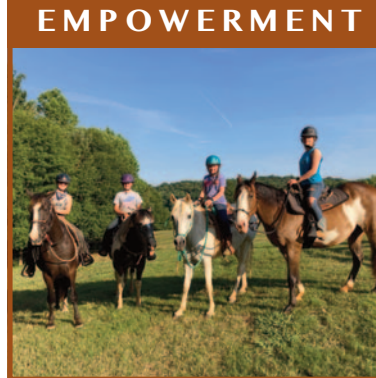
These are encouraging words, but it is much more than that. This is a picture of hope for our future. What a beautiful example of a young person telling the most important story of all...on his knees.



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## A Journeyman's Perspective

~Taylor Keene

The many ways that Steadfast has been meaningful to me is immeasurably more than all I could begin to share! Yet one impactful theme throughout the years that stands out to me is the valuable lesson of learning about our power coupled with our ability to empower others. Jesus came and demonstrated this lesson and then left us with his power to do infinitely more than we could ever imagine! I have specifically learned this lesson from our horses at Steadfast. I love how we are empowered through equines to do things that we once thought were unachievable. Horses are so great at helping us discover our power within. Not only have I learned that lesson over and over with horses, but I also now have the joy and excitement to help others learn that too here at Steadfast. I love seeing youth and adults who come to the farm and accomplish things with their horse that may have seemed difficult, scary, or even impossible at first. I have seen the profound amazement on so many peoples' faces when they discover that they had the power within them to do it all along. It fills my heart with joy to share in those moments with others and especially when they are then encouraged to use their power to empower others. The Steadfast Family, both horses and people, have empowered me, have taught me how to empower others, and have reminded me of the power that Jesus gave us all to do immeasurably more than all we could ever ask for or imagine.

"I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us" Ephesians 3:16-20

## Hello from Hannah ~Hannah Godwin

Hello there! My name is Hannah Godwin, and I am twenty-five years old. I am born and raised in Red Hill, and I am a wife of (almost) eight years to Alan and a mama to two beautiful children, Henry and Chesney. On top of being a full-time mom and wife, I am also a full-time student, and as of recently, a part-time employee of Steadfast Family Farm! I feel so blessed with every title that the Lord has entrusted me with, and needless to say, my cup runs over. When Deana and Tod hired me, they told me that their vision for the farm is a team of people working together as a family. In my short time here, I can earnestly say I already feel like part of the Steadfast family! The farm has quickly become a place of quiet and peace for me, and I am looking forward to what the future has in store for all of us!

"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose." Romans 8:28



## Steadfast Respect, Responsibility, and Courage

I like to come to Steadfast 'cause I get to work with the horses and I learn new things from them. But they also learn new things from me. They learn how to do what they're supposed to. Like when we work out there in the arena and I tell Falcon the direction he should go. He always

goes because I taught him. Falcon, he has done a lot of things for me. He is also nice and a good listener. My journeyman is nice and lets me do a lot of things with Falcon. And, she is respectful. She helps me out when I'm stuck. You have to do a lot of stuff and everything you do here takes a lot of responsibility to do it. And, you are respected. Respect is kind, and here, when someone explains something you always listen and you never say anything mean about it because there's really nothing mean to say here. Respect is important cause if you don't have it you feel like you're doing something wrong. I think people need to know that Steadfast gives you opportunities to learn new things. When you want to try something new, they'll give you a chance to try it. We have a lot of good activities about respect, and responsibility, and courage.

Like when we get here every time we talk a bit about God and Jesus and then we always pray. And here we pray if someone is having trouble and doesn't have any place to go or something, we'll pray to God and try to help them out.



## "Cap"ital Campaign: Serving the Servants

*Mentoring Sessions teaching life skills to approach life challenges*

*Storytellers Sessions preparing kids for leadership*

*Equestrian Lessons teaching Partnership,*

*Leadership, and Stewardship*

*Toccoa Falls College course preparing students for their life's ministry*

*Community Events highlighting our ministry pillars Joy, Peace, Empowerment, Belonging*

In all these offerings our horses are serving to extend the mission of Steadfast to our community through their special and unique power. We are now at a time when we need to improve our facilities to best care for them. Please consider giving to our Serve the Servants- "Cap"ital Campaign. We have a \$35,000 need which will be used to construct covered feeders- keeping their hay dry and mold free, automated waterers- keeping water fresh and algae free, run-in shelters- providing respite from rain and sun, and rubber footing - making a safe work area in our new pavilion.

Building teams, gifts of specified materials/supplies, and monetary gifts are all welcomed.

Your tax-deductible donation can be given online at [www.steadfastfamilyfarm.com](http://www.steadfastfamilyfarm.com)

Or be mailed to: Steadfast Family Farm  
PO Box 322  
Toccoa, GA 30577

A Steadfast Cap will be mailed in thanks for your gift of \$35 or more. Please join us on this journey to Serve the Servants.

STAND FIRM IN THE FAITH BE COURAGEOUS

BE STRONG REJOICE ALWAYS 1 Cor.16:13, 1 Th.5:16