

AMISH COOK

Reflecting on our adoption journey

By Gloria Yoder, the Amish Cook

Today marks four years since that notable day when Daniel and I took turns standing before the judge, declaring that we would love and care for these two children about to be a part of our forever family. It was one of those moments that I could not absorb enough.

For three and a half years we waited as the future of these precious children hung in the balance. Well, really, to God it was no question which way things would go, but for my mother heart, it ran deep. How well I remember the day I was again rocking newborn Jesse, stroking his soft skin.

I knew each prayer was heard, but where would this dear baby grow up?! I loved him no less than the ones I carried for nine months. That evening as I cried out to God, I asked, “God, why do you call me to bond with him, knowing that one day this bond may be broken?”

I was amazed at the words that clearly spoke to my heart, “So he can bond with Me one day.”

I blinked, absorbing the reality of it. I knew it was worth it, it did not matter so much what his years would hold from now until then, just so he could bond with the Father Himself one day. God would provide. Many times over in the next years I was reminded how the fierceness of true love releases, even when it cuts, when it bleeds, and when it just does not seem right. Perhaps one of our greater tests came one day, three weeks before the projected adoption timeline. The case worker sat on the couch, glancing at Daniel and I she said, “I hate to come and break your hearts...”

We didn’t know what to expect, it was one of those moments that felt as if the entire world came crashing over us. There was a sense of relief as she continued, “There has been a discovery that a few tribal searches have been missed, and would need to be cleared prior to proceeding on with adoption.”

Daniel assured her that we’ll take a step at a time and we want to do it right and not cut any corners. Though she didn’t foresee it being an issue, those next eight months dragged on. The little girls outgrew their new lavender dresses which had been made for adoption day.

It was with great anticipation and joy that we as our family made the short drive to Olney, Illinois courthouse, on March 24, 2021. We were ready to have it sealed, all sharing the same fam-

ily name.

As the judge pronounced the petition of adoption to have been granted, everyone clapped. I squeezed four-year-old Hosanna on my lap. My heart's desire was granted. I knew the journey would not all be simple, but is where God had placed us and it is where we wanted to be - a family uniquely put together by an unseen hand.

Today after school I took the youngest five children with me to the little country store to grab a couple of items to take along on our picnic in the chestnut grove to celebrate the four year anniversary. Hosanna and Jesse were pleased to be the ones to pick out a snack. I smiled at their choice which had been Daniel’s favorite he and I enjoyed together on rare occasions, Dot’s Honey Mustard pretzels.

Our evening passed calmly and smoothly as we grilled burgers and sausages over the fire. I told Julia it is the easiest picnic we ever had, thanks to her for chipping in and taking charge of packing everything up to take along.

It was interesting to listen to the children’s memories of four years ago when we had cleaned out the shop and invited friends and family to come rejoice with us. Julia recalled how her and Austin recited a poem for the guests at the celebration party that evening, Elijah remembered the rows of little picnic tables we had for the little children, one recalled the helium balloons and how they deflated just before the party and how we had someone rush to town for more helium.

My favorite that night was listening to Daniel as he shared about the adoption journey. Today I still marvel at God’s timing with the licensing process being lengthened time and again, then that placement happening two weeks after the license came in the mail. How likely is it that we would get these two children, which really came from Kentucky? The birth parents ended up in our local town to have their baby, thus, the baby and his sister were placed into our hands! And best of all, after the placement we were amazed to find out that over the time we started praying for our future children, little Hosanna had just been born. Thank you Jesus!

The evening of adoption, a sister in church came to me and handed a folded piece of paper to me. I saw that it was something from deep in her heart. She quietly explained, “God simply gave this song to me. I sang it on your voicemail as well.” Later in a quiet moment I absorbed

the words then sang it to my children. Each line held its own meaning in a precious way, there was no doubt it was from the Lord himself. Space won’t allow me to jot it all down, so I’ll just share one of my favorite lines, “He’s brought you here in his own time, He’s not a moment late...” Today we simply praise our Lord Jesus, He is so good and so deeply faithful, in His own time.

Okay, I won’t be able to give you a recipe for Honey Mustard Dot’s pretzels, so we’ll go with our recipe for homemade soft pretzels. Use your imagination on seasoning to sprinkle on top before baking. They are not only yummy to eat, but also lots of fun to make, especially if you have youngsters to try their imagination on various shapes and letters. Our favorite was making special ones for Daddy. Enjoy them for yourself or those around you!



Try Gloria’s recipe for homemade soft pretzels. (Photo submitted)

SUPER SOFT PRETZELS

- 4 cups flour
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1 tablespoon yeast
 - 1 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 1 cup milk
 - 1/2 cup warm water
 - 2 teaspoons butter
 - 3 eggs
- PretzelInstructions**
- 1. Mix 2 cups flour, sugar, yeast, and salt.
 - 2. Heat milk; add water and butter.
 - 3. Add wet ingredients to flour mixture.
 - 4. Beat eggs.
 - 5. Reserve ¼ cup for glaze.
 - 6. Add rest of eggs and enough flour to form a soft dough.
 - 7. Let rise one hour.
 - 8. Punch down and shape into a short rope and make a pretzel (or whatever shapes you like).
 - 9. Place pretzels a few inches apart on a greased cookie sheet.
 - 10. Allow to rise another 30 minutes, then brush lightly with beaten egg, then sprinkle with pretzel salt.
 - 11. Bake at 375 for 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from oven, dip into melted butter. Serve hot, with cheese sauce. Yummy!
- Yield: approximately 24 soft pretzels

Community Club recognizes McCan



Alisa Tolle, left, representing the Richland Community Club, presented Richland Library director Cindy McCan with a clock at the April meeting. McCan will be retiring as director after 15 years.

Patriotic Panthers 4-H Club meeting

The Patriotic Panthers 4-H Club met on March 12, 2025 at Prairie View Church. President Cole Millikin called the meeting to order. Caden Gorsh, Sawyer Cason, Savannah Travis led the Pledge to Allegiance. Roll call was answered by 21 members.

Business discussed: 4-H lock in, YQCA testing, Swine weigh in on March 29, bucket calf, lamb and goats by April 30, Sheep and goat weigh in is May 3, Livestock ID by May 15, Overnight Junior Camp, and the new Broiler Poultry class.

The next meeting is April 9, 2025 at Prairie View Church. The meeting was adjourned. John Jacobs, Izaak Echelberry, Carley Clarahan led the 4-H creed. The club painting activity was led by Christy Gambell, The Country Mile. Refreshments were served by Carley Clarahan and Madison Fry.

Reported by
Carley Clarahan, Club Reporter

Seeking 4-H Hall of Fame Nominations

The Iowa 4-H Foundation sponsors the annual Iowa 4-H Hall of Fame induction ceremony at the Iowa State Fair. Counties nominate volunteers, community leaders and Extension staff members who have exemplified outstanding service and dedication to the 4-H youth program in their county. Only one individual or couple per county can be nominated each year. Inductees can be recognized posthumously.

Nominations for Washington County 4-H Hall of Fame recipients are now being accepted.

Past inductees have given outstanding amounts of their time and talent to the youth of Washington County 4-H. Past Washington County inductees include Esther Birney, Elmer Schneider, Mike Orris, Howard & Shirley Bohr, Gary Murphy, Robert Spinner, Marie Hora, Pat Greiner, Donnie Davison, Gale Whitacre & Harold Wylie, Nancy Adrian, Jim Frier, Robert Emde, Harold & Shirley Bohr. Jim & Louella Schneider, Keith & Sara Murphy, Shirley Pfeifer, Dave Birney & Duane Sprouse, Kevin Hora and Bill & Mickey Blum, Duane & Vicky Fisher, Jim & Sandi Hotchkiss.

Nominations can be sent to the Washington County Extension Office or to Amy Green at amygreen@iastate.edu. Please include a description sharing the nominee’s involvement and years of service to Washington County 4-H program. Nominations are being accepted until April 15. Please contact Amy at the Extension Office, 319-653-4811 or washington4h@iastate.edu, with any questions.

Attend the Church of Your Choice

Sunday, April 13 – Saturday, April 19

ANTIOCH INDEPENDENT CHURCH

South of Brighton, Rev. John Benedict
Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Worship
Wednesday: 6:30 p.m. Bible Study

BRIGHTON UNITED CHURCH

Brighton, Rick Zickefoose, Pastor
Sunday: 9 a.m. Worship
10 a.m. Sunday school

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Abingdon, Pastor Reginald Marlin
Sunday: 10 a.m. Sunday school
11:05 a.m. Worship
Wednesday: 7 p.m. Bible Study

CHURCH OF LIVING WATER

Hedrick, Pastor Gary D. Smith
Sunday: 10 a.m. Sunday school
10:30 a.m. Fellowship
11 a.m. Worship
6 p.m. Evening Service
Wednesday: 7 p.m. Evening Service

FIRST CHRISTIAN (DOC) CHURCH

Packwood, Pastor Gabriel Claussen
Sunday: 8:55 a.m. Worship

FIRST CHURCH OF GOD

Brighton, Pastor Richard Hughes
Sunday: 9 a.m. Sunday school
10 a.m. Worship Service
5 p.m. Bible Study
Wednesday: 6 p.m. Youth Group
7 p.m. Bible Study

GRACE FAMILY CHURCH

24536 Hwy 78, Ollie, Rev. Dar Eckley
Sunday: 10:15 a.m. Worship
10:15 a.m. Children’s Church

HEDRICK CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Hedrick
Sunday: 10:45 a.m. Worship

HEDRICK COMMUNITY CHURCH/A GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

Hedrick, Pastor Michael Elrod
Sunday: 9 a.m. 9 a.m. Worship
www.hedrickcc.org
hedrickcc@mail.com 641-653-4477

HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Germanville (rural Brighton), Pastor Ryan Dexter
Sunday: 9 a.m. Sunday school
10:15 a.m. Worship
Wednesday: 6:30 p.m. Youth Group

JESUS NAME APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Brighton, Jeff Ide, Pastor
Sunday: 10 a.m. Worship

OLLIE BAPTIST CHURCH

Ollie, Pastor Tom Grove
Sunday: 9 a.m. Worship
Thursday: 9 a.m. Women sewing

PLEASANT PLAIN FRIENDS CHURCH

Pleasant Plain
Sunday: 10 a.m. Worship

PRAIRIE VIEW/A GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

Hwy 78 N of Packwood, Pastor Steven Lamb
Sunday: 7:30 a.m. Palm Sunday Breakfast Fundraiser
7:50 a.m. Sunday School
9 a.m. Sunday Worship, followed by Fellowship
10:30 a.m. Sunday School
5:30 p.m. Book Study at Parsonage
Monday: 8 a.m. Prayer Group

at Parsonage

Tuesday: 10 a.m. Bible Study
5 p.m. SPRC
Wednesday: 6 p.m. Family Fun Night
6 p.m. Confirmation/Youth Group

Thursday: 7 p.m. Maundy Thursday Worship
Friday: 7 p.m. Good Friday Worship

RICHLAND METHODIST/A GLOBAL METHODIST CHURCH

Richland, Pastor Michael Elrod
Sunday: 11 a.m. Worship
richlandumc.com or Richland UMC on Facebook

SS JOSEPH & CABRINI CATHOLIC PARISH

Richland, East Pleasant Plain Rev. Fr. Robert Lathrop, Pastor
Sunday: 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Joseph Church
Tuesday: 8 a.m. Prayer Service at Mother Cabrini Church
Thursday: 8 a.m. Prayer Service at St. Joseph Church

TRINITY FRIENDS CHURCH


Richland, Pastors Jerry Hoover & Steve Pfeifer
Sunday: 9:30 a.m. Worship

VICTORY FELLOWSHIP

Brighton
Sunday: 9:15 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 a.m. Worship
Wednesday: 7 p.m. Evening Service

WOOLSON FRIENDS CHURCH

Jasmine Ave. south of Richland, Pastor Jerry Hoover
Sunday: 11 a.m. Worship



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