



## Lent Week Four

Barry Steiner Ball interviews

Matt and Beth Johnson

This week's interview is with Beth and Matt Johnson, a young couple from Morgantown. Matt is the Associate pastor at Suncrest United Methodist Church and Beth is the campus pastor at WVU. In 2017, after a two-year process, the Johnsons adopted siblings via foster care. Today they share their story of becoming foster parents and adoption.

As you listen to the Johnson's story please ask yourself these questions:

1. Beth and Matt speak about the "unknowns" of being foster parents. Beth says, "they are just kids." What does this mean to you? How does this relate to the gospel story of the disciples trying to keep the children away from Jesus?
2. How important is it for foster parents to have a church community surrounding them? What support could a church family offer? If foster parents were to bring their foster children to church, the children might not be aware of the expected behavior during worship. How would your congregation really feel about this? Would these children really be welcomed in God's house?
3. Beth speaks very honestly about her desire to have a "very neat and tidy and happy adoption story." However, Beth admits that life is messy and nothing is perfect. Is God present in our messy lives? Is God present in the sometimes very messy lives of foster children? If God is present, why do we fear getting involved in the messy lives of our neighbors?
4. As adults we can imagine how difficult it is for foster parents to never be settled in knowing how long a child will be living with them. What affects would this unsettledness have on a child? We have thousands of children in West Virginia living every day in this unsettledness. What can the church do, what can your church do to help these children?
5. Are you willing to have a broken heart?

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