

Kindness Through Music

With my hand over my chest, I could feel my heart beating rapidly in nervousness. With only a few hours of notice from our state social worker, our family's first foster child was about to be dropped off at our doorsteps, an eight-year-old boy named Kawika.

Kawika, with a full head of dark curls, stepped through our home with nothing but two black garbage bags of clothes. I was shocked that he did not have any toys, a suitcase, or even necessary toiletries. As he curiously scanned his new home with his big brown eyes, I could sense a look of fear and concern across his face. I approached him as carefully as I could, and I offered him a friendly hug. Immediately, his face brightened up as he gave me a warm smile. As I brought him to his new room, the first words out of his mouth completely caught me off guard: "How long am I going to stay here?"

Fumbling for an answer to a puzzling question that I did not anticipate, I responded, "Um, well, you may stay as long as you would like!"

Upon hearing my response, a look of relief filled his eyes as he placed down his belongings and became more settled in his new room. His sense of anxiousness made sense to me after finding out that he knew he was no longer welcomed by his previous foster home, only after a few weeks of staying with them.

Trying to find something in common to connect with Kawika, I quickly brought out my ukulele. Immediately, it was clear that he had a passion for music. We sat down together, and Kawika started singing songs. It struck me that we both had a love for music; we connected.

I then introduced him to worship music, and I was surprised to learn that he had never heard a worship song before. I played him the song “Good, Good Father” by Chris Tomlin on Youtube, a song that our family often sings in church, and immediately tears filled his eyes.

“I haven’t seen my dad in years,” he whispered.

“Wait, really?” I replied. I discovered that he did not have a dad while growing up and he wished he could see him again.

We sat there listening to more worship songs together, and Kawika was clearly touched by many of the lyrics. It hit me that he had never truly been introduced to the meaning of love from a father, and he deeply longed for it. Even under complicated circumstances, he still wished for a relationship with his dad. Listening to these lyrics that there was a God who is a good, good Father brought a sense of hope and comfort. I did not realize that simply introducing him to worship songs would be so meaningful to him. “Good, Good Father” quickly became his favorite song to sing everywhere: around the house, in the car, at the park, and especially at church.

Following this experience, I realized that Kawika taught me the importance of showing genuine kindness to those around us. An act of kindness does not have to be a significant grand action that makes headline news; it can simply be spending quality time with someone. I believe that God created each of us, and if every person spent more quality time with those we encounter each day, the world would be a much better place.