

A birthday party for a home

by Jackie Thorwick

WEBSTER - Four-year-old Kyla Tracey sat with her sister Ava and her cousin Amanda Preston at a folding table Sunday afternoon in a new Habitat for Humanity home in Webster, eating ice cream cake. The home had been built by her parents and volunteers with the Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity program. Ava took a bite of ice cream and asked, "Who's birthday is it?" Grandma Mary answered, "It's your house's birthday, honey." Ava thought about that and asked, "When are we going home?" Her grandmother said, "You are home, honey, this is your new home." Ava thought about that, and before long, her lower lip began to quiver. "I want to go home, to my own room," she said, as tears began to fall. She was hugged and comforted.



The Tracey family gathered in the kitchen of their new Habitat home on Sunday after its dedication service. They are (L to R) Ava, Jenny, Kyla, Haven, and Hyatt.



Kyla Tracey, 4, member of the new Habitat family, ate ice-cream cake donated by Dairy Queen in honor of her new home's "birthday" at its dedication on Sunday.

Soon Kyla will come to know this new house as the safe place she thinks of as home. Perhaps the child thought her family would be sharing their new home with all of the people crowding it that afternoon, there to celebrate its completion and dedicate the home for the Tracey's use.

Eric Kube, executive director of Habitat for Humanity led the program. Kube thanked Thrivent Financial, which provided a substantial amount of the funding on this project. He explained that the Thrivent Builds with Habitat program has produced 1500 homes within the United States in the last five years, and nearly 1,000 more abroad.



Pastor Roger Pittman, of Lakeside Community Lutheran Church, offered prayers, read scripture, and spoke. He also presented three quilts made by the quilters at Lakeside as well as two embroidered pillow cases. The quilts were done in the favorite colors of the children. Matthew Bobick was there, representing Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Kube thanked Thrivent and Bobick. "Matt not only worked in the office, but he volunteered at the build site, putting in the soffit and fascia," said Kube. Other volunteers who helped build the home were there also as well as a number of extended family members.

Haven and Jenny Tracey, proud new homeowners, expressed their gratitude. "We never expected this," Haven said. "Thank you to Habitat and thank you to the volunteers who helped us build our home."