

Gardner-Webb University

## Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University

---

Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive

Gardner-Webb Publications

---

4-3-2014

### From Good to Grace

Office of University Communications

Alyssa Gutierrez

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive>

---

#### Recommended Citation

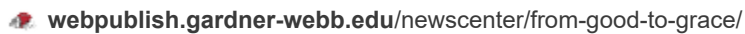
Office of University Communications and Gutierrez, Alyssa, "From Good to Grace" (2014). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 1428.

<https://digitalcommons.gardner-webb.edu/gardner-webb-newscenter-archive/1428>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Gardner-Webb Publications at Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Gardner-Webb University. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@gardner-webb.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@gardner-webb.edu).

# From Good to Grace

---

 webpublish.gardner-webb.edu/newscenter/from-good-to-grace/

Office of University Communications

April 3, 2014

## *Gardner-Webb Alum Katie Scruggs Embraces the Unexpected, Finds Help and Healing in God*

By: Alyssa Gutierrez, Communications Intern

“I knew my life was going to change as soon as that first test came back positive,” said Katlyn Scruggs, who recently graduated with a degree in psychology at Gardner-Webb University. “I was in complete denial, so I took another test and another test and still every single one came back with what I already knew—I was pregnant.”

Growing up in a strict Christian household, Scruggs was fully aware of the high expectations that her parents had for her which included no partying and moral purity when it came to boys. Heavily involved in church activities, cheerleading and competitive dance, Scruggs kept busy and stayed out of trouble.

“My parents kept me active to keep me out of drinking and going to parties,” said Scruggs. “Which I am thankful for now, but at the time I do admit, it did cause conflict because all of my friends had freedom that I wanted.”

Enrolling at GWU as a freshman in the fall of 2010, Scruggs continued living the “only way” she knew. With a serious boyfriend whose Christian ideals lined up with hers, Scruggs stayed on the straight and narrow.

“We never did anything bad,” She said. “We even went on mission trips together. It was definitely the type of relationship you would want. It had a foundation of Christ.”

After her freshman year, Scruggs had attracted friends just like her and what she was used to. “I would definitely say we were ‘goody goodies,’” chuckled Scruggs. It was not until the beginning of her sophomore year when she became exposed to a new crowd of people and was taken off track of the life she had always known. With her first taste of freedom from rules, she no longer became interested in her schoolwork, the wishes of her parents, or the faith-based relationship with her boyfriend.

“I finally got to be social and it became this addicting weekend ritual,” said Scruggs. “My boyfriend did not like that at all so he gave me an ultimatum—I could choose him or this new life I was living. I chose the new lifestyle.”

Soon after, Scruggs began dating again. “I had developed this silly little crush on this guy and we began seeing each other,” said Scruggs, of the young man who would later become the father of her child. After spending time with this young man and a new group of friends, Scruggs began to stray from the morals that she was raised with and before she knew it everything had gone out of her control.

“He was just fun. There was nothing deep about the relationship and I honestly was not thinking long-term at all but along came this child. I just had this overwhelming feeling of knowing I was pregnant,” said Scruggs. “I can’t even describe what it was like, but I just knew.”

Like most young women in her situation, Scruggs became instantly fearful of the future. What would her parents say? They were devout Christians and had taught her that true love waits. What about school? Gardner-Webb is a small, Christian school. How would they accept an unmarried, pregnant student? What about her boyfriend? They had not been dating that long at all. What would he say? While all of these questions ran through her head there was one that stood out the most. What about this unborn child? What was to become of him or her?

“When I first found out, I cried,” said Scruggs, who was with her best friend, Kelsey, at the time. “I told her, I don’t know what to do, this boyfriend was temporary, wasn’t stable and he liked to drink. He was in no way ready for this.”

Scruggs, who had just turned 20, told her boyfriend the news of the pregnancy and his response to her was not to tell anyone and that they would go get this fixed. “I thought to myself, ‘Is this what I am supposed to do?’” she said. She realized that “fixing” the situation by getting an abortion would never be an option for her so she decided to tell her parents the next day.

“Surprisingly my parents were the most supportive people to have in that instance. It was a complete 360 of what I thought was going to happen,” said Scruggs. “My mom was so calm and said ‘It’s ok, we’re going to work through this and this has happened for a reason.’ She just kept me in a positive state of mind while my boyfriend was trying to bring me down.”

With the support of her parents, Scruggs found peace with her situation at home but her life at school had yet to be resolved and she was considering the possibility of transferring.

“I found out I was pregnant two days before the spring semester my sophomore year,” said Scruggs. “I thought I couldn’t go to school pregnant, especially at a Christian college like Gardner-Webb. I thought I would get judged, but it turned out that I was the one who judged myself the most.”

Scruggs received an outpouring of support from the Gardner-Webb community, and believes that the decision to stay and not transfer was vital to where she is today. “All of my professors, everybody, they have just been so understanding,” she said. “I still have professors, especially in the psychology department, ask for pictures of my little girl!”

Her friends at Gardner-Webb were also there for her as she embarked on the one of the most trying times of her life. “My on campus friends actually threw me a baby shower when I was pregnant,” said Scruggs. “That was a really emotional day for me because you always know you have friends, but when you see them all together and see what they put together...it was just a really good feeling.”

Scruggs spent that summer preparing for her child and on August 25, 2012, she welcomed a baby girl into the world. She named her daughter Paisley Alivia.

“She turned out to be the biggest blessing in my life,” said Scruggs. “I thought my life was completely over but when I had her it was like my life had started over.”

While Scruggs does admit that balancing parenthood and schoolwork can be difficult, she emphasizes that her daughter is her top priority. “Sometimes I don’t get to study as much as I would like to for some tests but I have learned to manage my time well and space studying out,” said Scruggs.

Armed with a bachelor’s degree in psychology, she says that Paisley is the motivation she used to finish her undergraduate degree and her reason for continuing her graduate school studies here at GWU. Hoping to become a school counselor, Scruggs took 21 hours this past semester in order to graduate on time. “I want Paisley to say one day, ‘Mom did it, so can I,’” added Scruggs.

In addition to being a full-time student and a full-time mom, Scruggs also works three separate jobs in order to support Paisley. As a youth leader at Caroleen Baptist Church in Caroleen, N.C., Scruggs opens up about what Christ has done in her life and is grateful that the church sees who she is now and not who she was before she truly came to know God’s power. She also splits her time between her parents’ business and the Carolina Event Conference Center, where she prepares and caters food as the assistant chef.

Looking back and seeing the difference that Paisley has made in her life Scruggs says she would not change a thing. “I was going down a really bad path and I think that God placed her in my life to change me and get me and him closer,” she said. “If it wasn’t for Paisley, I do not think I would be on track to graduate and I do not think I would be so full of joy and happiness as I am right now.”

Scruggs says that her first trimester of pregnancy was the loneliest and scariest time in her life. But, through constant prayer and support of her family and the Gardner-Webb community, she has ended up right where she is meant to be.

“If there was one thing that I could tell people is that they are not alone,” said Scruggs. “There were times that I felt helpless and completely isolated, but God was right there with me the entire time.”

###