



## BLIND TRUST

By Jenifer Heath

It was mid-October. A Minnesota storm had suddenly moved in, and blowing snow was responsible for white-out conditions. Holly and I were on our way to pick up Lucy, a **twelve-year-old horse**, that was experiencing blindness from an eye condition called uveitis. Lucy's dedicated and loving owner had been dealing with the mare's chronic eye problem for more than a year. Vet visits and medication regimens were costly and time intensive, leaving her owner feeling **unsure of what to do next**. When we arrived with our horse trailer on that blustery day, we were cautioned that the little black and white pinto may be somewhat difficult to load. Last time she'd been hauled, it had taken quite a bit of effort to get her into the trailer.

Haven Acres has been home to several horses with sight limitations of varying degrees over the years, and many times they are skittish and unsure even in familiar surroundings. How in the world were we going to be able to convince a nervous, **blind horse** to load into our horse trailer in the middle of a blizzard by the promptings of unfamiliar people? **We were left with only one option... prayer**. Before we exited the truck to meet our new herd member, Holly and I said a quick prayer, asking the Lord to give Lucy the willingness to come with us.

Entering the barn where she was boarded, we found Lucy to be very calm, quiet, and level-headed. She was not dancing around or showing any signs of nervousness. **She was ready to go**. Placing a winter blanket on her and a fly mask to shield her eyes from the onslaught of blowing snow, we headed for the trailer. Holly led the sweet mare up to the trailer and gave her a minute to smell it and get a sense of what was expected of her. A few minutes later, and with minimal encouragement, Lucy calmly stepped up into the trailer and handled the ride home beautifully. **God had answered our prayer!**

When new horses arrive at the ranch, they are kept on quarantine in the barn for two weeks in order to ensure that they don't have any illnesses that could spread to the rest of our herd. **Since horses are social creatures**, they can become very anxious when they are separated from other horses. Sometimes the stress of a new environment and being isolated can cause them to pace incessantly, paw impatiently, or even refuse to eat. Since Lucy had the added stressor of blindness, we would monitor her closely in the next few days and weeks.

*continued on back side*



**“I WILL LEAD THE BLIND BY A WAY THEY DO NOT KNOW, IN PATHS THEY DO NOT KNOW I WILL GUIDE THEM. I WILL MAKE DARKNESS INTO LIGHT BEFORE THEM AND RUGGED PLACES INTO PLAINS. THESE ARE THE THINGS I WILL DO, AND I WILL NOT LEAVE THEM UNDONE.”** – Isaiah 42:16

Over the next several days, we watched in amazement as **Lucy remained quiet and tranquil** and even laid down for periods of time in her stall, evidence that she felt safe and relaxed in her new home. So uncommon was her behavior, that I spent some time pondering it. Many of our sighted horses did not adjust so easily or trust so readily. Why was Lucy so trusting and **confident in spite of her disability?** Although I may never know the answer for certain, my guess is that she was privileged to receive a **solid foundation of trust from birth** with careful and kind handling in the homes in which she had lived.

Horses, much like people, react based on their personal experiences. Haven Acres has had many horses over the years from abusive or neglectful situations, and it can take them months, and in some cases, years to build trust. Once that bond is formed, however, they can be loyal and dedicated equine partners for life. Lucy strikes me as a horse that just **doesn't have a reason not to trust**. If you've never been mistreated or neglected, you tend to believe the best about people, and that seems to be her premise.

The more I thought about it, a spiritual lesson resonated in my spirit. God created us to have relationship with Him. When we decide to become a Christian, we are putting our trust in Him. **Like horses, the ease with which we are able to trust God may depend on how people have treated us. The problem with that philosophy is that people will ALWAYS let us down, but God NEVER will. He will be faithful EVERY single time! He NEVER fails!** Like Lucy, we need to display BLIND TRUST in God. Trust that allows us to remain calm even if there is a “blizzard” of difficulties or challenges surrounding us and we can't see where we're going. Trust that gives us peace and rest that God will always lead us to what is best. Trust that conquers our every fear.

Please pray with us this summer as Lucy begins to participate in our youth mentorship program. For the first time ever, we have a blind student that will have the opportunity to work with a horse that understands her situation. With confident expectation, we are looking forward to **seeing God use Lucy's blindness for good**, as only He can.



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**Haven Acres**

2820 245th St E • Hampton, MN 55031  
**WWW.HAVENACRESMN.ORG • EMAIL: info@havenacresmn.org**