

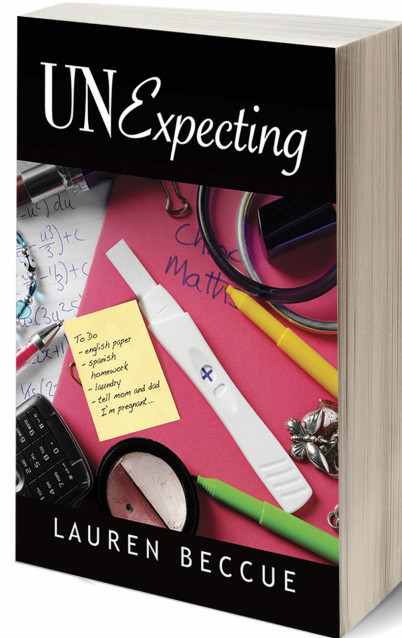
# UNExpecting

Lauren Beccue

**“It won’t happen to me”** is what Lauren was thinking, just moments before she conceived her first child. As a senior at Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, author Lauren Beccue was making plans for her life after college, applying to MFA programs in her home state of California, expecting that a graduate degree in creative writing would lead to a writing career. What she was not expecting, as she prepared to send out her applications, was to see two red lines on a pregnancy test.

Immediate questions confronted her: Should I keep this baby? How am I going to tell my parents?! What will happen to my plans and dreams? Have I ruined God’s plans for my life? Lauren came from a Christian home and knew the statistics surrounding premarital sex. She’d even pledged abstinence in high school. Good girls like Lauren don’t get pregnant . . . or do they? Just three months into her senior year of college, Lauren joined the more than three million women who unexpectedly become pregnant each year. To make matters worse, she’d only been dating the child’s father for a few weeks.

With refreshing honesty and a gift for words, Lauren shares the struggles and triumphs of her journey. An ill-timed pregnancy. An impromptu marriage. At some point, we all learn we’re not immune to the consequences of our actions. Join Lauren as she candidly, yet humorously, reveals how she eventually allowed God to free her from shame and witnessed his redemptive power in action as he unveiled his beautiful new plans.



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*Deep River*  
B O O K S



## **Lauren Beccue – Santa Barbara, CA**

Lauren Beccue graduated with a BA in English from Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, but not without incident. Wife and mother, Lauren speaks to teens about sex and marriage as a certified sex ed instructor.

### **Endorsements for *UNExpecting*:**

Lauren Beccue takes us on a captivating journey of what it means to be “UNExpecting.” Although not everyone has been in Lauren’s situation, everyone can identify with the disruption of well-laid plans and the subsequent dilemma of what to do. Which decision is morally, ethically right? In Lauren’s case, abortion would be so easy . . .

Lauren has written a brave, honest book about grace and second chances that is hard to put down. I highly recommend this book.

**- Nancie Carmichael, spiritual formation counselor; bestselling author of *Surviving One Bad Year: 7 Spiritual Strategies to Lead You to a New Beginning***

With an engaging and captivating writing style, Lauren communicates her journey through the chaos that results from not following God's design for relationships and sexuality. Thankfully the story doesn't end there, but rather with the redemptive work of God and the hope of his grace. With raw honesty, Lauren doesn't hide the pain connected with disobedience but also clearly offers the true hope of the gospel. This book reminds us that God is in the business of restoring our brokenness.

**- Dr. Virginia Friesen, co-director of Home Improvement Ministries ([www.HIMweb.org](http://www.HIMweb.org)); author of *The Marriage App: Unlocking the Irony of Intimacy* and *Raising a Trailblazer: Rite-of-Passage Trail Markers for your Set-Apart Teen***

Winsome, wise, and warmly written. Raw honesty. Clothed in grace and love. What a testimony of God's faithfulness and mercy and goodness to all of us who fall short—and that includes us all!—when we come running into God's waiting arms of loving embrace. This is a book I will recommend as a seminary professor to my students, as a psychologist to my clients, as a priest to my flock, and to Christians and non-Christians alike.

**- Samuel R. Schutz, MDiv, PhD, professor of evangelism and church planting; advisor to the dean of students for crisis intervention at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary**

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Choosing the road less traveled . . .

Like many others, Lauren, as a college student, experienced the reality of an unplanned pregnancy. Having an abortion, allowing for an adoption, or choosing a life submitted to God (and raising her child), were all real options for a young woman with many plans for her future. How we choose to respond matters to God and has far reaching effects. In this fast-paced and easy-to-read story, you will see the real-life struggles of Lauren and her now-husband, Clay, as they process and decide to choose the road less traveled, and the blessings of having made that tough but wonderful decision. His name is Zach.

**- Andy Jordan, retired businessman, previous board member: Pregnancy Care Center of Northeast Massachusetts, and the Center for Pregnancy Concerns of Baltimore, MD. Current national board member, Community Bible Study, Colorado Springs, CO.**

If you were ever going down one road and then your life took an UN-expected turn, this book is for you. Lauren takes you on a revealing journey about what happens when you face a crossroads, and how God can take a difficult situation and turn it into something beautiful. It shows that character is not that we won't make mistakes; no one is perfect. Character is how we respond to the mistakes we make. Whether a teen, adult, parent, or grandparent, this book is for you. It will help you navigate the storms of life and see the sun rise again.

**- Craig Johnson, director of ministries for Lakewood Church, Houston, Texas; author of *Lead Vertically***

## **Suggested Interview Questions for Lauren Beccue, Author of *UNExpecting***

**1) There are over 3 million unexpected pregnancies each year. What motivated you to chronicle the details of yours in a memoir?**

First, there is so much fiction surrounding the issues of unexpected pregnancy and pre-marital sex in books, movies, and so-called reality shows. I wanted to share some truth, or at least the truth of my experience, so hopefully people can be better prepared to make the important choices in their own lives. Second, when you experience the power, grace, and redemption of God, you can't help but want to tell everyone about it, any way you can - writing, speaking. And you want everyone to know God's grace is available to them too.

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**2) You are now a Certified W.A.I.T. Trainer, (WAIT stands for Why Am I Tempted?) - you go into classrooms and churches and promote abstinence . What is your response when people ask, “How can you tell teens to do what you chose not to do”?**

When you know better, you do better. After living with the consequences of my choices, I know better and feel responsible to teach others to do better as well. One of my focuses is reaching teens before they make those choices - and because of my experience, I can add a different dynamic to the WAIT material - I can share what really happens when we decide not to follow God’s plan for us.

**3) In your book, you equate the process of discovering you were pregnant to a terrible dream from which you couldn’t wake up. Can you describe what that felt like?**

Finding out I was pregnant was one of those surprises you think can’t possibly be real. There’s no way this is happening. As the next few days passed, my situation wasn’t changing - pregnancy test results didn’t change - I kept waiting for someone to wake me up and say, “Don’t worry, it was just a vivid dream,” but that never happened.

**4) What was it like to tell your parents?**

Telling my parents was very difficult and scary. I was 3,000 miles from home so I had to do it over the phone. In one sense I had wanted to tell them as soon as I found out, and in another sense I never wanted to tell them. I knew they were going to be very disappointed in me and my choices. I had kept it a secret for several weeks and telling my parents, letting the secret out, established the pregnancy as a reality in my life. Once I told them, though, I did feel better - they were certainly upset with me and Clay but I also knew they would help us through it.

**5) After finding out you were pregnant, you had seven months left of college. What was it like to finish school when you were pregnant?**

Awkward at best. Holy Cross is a small school so it didn’t take long for people to know about my pregnancy. Pregnant women don’t fit into the college atmosphere at all as you can imagine, so I spent as much time off campus as I could and tried to focus on what was to come after college.

**6) At the time, what was the hardest part of living out your decision to keep the baby?**

The transition, or lack there of, from being a college student to a mother. Up until I had Zach, I had only been responsible for myself. My concerns were getting a good class schedule and figuring out how to do as little homework and still get good grades. College ended and less than two months later, when most girls my age were concerned about post-college jobs and apartments, I was flung into motherhood. I wasn’t emotionally ready at all.

**7) You say in your book that you felt “hopeless.” Looking back, how do you know God was walking with you?**

Well, I was putting my hope in the wrong things. I was hoping that, despite getting pregnant, I could somehow make my life work out the way it was supposed to - I could still do the things I had planned on doing. I was hoping my husband would be everything I ever imagined a husband to be (which of course is unrealistic since I thought my husband would be like a Nicolas Sparks character). I was hoping that experiencing the joys of motherhood would mean I would never wonder what would have happened if I hadn't gotten pregnant. Putting hope in these things left me feeling very disappointed because I couldn't piece my life back to the way it was “supposed” to be, my husband is human and not perfect (and I'm not the perfect wife). And in the early stages of motherhood when you're sleep deprived and haven't taken a shower in two days, you start to think about how glamorous life would be without kids. So I was definitely feeling hopeless. And I was also feeling pretty worthless when it came to God's eternal purpose for my life. I felt like I'd messed things up too much to ever be useful to Him again. But I realized I had to put my hope in the Lord. Hope that He would use a sinful choice that changed my life so drastically for His glory, hope that He would give eternal purpose to what I was going through. Hope that He could somehow make my life a reflection of His love and grace. And He has done all of that. He's still doing it.

**8) What message do you have for teens or college students? What about someone going through a similar situation as you?**

Well, teens have it rough. Parents and church are telling them not to do certain things - don't do drugs, don't have sex before you're married - and everyone else around them is saying “do whatever you want.” It can be especially confusing when everyone is doing whatever they want, and there never seem to be any consequences. I want teens to know that consequences are not always visible to outsiders - they can be emotional, physiological, spiritual, and they are not always immediate, but they are always real to those living with them. But, instead of focusing on the consequences, I want them to focus on the many benefits of waiting to have sex. First, God promises to bless those who follow and obey Him - and God wants to bless you with a great sex life - He invented sex. Second, studies show people who wait to have sex actually have better sex once they're married. So focus on all those years of great sex after marriage. Focus on how great the wedding night is going to be. Focus on the joy of building romantic relationships based on values, likes, dislikes and not on sex, which can cloud your judgement when it comes to picking a husband or wife. Let all of that be your motivation. To those going through what I went through, either an unexpected pregnancy or just feeling remorse over a decision you've made - my main message is never think that you are no longer valuable or useful to God. Never think He can't possibly have a plan for you anymore. He somehow uses even our worst decisions for His glory if we let Him. That's the beauty of redemption - it's not just forgiveness, it's using our sin for something great, it's turning darkness into light.

### **9) What message do you have for parents of teens?**

Despite their best efforts to make you think differently, teens really do have questions about sex and they want answers. If they don't get their questions answered from parents or church, they will get answers from dangerous sources like peers, movies, the internet, etc. Conversations with teens need to be open and occur often. It's not "The Sex Talk," it's a series of conversations - the earlier you start, the better. There is a tough balance for parents when it comes to this topic because it's not their job to be their child's friend, we're parents - but if every conversation about sex is a lecture, not a dialogue, those conversations are going to end quickly and they won't be very effective.

### **10) What is your favorite part of being a mom?**

I love so much about being a mom - I love watching my kids grow and experience the different stages of childhood. I love watching their personalities develop. I just love watching them go through life. But there is nothing quite like hearing "I love you, Mom." That gets me every time.