
2-28-07



Hello Champions!

I hope your first month as a Champion went well! I would like to work on an individual basis, personalizing the role of Champion for Children in your church according to your availability and particular areas of interest or passion. I would appreciate it if you could call or email me at the end of each month with a short description of anything you may have done or hope to do as a Champion and any feedback regarding what's working, what's not, and what I can help you with. As a new program, Champions for Children is constantly growing and learning thanks to devoted volunteers like you!

I have met with several of you and your church pastors so far, though I still have many to schedule meetings with. If you have not already done so, please contact your church leaders and arrange a time with your pastor (and/or other church leaders who may be interested or have some helpful ideas about where to go from here) as soon as possible. Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays work the best for me though my schedule is somewhat flexible.

My challenge for March is to consider planning an adoption ministry group. If you have several families who have adopted or provided foster care in your church, starting a group that meets once a month to discuss the many issues that arise in these processes could be extremely helpful for these families and beneficial for your church as a whole. We have staff members who are willing to speak in your congregation if you would like to have someone come to an informational meeting for anyone who would be interested in participating in an adoption awareness group. Please see below for further information.

If an adoption ministry is not something that would be beneficial for the needs of your particular church, please consider making Easter baskets for the children in foster care. I have attached a sample bulletin announcement if this is something you are interested in doing for Bethany's foster families. Collecting small gifts like candy, toys, art supplies, books, and clothing to assemble Easter baskets can be a great and creative way for your congregation to get involved and help children celebrate Easter in the Kalamazoo area.

Please see the attached page for the March Connection and feel free to contact me with any questions or comments. With your feedback (What you've found to be effective or ineffective, suggestions for future improvement, and ideas for ways for your church to partner with Bethany Christian Services) we hope to create a strong and lasting relationship, influencing positive change within your church and our organization.

Blessings,

Karman Hamlin
"Champions for Children" Program Coordinator
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The Champions for Children Connection



MARCH 2007 CALENDAR

- **Thursday, March 1, 6:30-8:30pm***
Adoption Information Meeting:
International, Domestic, Older/Special Needs Adoption
"The River" Church
1652 North M-40
Allegan, MI 49010
 - Please join the Bethany Christian Services offices of Holland and Kalamazoo as we bring together a panel of adoptive families to share their stories and professional staff to answer any questions. Unfortunately, childcare will not be provided, but refreshments will! Please RSVP at 800-226-7703.

- **Monday, March 5, 4:30-8pm**
Adoption Orientation – General Information Session
Bethany Christian Services Kalamazoo Branch
6687 Seeco Drive
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
 - If you or someone you know is particularly interested in adoption in general, please have them contact Angela Mitchell at 269-372-8800 to RSVP for this session.

- **Tuesday March 6, 1-3pm**
International Adoption Information Session
Bethany Christian Services Kalamazoo Branch

- **Thursday March 15, 6:30-8:30pm**
International Adoption Information Session
Bethany Christian Services Kalamazoo Branch
 - If you or someone you know is particularly interested in international adoption, please have them contact Mary Holtapp at 269-372-8800 to RSVP for a session.

MARCH 2007 CHAMPION CHALLENGES

CHAMPION CHALLENGE: Option #1: Consider starting an adoption group



- Speak with your church leaders to see if they know of any families who have been touched (either directly or indirectly) by adoption or foster care.
- Contact these families to see if they would be interested in starting a support group.
- Brainstorm about different topics or books that would be helpful to discuss and talk about a good time to meet during the week on a monthly or bi- weekly basis.

- NOTE: you wouldn't necessarily have to be the leader of this group but you could encourage them and distribute resources from Bethany Christian Services. Also, this is not something that would need to happen immediately but could positively impact your church family in the long run.

OR

CHAMPION CHALLENGE: Option #2: Assemble Easter baskets

- Make an announcement in church or in a bulletin or newsletter like this:
 - o Share the joy of the Easter season with a child in foster care! We will be collecting candy along with new toys, books and clothing for Easter baskets for the area children in foster care and families in need at Bethany Christian Services. If you are interested in assembling the baskets please contact (Champion name), otherwise please bring donations to (location) on or before (date).



- Easter Sunday is April 8th so if you are interested in doing this, please contact me and have your baskets assembled and delivered* to the Bethany office by **Friday, March 30th** so that we will have a week to distribute them.

(*If you need help transporting them to the Bethany office please let me know, and we can make arrangements to come pick them up.)