



Every Life a Promise

Bethany Christian Services- Nashville, 220 Athens Way, Suite 405, Nashville, Tennessee 37228, (615)242-0909

Recent Adoptions

Lamont and Regina took home Gabriel on October 2nd.

Tim and Terri took home Emily on October 11th.

Garner and Jennifer took home Jericho on October 18th.

Bill and Stacy took home Sammie on October 23rd.

Reynold and Donna Yordy brought Ella home from China on October 25th.

Upcoming Events

- November 6 Children of Hope Meeting (Transracial Adoption Group) at the Northwest Family YMCA, 3700 Ashland Highway, Nashville, from 6:30 until 7:30pm.
- November 12 IAC Adoption Conference at the Gordon Jewish Family Center, from 12:30 until 6pm.
- November 14 New Friends Dinner and Silent Auction at Cool Springs Embassy Suites at 6pm.
- November 20 Adoptive Families Group Meeting at Woodmont Hills Family of God, East Hall, Room 201, at 6:30 pm. Childcare will be provided. The topic will be Networking: One way you can be Proactive in Facilitating Your Child's Adoption.
- December 9 Bethany Christmas Party in the Plaza I Lobby from 11am until 1pm.

From the Director

"I just found out that my company will match 50 cents on the dollar for employee contributions! Please review this form. If it meets with your approval, please fill out your section, sign, and mail back to the address on the bottom of the form. You will also need to include proof of Bethany's 501(c)(3) status. Give me a call if you have any questions."

I received this e-mail from one of our faithful supporters last week. As you can imagine, it brought a smile to my face. Not only am I very thankful for the donation that will now be coming from that company, I am soooo thankful for

people who keep our ministry in their thoughts and prayers.

I know that there are so many of you who are always looking for ways to support this ministry - through your time, prayers, and financial resources. You have truly made this your ministry. I always know that when we, as a staff or our clients, have a need there will be people like you out there to meet that need. As we go into this Thanksgiving season, I want you to know how thankful I am for all of the people that God has brought to be a part of the ministry of Bethany Christian Services of Middle Tennessee. God Bless You!

From Bethany

We here at Bethany understand that adoption is a significant financial undertaking for the majority of our families. There are countless ways of creative fundraising and many grant opportunities to help cover expenses. You can find information about the Adoption Tax Credit, grants, and fundraising ideas at www.bethany.org/financing. Here you can also find information on the FamilyFirst Loan, a low interest loan program that was developed to help bridge the gap between the time you need funds and the time you receive your Federal tax credit/refund for adoption expenses. Please let us know if you are hosting a fundraising event such as a garage sale, car wash, music benefit, or chili cook off! We would love to help spread the word about adoption related fundraisers by posting them on our newsletter under "Upcoming Events".

From Kristi

This fall seems to have flown by- my work with birthmothers has kept me very busy. The new mentoring program is proving to be successful! It is a great way for my clients to receive support from someone outside of their "circle." It also is a huge help for me because it is often difficult to be 3 (sometimes 4) different places at one time. With a mentor involved, at least I know the client has an extra person that can be there for her in times of need. We have had quite a few "challenging" cases over the course of the last 6 weeks or so. It is so easy to get in the habit of just "doing what you do" until something out of ordinary happens. It is then that I have to take a step back to remember that God has His ways, His plans, His timing. When I throw up my hands because I have no idea how God is going to work things out- then I can almost hear Him say "Finally- can I try now?!" He absolutely deserves all of the glory for the awesome things He has done with, for, and

through Bethany. We are constantly reminded that when we are weak He is strong.

From Shelby

A concern I hear frequently from couples I meet with is about having more than one child with different adoption or birth stories. Often couples wishing to adopt a subsequent child will tell me, "I'd like both of our adoptions to look alike. I don't want one child to have lots of contact with his birthparents while the other has little or none with hers." There are several major considerations associated with this issue. Here is yet another area in the world of adoption where you as the parents have little or no control. Even if you can be matched with a second birthparent who might resemble your first, there can be no way of predicting how that birthparent's life and your relationship with him or her will develop over time. Will she move away? Will she get married or divorced? Will a very open relationship begin causing him pain after he has other children so he might begin to withdraw or stop returning your phone calls? Or will a birthparent who formerly only wanted letters and pictures suddenly request a meeting? All of you know that with openness there are no guarantees, and the best relationships are those that are allowed to change and develop over time. I am sure you expect your life and the life of your child to do the same, so it would be unfair to expect less than that from birthparents.

So what can you do to get comfortable with the likelihood that multiple children will have different birth stories and different life experiences as a result of those stories? First, as any parent of more than one child can tell you, it is important to recognize that each child has his or her own story, whether it is health history, gifts and talents, birthparents, birth order, or any of a number of factors that may vary. Celebrate the differences in the children you parent and what makes them unique. Try not to manipulate situations or information in an attempt to avoid causing your children pain. The desire to do this is very human, but these kinds of manipulations almost always backfire with a child feeling you were dishonest or that it was not really okay to be different. Lois Melina says it well: "Sometimes it is the adoptive parents who feel the greatest responsibility to equalize or compensate for any differences between their children. They might be aware that because of adoption, their children have experienced profound losses and are different in ways that cannot be changed. Although their intentions are good, they are really treating their children as victims of adoption who need to be protected from further wounds. They will serve their children far better if they help them learn to manage life's inequalities." ([The Open Adoption Experience](#), p. 293)

Allow birthparents who are able to be in the lives of your children to be the role models other birthparents cannot. They may be your child's best experience of his own birthparent, and hiding that from him denies your child that

chance to feel good about where he came from. Being accepted by a sibling's birthparents can address feelings of rejection a child of adoption may have. Denying that those feelings are there is often only a pretense. Children have feelings of rejection and loss anyway, and bringing them to the forefront when dealing with levels of openness in different adoptions is healthy. Encourage children to explore any feelings of hurt that might emerge by writing a birthparent a letter (mailed or not) about how she wishes their relationship might be. Talk with the child about his fantasy birthmother, and encourage him to see that in other caring adults that surround him. Melina suggests designating a "cookie person" for children without open relationships with their birthparents, and this is simply another caring adult who can spend time with them when a sibling might be with a birthparent.

Remember that all children look for differences when they are in relationships with one another—and that is true of birth and adopted children. Sometimes the way children tease each other about those differences can be very painful, but trying to design a relationship with future birthparents that imitates the relationship one child already enjoys will only add to your stress and a need to keep things balanced at every turn. It is more of a Band-Aid than a real solution, because it does not heal the wound beneath. Dealing with potential hurt up front can allow relationships with birthparents to develop in the natural way that life takes them, rather than a predetermined formula. Every child in a family has a different story about how he or she came to be there, and the roles that child plays in that family will change as he or she grows. That is the wonderful gift of parenthood—celebrating what makes each child special.

From Sheryl

Many couples affected by infertility struggle with the holidays and describe it as a landmark that highlights the passage of time and the pain of infertility. Thanksgiving and Christmas are obviously family-oriented holidays, and couples may be faced with family gatherings including nieces and nephews as well as pregnant siblings. While family is a gift and the holidays can bring joy and celebration, these triggers can bring new pain or open old wounds. Resolve.org has many suggestions for coping with the holidays. We'll look at these this month and next:

- **DO** Be selective about accepting invitations to parties and holiday celebrations, especially the ones at which you know there will be a lot of children or pregnant women. Remember: you don't have to say yes.

DON'T Feel guilty about not participating in all the traditional family events. You've had a difficult year, and you need to concentrate on helping yourselves and each other get through the holidays.

- **DO** Plan to spend time with other couples or friends who don't have children if family festivities are too much to bear this year. If you find it painful to be around your young nieces, nephews, and cousins, consider arriving just in time for the holiday dinner rather than the night before.

DON'T Rely completely on old family traditions to fulfill your present needs.

- **DO** Spend time doing things you like best: preparing a spectacular meal, taking long walks, going horse-back riding or jogging, or curling up by a fire with a good novel. Plan a special trip for just the two of you such as a ski weekend, or a few nights at a cozy country inn. You may have to put up with comments like, "How can you be so selfish?" or "The holiday won't be the same without you." But those remarks may be easier to bear than a holiday table packed with children. Begin your own family traditions: a special ceremony or ritual that says that the two of you are already a family, and that you can rejoice in your love for each other, with or without children.

DON'T Pretend that there's nothing wrong and carry on with "business as usual."

From Chris

For most families "the wait" is the hardest part of the adoption process. You spend so much time in a flurry; filling out paperwork, attending necessary appointments, attending training, and meeting with your case worker. Then it's all done. Everything within your power has been completed, and then begins the wait. What began as an exciting journey can turn into a difficult time when the weeks turn into months, and still, you wait. Your case worker will keep you as informed as possible during this time, but there are no magic answers or time frames. Here are some of the things you can do during the wait:

1. Allow God to really speak to you during this time. Very often, the wait, becomes a journey of growth for families as they wait for the child that God intends for their family.
2. Use this time to journal your journey. Write down your meetings, fingerprint appointments and trainings that you attend. This will help you keep a record of all that you have completed. Then write about your feelings, good and bad. Don't worry about grammar or spelling, just write. As your journal grows you will be able to look back and see what all has transpired during this time, and how God has been with you through every step.

3. Keep your journal for your child. There will come a time in your child's life that they will treasure your journal, both the joyous moments and the heartaches during your journey to them.

Childcare Workers Needed!

If you would still like to help with the New Friends dinner, here is an opportunity! We could use some more childcare workers to serve our children during the dinner. If you can help, please call Kathy Frost at 650-7539.

NFD Silent Auction

It's here! We've been talking about it and preparing for it for months and it's finally here! We are looking forward to a wonderful evening. Some of the over 100 items that will be available to purchase at the Silent Auction are:

- Meal Packages
- Airline Tickets
- CDs, books, and DVDs
- Titans and Predators Tickets
- Hotel Package
- Photography Sessions
- Paintings
- Antiques
- Home Depot Gift Cards
- And Much More!

Adoption Conference

The Middle Tennessee Inter-Agency Adoption Coalition is sponsoring an Adoption Conference to be held on Sunday, November 12 from 12:30 until 6:00pm, at the Gordon Jewish Family Center, at 801 Percy Warner Blvd. The guest speaker will be Patricia Johnston. The cost for the conference is \$20/per person (\$25 for late registrations). Please register by October 30th, but walk-ins are also welcome. Please send conference fees to: I.A.C., P. O. Box 210762, Nashville, TN, 37221. For more information, contact us at Bethany or go to the IAC website at www.tennesseeadoption.org.

Infertility Support Group

Bethany is preparing to begin the next six-week infertility support and educational group. The group will address many issues including how infertility affects marriage, friendships, spirituality, and finances. The group also investigates ethical issues that can arise during treatment. The cost is \$10 per session (for couples or individuals) and meetings will be held each Tuesday night from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm at the Bethany office located at 220 Athens Way, Suite 405 in Nashville. If you are interested, please email sfindley@bethany.org or call the office for dates.

Share Your Adoption Story

We are getting ready to update our Nashville Bethany webpage with a personal touch. Within the coming weeks, we will begin showing local Bethany adoption stories and pictures on our homepage. We plan to highlight 3-4 stories on the home page at a time, and the full collection of stories will be kept permanently on the Stories page. If you would like to participate, please write your adoption story (1,000-1,200 words) and send it with 1-3 family pictures to Sheryl Findley at sfindley@bethany.org. We believe that your story can be a source of encouragement to others as they bear witness to God's handiwork in building your family!

Another Way to Serve Bethany

We need a decorating committee! This spring our office went through some remodeling and we think it looks great, except that we have done almost no decorating! We would really appreciate it if we could get a few people to work together to improve the decor of our office. Jay, our office manager, will be the contact person. Please let us know if you are interested.

Birthmother Mentoring Program

Many of you may know that we have been in the process of developing a Birthmother Mentoring Program. The program

is now in place and all we need are volunteers! We are looking for Christian women ages 21 and older who have a flexible schedule during the day to help with practical needs of birthmothers including, but not limited to, transportation to prenatal appointments. This program is designed for mentors to develop a one-on-one relationship with a woman in a crisis pregnancy to provide support, encouragement, and friendship. Please contact Sheryl in our office for more information. Please note that women who are in our pool of waiting families for domestic adoption are not eligible as to avoid any possible conflict of interest.

Bethany Christmas Party



Save the date! The Annual Bethany Christmas Party will be held on Saturday, December 9, from 11am until 1pm in the Plaza I lobby.

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