



The Bethany Times

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8: For everything there is a fixed time, and a time for every business under the sun. A time for birth and a time for death...A time for weeping and a time for laughing...A time for sorrow and a time for dancing...A time for search and a time for loss...A time to keep and a time to give away...A time for keeping quiet and a time for talk...A time for love and a time for hate...A time for war and a time for peace.

Bethany Christian Services

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Welcome Home...

- © Alexander Brian...July 20
- © Braden Arthur John...August 31
- © Mia Ana...Sept 1
- © Thor Jayden...Sept 5
- © Grace Victoria...Sept 21



Forever Families...

- © Brianna Jo...August 14
- © Sage Endonnis...August 14

From the Director...by Jeff Piehl

In recent newsletters, we have been asking for prayer as we seek a new director. Well, our prayers have been answered! Jeff Piehl, our new executive branch director, started on Monday, August 27th! He has been a wonderful addition to our Bethany staff and we eagerly look forward to the many gifts he will bring to our ministry into the future. Jeff will contribute a column each quarter to the Bethany newsletter, so keep an eye out for his words of wisdom.

The repercussions of the I-35W bridge collapse have been varied and numerous. Congress is going to find money for road maintenance, inspections on all bridges became high priority, and we may question those things we have taken for granted. You expect bridges to get you across the river safely; you expect buildings to last forever, and you expect that every child has a loving family to care and nurture them. November has been designated National Adoption Awareness Month for the purpose of getting the word out concerning the millions of abandoned children worldwide. Lest we Americans think children are never abandoned here, just

like bridges never collapse here, there are over 100,000 children in the United States waiting for permanent families. If you are reading this newsletter, you are probably painfully aware of the needs. I must confess, however, that before being swept away by the cause of Bethany Christian Services to enhance and protect children, I was blissfully unaware of not only the plight of abandoned children but also the expert services of Bethany. I am, after 20+ years in student ministry, privileged to have the responsibility of making sure every Minnesotan is aware of the much needed services of Bethany. I have only been part of this ministry for a short while, but I have already witnessed the pain of a birth mom releasing her daughter and the unbelievable joy of a family receiving that little one. My wife, Shari, and I have two biological children for which we may too often neglect to say thanks. Since the bridge collapse, every time we drive over a river on a bridge, Shari puts her finger on the power window switch as a reminder to not take the bridge for granted. Maybe we should say thanks for our children as well? Maybe we all should tell the miraculous story of adoption so no one takes the world's children for granted.

The Daily Grind

From Kristina Huisinga, our newest adoption social worker...

As the newest addition to the social work team at Bethany, I am incredibly excited to have the opportunity to work with families in both the Domestic Infant and International adoption programs. My start date was in mid-July and I am thoroughly enjoying my work with the families that come to Bethany and am excited to serve many more in the future!

Here is some information about me: I received my Masters of Social Work degree from the College of St. Catherine/University of St. Thomas. A desire to serve children, especially through adoption, is what drew me towards this degree (and served as the motivation to persevere through it when it became difficult!). My undergraduate degree is in Business from Bethel College. In the past, I have worked as a nanny, in a Christian battered women's shelter, at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and as an AmeriCorps*VISTA. This broad range of experiences truly seems to have prepared me well for this new position. On a more personal note, I grew up in Willmar, MN and continue to enjoy spending time there with family and friends (I am a first-time Aunt and loving it!). My free time is spent doing a variety of things including sports, music, travel and reading. I have two cousins that were adopted through Bethany and, Lord willing, desire to adopt my-

self someday. I also enjoy serving others, especially through short-term missions work.

Feel free to introduce yourself by phone or if you stop into the office—I'd love to meet as many of the wonderful families that Bethany works with as I can!

Administrative Changes!

Melissa Johnson, our administrative assistant, has transferred to a new position within our office. Melissa is now a Domestic Infant/MN Waiting Social Work Assistant. We are currently in the process of hiring a new person to fill the administrative assistant role.

Phon-a-thon

Our annual "Phon-a-thon" will take place this fall on Oct 16 and Oct 25. This is our major fundraiser of the year and we would welcome your help and prayerful support. If you are interested in volunteering as a caller or envelope stuffer, please call the office and speak with Melissa.

A Great Golf Classic!

Thank you to all of those who were involved with the annual golf classic "Golf for Kids"! Over \$7,000 was raised for our ministry. We had a great day with great weather golfing for a great cause.

Prayer Corner: Lord, we pray that You will lead more families to care and love for Your children through adoption.



What Our Families Have to Say!



In honor of National Adoption Month, we are highlighting writings that a few of our families have contributed. Read on to find a letter written by an adoptive father to his daughter, song lyrics written by adoptive siblings, and poetry by an adoptee and her brother who have been in foster care.

This letter was included in an autobiographical questionnaire submitted prior to the home study interview process. It gives a glimpse into one father's reflections upon and preparation for the daughter he has yet to meet.

Dear Anna,

I love you. You are a child of God and He's had a plan for you since long before you were born. That plan includes you becoming part of our family.

You have a brother named Luke who's not that much older than you are. He's full of light and love and wants you, his little sister, to come play with him. Your next oldest brother, Jeb, thinks you're going to teach him to speak Chinese! He'll teach you how to sing and dance and share and encourage. Cooper is your oldest brother and he can't wait to show you ice and snow and bikes and video games. Be prepared, they love to wrestle like puppies, and you're expected to be right in there with them!

Your mother - my beautiful wife Sara - has been longing for you for a long, long time!

Our family has a lot of love to share, and we've been making a space for you in our hearts for at least as long as we've been married, which is almost ten years at the time I'm writing this.

As for me, God placed a very specific call on my heart two years ago that I was supposed to bring you home. Sara and I have been waiting and praying since then, trying to discern the right time to come find you.

Well, it appears that the time has come. Our hearts have burst to overflowing and we're now embarking on the process that will lead us to you.

Be patient little one, and rest peacefully in the knowledge that God loves you and has placed you exactly where and how he wants us to find you.

We can't wait to touch you and kiss you and hug you and bring you to our house. But little Anna, you're already home. In God. And in our hearts. You're already home.

I love you and I'm coming to get you.

Love,

Your Dad, Jim

Anna was adopted from China in 2005 when she was 2 years old. She was one of Bethany Christian Service's Children of Promise.

Meghan, Ryan, Becca, and William are siblings who make up the band Silent Substitute. They were prompted to write this song in connection with their family's first adoption process. Stacia and Joel were each Children of Promise adopted from China (Stacia in 2004 at 2.5 years and Joel in 2005 at almost 2 years). Mike and Maureen are the proud parents of this still growing family.

Silent Substitute has performed at various Christian Events. Check them out at www.silentsubstitute.com

Child of the King

She sat all alone and cried,
One of many asking why
Promises have passed her by
She longs to know where the answers lie
Now she falls to her knees
She cries

Though I am an orphaned child
Abandoned in a world so cold
I pray, O Lord, my soul you'll hold
Please place me on Your path of life
I long to be precious in Your sight
A child of the King
A child of the King

Looking back on yesterday,
She can see Your hand guide the way
She's not alone on this road
You have promised her a future
And hope

Though I am an orphaned child
Abandoned in a world so cold
I pray, O Lord, my soul you'll hold
Please place me on Your path of life
I long to be precious in Your sight
A child of the King
A child of the King

I lay down the plans and dreams I hold
I'm holding on to your hand and never letting go

Though I am an orphaned child
Abandoned in a world so cold
I pray, O Lord, my soul you'll hold
Please place me on Your path of life
I long to be precious in Your sight
A child of the King
A child of the King

Children of Promise is Bethany's name for children available for international adoption who have an identified special need.

In 2005, Chris was 15, and his sister, Amanda, 14, when they co-wrote "In Our Own Words".

In Our Own Words

by Chris and Amanda

Past

Angry.

Confused. Not given a chance.

Sad. Left out. Abused. Neglected.

Attention-starved. Powerless.

Underestimated.

A shadow.

Present

Lovable.

Determined. Aware.

Looking for answers. Ambitious. Smart.

Working hard. Looked down upon.

Without a family.

Foster kid.

Future

Successful.

Survivor. Responsible.

Helpful. School. Normal. Family.

Achievement. Determination. Loving it.

Joyful. Excelling.

Hope.

Written by Amanda in February, 2007, after being in her pre-adopt home for two months.

I'm Thankful...

by Amanda

my parents hug me whenever I'm angry,

they hold me whenever I'm sad.

they love everything about me.

they're the parents i not always had.

my parents are very strong.

they are always there for me

they are aware of all my wrongs,

they are all i hoped they'd be.

my parents are tender hearted

they always fight to protect me.

they know that we don't share a last name.

but I don't base my family on that

for we are family just the same.

I ♥ U, mommy & daddy!!

Congratulations Amanda and family! Amanda's adoption was finalized on September 27th. Though Amanda and Chris were not adopted together, Amanda's adoptive family continues to maintain contact with Chris and support him in his life.

Do you have something to share with other adoptive families?
Contact one of the editors if you would like to add to our quarterly newsletter or website!

Local Events to Check Out

- ◆ **Documenting China: Contemporary Photography and Social Change:** Now through November 25. Go to www.weisman.umn.edu for information!
- ◆ **Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company:** Friday, October 26th. Go to www.ordway.org for more information!
- ◆ **Check out the Bethany booth at the Christian Community Fair!** November 9 & 10 at the St Paul River Centre. FREE ADMISSION! One of the first events of its kind in the Twin Cities, The Christian Community Fair is a weekend of family fun and entertainment! The Christian Community Fair has something for everyone in the family! For more details, go to www.christianfair.com.
- ◆ **Circus of the Heart:** A FREE celebration honoring families who have grown through adoption or are waiting to adopt. Sunday, November 11th from 1:00—4:00 pm at the Earle Brown Heritage Center in Brooklyn Center, MN. Go to www.mnasap.org for more info!
- ◆ **A Taste of Many Cultures:** A multicultural evening of learning, food, music, dance & fun! December 6th, 5:00—8:30 pm at the Crowne Plaza in St Paul. Visit www.mcdc.org/TOMC.htm for more information!



Happy Thanksgiving!



Merry Christmas!



Lest we forget...Jesus is the Reason for the Season!

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Every Life a Promise



Trainings/Workshops

Check www.mnasap.org for details on:

- ◆ October 16—Beyond Good Intentions (Roseville)
- ◆ October 18-21—Fall Family Retreat (Camp Confidence, Brainerd)
- ◆ October 27 — Practical Parenting: A User-Friendly Guide for Adoptive, Foster & Kinship Families (St Cloud)
- ◆ November 7— Parenting Strategies: Some Basics (St Paul)
- ◆ November 8— Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Conference (St Paul)
- ◆ November 17— Advanced Multicultural Training (Oak Park Heights)
- ◆ December 15—Harambee Village at NACAC: December Celebration (St Paul)

Check www.fraser.org/seminars for details on:

- ◆ October 11—What's Next? A Workshop for Families of Children Diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders (Minneapolis)
- ◆ October 15—Building Character Education through Literacy (Minneapolis)
- ◆ October 22—Staying Safe in Our Hard to Understand World (Minneapolis)
- ◆ October 30 —Planning Fun Activities for Children with Autism (Minneapolis)
- ◆ November 8—Behavior Guidance (Minneapolis)
- ◆ November 15—Beginning Signs using American Sign Language (Minneapolis)
- ◆ November 19—Sensory Challenges: Strategies for Successful Inclusion (Minneapolis)
- ◆ December 10—Social Interaction Activities (Minneapolis)
- ◆ December 18—Potty Training and other Daily-Living Skills for Children with Autism (Minneapolis)

...And Many More Training Opportunities!!!

Did you know...

- November 2007 is National Adoption Month! The theme is "Answering the Call." For more details go to www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/nam/
- As a part of National Adoption Month, November 17, 2007 is National Adoption Day! National Adoption Day is a collective effort to raise awareness of the 114,000 children in foster care waiting to find permanent, loving families. For more details visit www.nationaladoptionday.org
- A new online training has been created for families adopting internationally. This is an 8-hour Hague-Compliant training that is being recommended by Bethany. Please visit www.hagueadoption.com for more information.
- The newsletter is on the web! Go to www.bethany.org/plymouth and click on Newsletter

In honor of Thanksgiving, the Bethany office will be closed on Thursday & Friday, November 22nd & 23rd.

In honor of Christmas, the Bethany office will be closed on Monday & Tuesday, December 24th & 25th.

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