



# Orphan Care Ministry

James 1:27

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.



Winter 2018

## Upcoming Events

Feb 18 in Sugar Grove Feb 25 in Aurora	Mission trip info meetings
Feb 24 Mar 17 April 20	Adoption/Foster Support Dinner
Mar 4 At 12:30	Adoptive Family Connection Lunch: Sugar Grove campus
April 13- April 14	Empowered to Connect -- Harvest New Beginnings in Oswego; <a href="http://showhope.org/conference">showhope.org/conference</a>
End of May	Juna Amagara care packages due

## Loving Out of Our Poverty

Excerpt from "Foster Care and Adoption: Loving Out of Our Poverty?" by Jason Johnson

When speaking of the widow's small offering in comparison to that of the rich, Jesus says, "Truly, I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them. For they all contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all she had..." (Luke 21:3-4).

What a provocatively encouraging statement – that somehow, the value of her offering was not measured in quantity but in humility; not by size, but by sacrifice. Jesus doesn't discredit the offering of the wealthy, He simply redefines that of the poor. In that moment He stops and essentially says to all those around, "Hey, there's something truly profound going on here that I don't want you to miss." She gave less than the others but gave all of what she had, and He calls it "more."

Amazing. If the fostering and adoption journey has taught me one thing it's this – we love these kids out of our poverty, not out of our abundance. Going into it we know we have a certain amount of resources that might make their lives more comfortable, and perhaps even more enjoyable. But we quickly learn that's not ultimately what this is all about.

Somehow, their stories, and the gravity of becoming a part of them, expose a deficiency not in our stuff, but in our souls. We realize we are not so much bringing these kids out of their "poverty" and into our "abundance," but perhaps in many ways they are rescuing us out of our "abundance" by exposing us to our own "poverty." That, then, becomes the place from which we love them – a deficient, broken, impoverished place within us that I'm convinced Jesus looks at and says, "Yes. That's it right there. That's the 'more' I'm looking for."

### Other thoughts...

"As Christians we need to help each other, and especially those who are poor, children who are orphans, children who have been neglected by society, and children who are really helpless."

Charles Mully



### Stand for Orphans

# Partner

It takes Village Bible Church to raise a child!

*There are many ways YOU can partner with others in caring for orphans...*

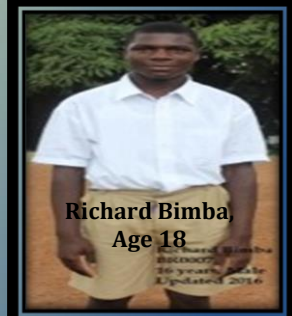
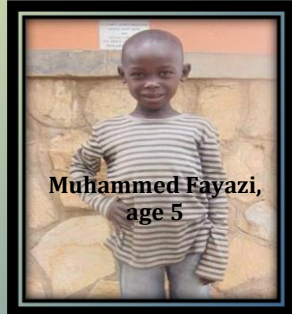
### Involving Kids in Orphan Care

- Decorate and assemble Sweet Cases for kids in foster care. TogetherWeRise.org will help you put together duffel bags of necessities for kids and teens going into foster care. You can help decorate the bags and assemble them with the items provided. Make it a party...the more help the merrier!
- Read books together as a family to educate yourselves about orphan care. For smaller children, read, "Gotcha: An Adoption Story" by Mariah Johnson. For older elementary, they can read "Tales of the Never Alone" by Beth Guckenberger (borrow from VBC Orphan Care Ministry). Teens may like "Chosen For Greatness" by Paul J. Batura (borrow from VBC Orphan Care Ministry). There are many other options...just google it!
- Kids can raise funds for orphan care. StandForOrphans.org is an initiative created BY kids to help kids raise funds to support orphan care. They provide a free kit with printables and helpful info to get you started. It's literally as easy as a lemonade stand!

- Have kids collect coins in a change jar to donate to a local family's adoption fund or an orphan care organization or school.
- Have kids draw pictures or write letters to your sponsor child. Sponsor a child as a family through amagara.org.
- Older teens that have a knack for photography can volunteer their services to capture the special moment of families finalizing their adoption through foster care.
- Assemble and decorate care packages for college foster youth or birthdays for kids in foster care. Learn more at TogetherWeRise.org.
- Pray with your kids. Pray for the hope and care of kids in orphanages. Pray for all kids to have forever families. Pray for the biological parents of foster kids that they would be able to best care for their children. Pray for social workers, orphanage workers, foster parents, safe families hosts, and adoptive parents as they love and care for the children God has entrusted them with.
- Have kids draw pictures or write letters to a newly adopted child welcoming them into their church or school.

**WILL YOU SPONSOR ONE OF THESE CHILDREN THROUGH JUNA AMAGARA?**

Email [kate@kathleenduff.com](mailto:kate@kathleenduff.com) for more information





**Luna Family: John, Gail, Allie, and Nathan**

## Active Partner

Village family actively caring for children through Foster Care, Safe Families, and Mission Trips.

*Temporary care for long term gain...*

### A Safe Families Story

Hello, Village! My name is Gail Luna. My husband John and I have two children, Allie and Nathan. Village has been our church home for the last year and a half. Shortly after we started attending, we joined a small group. It was there that we first heard of Safe Families. It sounded like a great ministry, but we didn't give thought that it would be somewhere we would serve. Little did we know that God had already started a work in our hearts.

Shortly thereafter, Orphan Care ministry spoke one Sunday about different ways we could "do" orphan care. After service, we approached the Safe Families table not seeking to become a ministry partner, but out of curiosity. We drove home, pamphlets in hand, without saying much. By the time we got home, both John and I felt convicted that this was the direction God was leading us. We had discussed adoption and fostering in the past but ultimately never felt called, so it took us by surprise how strongly we felt that this was where He wanted us.

There was some initial hesitation and it seemed we were stuck in a holding pattern: talk about it, pray about it, put it on the shelf, repeat... One thing was evident. God kept bringing it before us.

In time, God revealed to us His desire for our family. In early November, we welcomed a sweet 14 month old girl named Logan into our home. Of course we were excited, but we also didn't know what to expect.

With our kids being older, 20 and 14, it had been a long time since we had a little one in the house full time. We were quickly reminded how difficult caring for a baby can be!

It took some adjustment, both for us and for Logan, but we quickly saw how God is using Safe Families to bless each of us in many ways. We're blessed to experience the love and joy Logan brings and to see our kids experience it as well. We also have a good relationship with her mom and are joyed to be able to minister to her. It fills us to be able to bless them both, which in return has been a blessing to us. We've learned much about the dynamics of being a host family as well as about ourselves- some great things, some not so desirable. There have definitely been trying moments, but the moments of joy far outweigh the rough times.

The timeline for when Logan will return home continually changes. Regardless of when that will be, there's sadness because we know how much we'll miss her when she goes. We feel fortunate we've had the opportunity to love on her as long as we have and are hoping she'll return to a home situation that is better than it was before. For now though, we'll enjoy the sweet sound of baby babbles that fills our home, and pray that God will continue to use it for His glory.



17 month old Logan

### Mission Trip Dates & Informational Meeting Dates -

Village Bible Church will be sending a team to Uganda this summer to spend time with Juna Amagara kids sponsored by VBC families. They will be delivering care packages, getting to know them personally, and praying with them. Join the team! It's a wonderful opportunity to meet your sponsor child and to get a better understanding of all that God is doing through Juna Amagara Ministries in Uganda! Attend one of the Informational meetings to learn more. They will be February 18 at Sugar Grove campus or February 25 at Aurora campus. Applications to join the mission team will be due mid-March. Contact Marie Friesema at [mfries07@gmail.com](mailto:mfries07@gmail.com) for more information.



Uganda Mission trip; Kate Duff



## Forever Partner

Village family providing a forever family through adoption.

*We praise God for the provision of family...*

### ADOPTION PROCESS

There are quite a few families currently in the process of adopting. Take a minute to ask these families how their process is going and how you can pray for them.

**Sean & Amy Gately: Vietnam**  
**Lisa O'Brien: Uganda**  
**Fred & Sue Spencer: Domestic**  
**David & Emily Wood: Domestic**

### Gately Story

*By Sean & Amy Gately*

Amy and I came into our marriage interested in adoption. This interest in adoption included: going on a pre-marriage date to an adoption agency to learn about their international and domestic programs; interviewing 5 couples, including Amy's aunt and uncle, to learn their adoption stories; researching several adoption agencies before choosing Holt Sunnyridge; attending the Village Bible Church adoption support group hosted by Chad and Darnell Duncan.

Each of these gave us a glimpse into adoption and showed us that we have a lot to learn. Amy's Aunt and Uncle adopted a brother and sister from Korea. Amy grew up with Kevin and Laura and has thought about adopting for a long time.

We originally thought we would adopt from China, but we are currently working to adopt from Vietnam. That was one lesson we heard from all of the families we met who have adopted. You don't end up where you planned, but with patience and flexibility you will end up with a family. We think this is a great example of one way God works. God put adoption on our hearts. God is preparing us to adopt and knows the child (children?) we will adopt. It will probably not be who or how Amy and I have planned, but it will be who God has planned for us.

Last spring we held an Adoption Fundraising Garage Sale where we were blessed by so many people from our church, community, family and friends who volunteered their time, gave contributions and prayed for a successful sale. God provided. The proceeds of the sale covered our cost for the home study and some immigration documents.

Currently we have an approved home study, a preliminary child match from the Vietnam waiting child list, and have just started working on the adoption dossier we will be sending to Vietnam. We strongly believe that God is directing our adoption and pray that everything goes well with our adoption from Vietnam.

### Empowered to Connect Conference

The Empowered to Connect conference features two days of practical teaching beneficial for adoptive parents, foster parents, potential adoptive and foster parents, and professionals or ministry leaders serving children.

This national conference will be held close to home this year at Harvest New Beginnings in Oswego on April 13-14. It's an awesome opportunity to hear from leading experts and gain great insight into children from difficult places! Learn more at [showhope.org/conference](http://showhope.org/conference).

**EMPOWERED**  
TO CONNECT  
**CONFERENCE**

### References

- [www.villagebible.org/orphanare](http://www.villagebible.org/orphanare)
- [www.amagara.org](http://www.amagara.org)
- [www.safe-families.org](http://www.safe-families.org)
- [Showhope.org/conference](http://Showhope.org/conference)