

Orphan Care Ministry

Malachi 3:5

5 "So I will come to put you on trial. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive the foreigners among you of justice, but do not fear me," says the Lord Almighty.



Winter 2016

Upcoming Events

[Mar 12 th]	Juna Amagara Banquet www.amagara.org
[Mar 6 th] [Mar 20 th]	Deadline for applying for Uganda mission trips. (April & August)
[April 23 rd]	Prayer Mtg at the Conley's 1040 Canham St. Plano starting at 6:30PM
[May 5 th -6 th]	CAFO Summit 2016 Orlando, FL (CAFO.org/summit)

Stories that Ignite

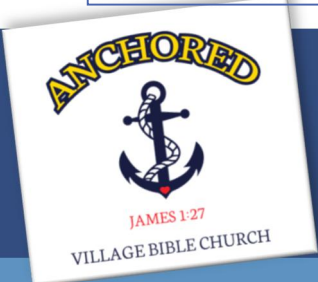
By Darnell Duncan

I love when people share what God is doing in their lives. In the past few weeks, I have witnessed 2 families bring home new additions to their family through adoption and another family embrace and love a new foster child with a desire to adopt her. But those details don't tell their stories. Their stories are what I love.

From the outside, we see bravery and love, but when we hear the stories of God's hand, we can't help but be in awe of who He is. We get to see more of Him and less of the people He is using. And when we see more of Him, we realize that He can use us too. The people that God uses to bring Him glory through orphan care will tell you that they are normal fearful people that love Jesus. No superpowers. No fanfare. They are willing to be used by God and their stories are encouraging because of His work.

These children, both big and small, are then renewed through the love of a mother and father. There have been countless times that I have met someone in a store check-out line that notices my baby girl is adopted and they tell me they are adopted too and they thank me from the deepest part of their souls. This experience nearly brings me to tears every time...tears of encouragement from these people sharing their story.

In revealing God's work in our lives, we encourage others to do His will. This resonates with me when I read Hebrews 10:24 "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works". God uses this stirring in our hearts to lead us to action. The simplicity of sharing our God-stories can ignite orphan care!!!



Other thoughts...

"We care for orphans not because we are rescuers, but because we are rescued." - David Platt



Partner

It takes Village Bible Church to raise a child!

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



FIRST PRAYER MEETING
By Clay Conley - In October we had our first quarterly prayer meeting to lift up the orphans. We had a great turn out and the kids had fun playing in the basement. We spent time praying for our church, families that have adopted or in the process of adopting, Safe Families, Foster Care, upcoming missions trips and those serving in orphan care in different ways, orphans in general and many other items.

I would encourage everyone to consider coming and enjoying fellowship and a time to lift the orphan in prayer.

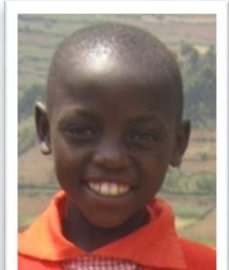
SPONSOR CHILDREN OF NEED, ADOPTION, SAFE HARBOR?
By Linda and Jim Mallette - It has been nearly eleven years since Jim and I decided to sponsor a young boy (Bruce A.) through the Uganda-Juna Amagara Ministries. We have never regretted that decision, in fact last year we decided to sponsor a second child, a young girl (Letensia O).

What has this sponsorship meant and done for these two children? It has provided them with the basic clothing / meals, Christian education, and shelter / care in a

loving environment. But it is more than that! We have been praying for them, their families, their safety, and most of all that they will grow in truth and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. That these children will recognize at an early age that God indeed has a great plan for their life and the life of their family. ***That they will see that there is Hope in Jesus and Jesus alone.*** We want to be a part of God's great plan in bringing Hope where there has been distress in the life of orphans.

We write and receive letters from both of the children. God is helping the children and me to communicate as openly as possible. Together, we share our prayer requests, joys, interests, goals, family news, blessings, and scripture encouragement. Often they include pictures about their life at home. ***The children are so thankful for sponsorship! We feel connected like a family, God's family!*** I know God will bless them and their families abundantly as they take advantage of the opportunities that come with being sponsored. ***Again, it is our prayer that they will grow 'Strong in the Lord', choosing to give their life to Him.***

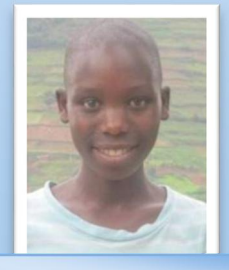
WILL YOU SPONSOR ONE OF THESE CHILDREN THROUGH JUNA AMAGARA?



Medius Natukunda [9]



Bright Ainamani [20]



Unity Ninsiima [16]



Active Partner

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

Temporary care for long term gain...



HURTING FOR ORPHANS

By Joyce Wiersma - I am new to Safe Families for Children and started hosting my first placement in mid-September and have been blessed with twin girls who are now 18 months old. Many people have said to me that, "they would like to help but it would just break my heart to send them back" and while it is true that it will be hard to send them back, isn't that what we are here to do?

Recently we sang a song at our church called, "From the Inside Out" by Hillsong. Part of the lyrics are:

*"My heart and my soul
I give you control
Consume me from the inside out Lord
Let justice and praise
Become my embrace
To love you from the inside out"*

Being the people we are, we usually are very willing to work hard and do whatever needs to be done to accomplish a goal, but sometimes we aren't willing to suffer heartache to accomplish the very thing that matters so much to God. We hurt on the outside with fatigue, financial sacrifices and the headaches of life but why do we work so hard to

protect our heart? Isn't that the part that God prizes most? The only thing God made in His own image is people. People are important to Him. All people matter but especially the young people He has made. I love "my" little girls and they have a home with me as long as they need it. And then they will go home and I will cry and hurt. It's a *beautiful thing*.

8 YEARS LATER...

By Amy Hett - We got a call from our old DCFS licensing worker back in the beginning of December about a former foster child. We had her for 3 1/2 years and hadn't seen her for 8 years, but had a significant relationship with her when she was with us. We were told she was at a crossroads in her life, and they needed a home for her. This was a shock for us, we thought she was happily adopted. Unfortunately, her adoption failed and she had been back in the system for almost 2 years. We did a lot of praying and consulting with friends and family, and everything pointed to the fact that God wanted her back in our lives. Not for a while, or until she got in trouble, but forever.

ADOPTION

Village Bible Church has 13 families that have adopted and many more adults who have been directly impacted by adoption. Our church has a growing support network for families who have adopted children of various ages both domestically and internationally.

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.

Chris & Jen Mehochko: Domestic
Matt & Heather Mickiewicz: Haiti
Fred & Sue Spencer: Domestic

CONGRATULATIONS!!

Adoptions recently completed. Take a minute to congratulate and ask how you can pray for them.
Jamie & Amy Benjamin: China
Darin & Anne Malone: Domestic

Forever Partner

Village family providing a forever family through adoption.

We praise God for the provision of family...



ADOPTION STORY

By the Benjamins - 2015 was certainly a memorable year for our family! Our lives have been forever changed because of God's call to adopt. We found our way through mountains of paperwork and traveled across oceans to bring our beautiful, spirited, spunky, little man into our family. Okay, he's pretty handsome too!

We began our international adoption journey in April of 2014. We were adopting a special needs child from China, preferably a boy but were open to a girl as well. We remember the joy that surrounded our news when we told our family and friends. We then started our search for an adoption agency and were assigned an amazing social worker. Before long those mountains of paperwork started and never seemed like they would end. Fingerprints, background checks, home study and even more fingerprints. We went from excitement to frustration in no time! The paperwork was exhausting and we realized we were about to experience a roller coaster of emotions.

The paperwork takes many months to complete even if you are on top of things like we were. Time passed by and more time passed by....a lot of waiting in between phases. Our youngest daughter even said, "Why can't they just send us our brother in a box in the mail?" Slowly but surely the approvals came and we had completed the majority of the paperwork!!

Fast forward a little and we are now "logged into" China's system. This means that we can now look at referrals given to us by our agency. We eagerly waited each month for the agency to call, but it took several months before they did. Once they called, they believed that they had found the perfect boy for us. Tears of happiness, right? Yes, but something about this little boy didn't feel right. How do you turn this child away knowing he needs a forever family? What kind of people are we? Our hearts ached for this boy, but we knew he wasn't the boy God intended for us. We had to believe His forever family was still out there.

More time went by and our agency called again. This time everything felt right! This lil'man is Elijah James Xia Benjamin who's Gotcha Day was Dec 7th and was officially adopted on December 8th. What a day to remember! Already, in such a short amount of time, we can't imagine life without him. While our love keeps multiplying for Eli, our hearts go out to his foster parents. They began caring for Eli ten days after he was abandoned in 2013 and had cared for him ever since. We were able to meet his foster parents, and we could clearly see the love they all shared together. We strongly believe the bond they shared is the reason Eli trusts us and has so easily attached with us. Their love for Eli will be cherished in our hearts today, tomorrow, and forever.

As for our future, we have a long road ahead of us with surgeries, speech therapy, etc., but our strong-willed son

will handle it all just fine. Elijah definitely brings a new dynamic to our home and we are enjoying the ride. It fills our heart with so much happiness to see him run, laugh and play. He loves all of us, and we love him more than he will ever know. This little three-year old boy now has a forever home and we are more than blessed to be his forever family.



References

- www.villagebible.org/orphan-care/
- www.amagara.org
- www.safe-families.org
- missions@villagebble.org