

FAMILY ALBUM

Nightlight Christian Adoptions

801 East Chapman Avenue, Suite 106
Fullerton, California 92831

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FAMILY ALBUM

A Quarterly Publication of Nightlight Christian Adoptions

Spring 2009

ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE

The next newsletter will come out in May—to your email inbox. If you aren't certain that we have your email address, please contact us with that information by calling Nightlight at (714) 278-1020 or sending an email to info@Nightlight.org. We want to be sure that you have the latest information on activities at Nightlight throughout the country.

NEW WEB SITE

Be sure to check out our new website and let us know what you think, www.nightlight.org.



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NEW ARRIVALS FROM OVERSEAS

FROM CHINA, KYRGYZSTAN, TAIWAN AND RUSSIA, WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE ARRIVAL OF...

Alexander to parents Mike and Gina Byington of Snellville, GA • Maxim to parents Mark and Anna Fagan of Clermont, FL • Anastasia to parents Michael and Patricia Foster of Orange, CA • Samuel and William to parents Andrew and Lesley Lockhart of Lantana, TX • Malachi to parents Jason and Barbara Tank of El Segundo, CA • Sadie to parents Thomas and Colleen Trucchio of Centereach, NY • Ivan to parents Mark and Kelly Lindstrom of Bentonville, AR • Brendan to parents Vianney and Theresa Kang of Lakewood, CA • Anna to parents Jack and Stephanie Higgins of Oxford, GA • Noah to parents Tom and Barbara Lee Price of Stone Ridge, VA.



Above: Ivan Mark

SNOWFLAKE ARRIVALS By Megan Corcoran



Above: Caden & Cooper

The blizzards of winter brought four precious Snowflakes to their parents' loving arms. In November, Samuel Joseph was born to Joe & Becky, and Joel Leighton was born to Leighton & Laura. In January Grace Elizabeth was born to Bill & Rebecca, and Charles Walter was born to Will & Cat.

And then Spring came along and more babies were born! Snowflake births this spring include an early bird, Connor Joseph, born to Jeff & Julie in February, and March miracles Marianne Marin born to Kevin & Dara, Caden Lane and Cooper Preston born to J.V. & Cathy, and Grace Kerah-Isabella born to Jeremy & Emily. Welcome home!

To the men and women who chose to give life to their unborn embryos, your choices saved the lives of these children. You are their heroes. Thank you.

There are many embryos waiting to begin their lives with their forever families. If you are a Nightlight client who has already completed one adoption and still feels a calling to parent more children, please consider adopting waiting embryos. They need you!

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The Future of Adoptions

Well, after selecting a title for this letter, I realized that I probably chose a larger plate than I had intended. So we will try to make this an appetizer and hope that those that are interested will ponder

the questions raised and lend their wisdom to the future course of adoptions. They say that controversy makes news – so, although I did not set out to offend everyone, I'm sure that my comments will not be well received in all quarters.

Recent statistics show that single women account for about 40% of the pregnancies in the United States.

Fifty years ago, that would have been a strong indicator that there were a lot of adoptions taking place. But this is a different day. Abortions are common and easy to obtain (not so easy to live with afterwards). Less than 1% of single women relinquish their child for adoption. The concept of a child needing a mother and father has been replaced with a self-centered concept of the child satisfying the needs of the parents (this is not a condemnation of single

(continued on page 2)

NEW DOMESTIC ARRIVALS

We also welcome home the following babies who were adopted through our Domestic Adoption program and were delivered into the waiting arms of their proud parents.



Above: Boden Crew

CHILD	DATE OF BIRTH	PROUD PARENTS
Drew Joseph Elijah	April 1, 2008	Joseph and Marcy Blanding
Kamryn Simone	September 14, 2008	Jerry and Claudia Salcuni
Boden Crew	December 14, 2008	Nils and Courtney & Big Brother Jax Van Dijk

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (continued from page 1)

parenting, but a comment on the changing priorities in the lives of so many people). We need to step up and talk plainly to young women about the life giving choice of adoption.

International adoptions grew in numbers for over 10 years, peaking in 2004 at 22,000. Since that time, there has been a steady decline in the number of adoptions as various countries have either closed or slowed the pace of adoptions. With the number of families wanting to adopt still high, the challenge is to find a stable, predictable country from which to adopt. We continue to see 2 or 3 families seeking to adopt baby girls for every family who seeks to adopt a boy. The need for families to adopt older children remains high and we continually pray for families to meet this need. Further

complicating international adoptions is the increasing regulation both in the United States and abroad. It seems that gaining Hague accreditation was an essential step, but only the beginning.

Embryo adoption is one of the few forms of adoption to show growth over the past 5 years. But even our Snowflakes program is going through adjustments as we find ourselves short on adopting parents while many potential donor families look at placing their embryos for adoption. There is every reason to believe that this option will grow well into the future and represents one of the strongest pro-life ministries for our agency. Many people are still unaware of this life giving, life saving alternative to family building.

With the need to remain vigilant and pro-active in ministering to pregnant women, families and adopted children, your prayers are not just important, they are indispensable. We praise God for having sustained us for the past 50 years and hope you will allow Him to work through you in sustaining us in the coming year.



Ron

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50TH ANNIVERSARY PICNIC

Los Vaqueros Park
1200 N. Carlsbad Street
Placentia, California 92870
Saturday, July 18, 2009, from
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

We were happy to see lots of families at our first celebration of our 50th Anniversary, at our Gala, and now we hope to see even more of you at our Summer Picnic to continue the celebration. We look forward to having some of our families from the early days of our agency join us again.

We'll share a little history and have lots of fun activities. The children from our Taiwan Tour will be there, we'll have our annual Talent Show with children adopted through our different programs performing for us, Knowlwood will be grilling burgers and hot dogs for our lunch, and we'll have our Annual Watermelon Eating Contest! You don't want to miss the games, especially the Tug-of-War. And you don't want to be left out of the annual photo of all our kids—many of whom are now adults!

The Picnic is open to everyone—families who already have their children, those awaiting their adoptions, people interested in learning more about adoption, and extended family members and friends. Bring your lawn chairs, sunscreen, and have some fun! It's a great time to catch up with old friends and make new ones.

We're looking for people who would like to help with preparations—and for kids who would like to perform! We want representatives from all of our programs to put on a little performance for us—maybe sing a song, recite a little poem, or do a little fashion show. Russian singers, Chinese singers, you name it!

For more information, please watch your mail for the spring letter and check our web site! You may register online or by sending in the Registration Card you'll receive in your mailing. The cost of the Picnic is \$10 and includes your lunch (choice of adult cheeseburger, veggie burger, kid's cheeseburger, or kid's hot dog meal, all with fries and drink), the watermelon eating contest, performance, games and prizes. You may also participate in our Raffle.



NIGHTLIGHT ACQUIRES CAROLINA HOPE CHRISTIAN ADOPTION AGENCY



We are pleased to announce that Carolina Hope has become part of the Nightlight Christian Adoptions family and are excited about the opportunities this consolidation will bring to waiting

children and families and the ability to expand our counseling services to women facing unplanned pregnancies.

The acquisition allows Nightlight to offer a direct program in Ukraine and networking programs in China and Ethiopia, in addition to its existing Russia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Taiwan programs.

Domestic:

With our new branch office in South Carolina we have more opportunities for families to be matched with birthmothers. The director of the South Carolina office, Laura Godwin, is an adoptive mother and her husband is a full-time adoption attorney. Lisa Prather is a licensed social worker who has provided compassionate care to birthmothers. Nightlight not only meets the birthmothers' material and medical needs, but we also seek to provide spiritual guidance and professional counseling. We are all very excited about this growing program and providing a ministry to birth and adoptive families.

China:

There are thousands of children still awaiting homes in China, yet the wait is about five years for a healthy baby now. There is, however, a critical need for families to adopt children with special needs. Those seeking to adopt a child with special needs can adopt a child usually within one year. A webinar (online workshop) will be available to educate you regarding the more common types of issues children with special needs face so that you can realistically determine if your family can adopt a precious child who needs a home. Through this networking program, we have several children who are now awaiting homes.

Ethiopia:

Nightlight will now be able to offer adoptions from Ethiopia where families are needed to adopt. Many children are orphaned

because of poverty, disease, and the AIDS crisis in Ethiopia. The plight of those children growing up without a mother or father in this impoverished country is very bleak. In general, families are quickly assigned children, and the adoptions can usually be completed well within one year. Babies, toddlers, and school age children all need homes.

Ukraine:

This program is 11 years old. The children live in orphanages awaiting a family. For those seeking an older child, a sibling group, or a child with special needs, the adoption can be completed in about one year or less after the home study is completed. For those wanting a younger child, the timeframe is longer. A couple travels to Ukraine to select their child. Two trips are required, or one long trip for about 30 days.

In addition to the new programs we will be able to offer, we have expanded our services:

Homestudy Services

Through the South Carolina office we provide complete pre and placement services. Also, we now offer a live, online educational program on the homestudy process. You can also click on the website to pre-recorded information on the homestudy process.

Education:

We have been committed to educating families regarding adoption issues and offer regular webinars so that families can be educated in the comfort of their homes. We offer a wide range of topics, from medical issues, older child and special needs adoption, domestic adoption issues, and transracial and transcultural adoptions.

Post Adoption Services:

After a family is home with their child, the paperwork is still not quite over and a child's adjustment to a new home can, at times, be difficult. We provide services to assist you in completing the paperwork, webinars on domesticating an adoption in SC, and advice on helping you and your child adjust.

Humanitarian Aid

This June we are sponsoring a mission trip to Ethiopia through our South Carolina office. We will also continue to collect funds and support drives for aid to be sent to children, including shoes, clothes, school and medical supplies.

JABEZ CUT-A-THON Sunday, June 7, 2009 - Noon to 4:00 p.m.

Jabez Salon has been a generous supporter of Nightlight Christian Adoptions for several years. And this year they are sponsoring their second Cut-a-thon for Nightlight to raise money for our 2009 Summer Tour from Taiwan. All proceeds from the services and 40% of product purchases will go to Nightlight in support of the Tour.



There will be a Raffle—a two night stay at the Holiday Inn at Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco! And while you're having your hair styled, you can have your car washed by the Boy Scouts who will be supporting the Nightlight Tour Fundraiser. For more information, please visit our web site at www.nightlight.org.

A NEW BEGINNING— THROUGH MARIANNE

By Dara

She is the end (or rather a new beginning) to our embryo adoption



story. It began one day when I was reading on the internet about international adoption and learned about the Snowflakes Program. My husband, Kevin, and I agreed it was a wonderful program but never thought it would be in our future. Some months later, in an ethics class at church, the doctor who was teaching discussed embryos. We saw pictures of embryos just 3-6 days old, and my heart was pulled to take a stand and rescue these babies-to-be. I prayed, "Lord, if we can have one of these babies please let us."

On the way to our oldest son's college graduation, I was reading a newsletter from NATHHAN/CHASK. NATHHAN is the National Challenged Homeschoolers Associated Network and CHASK is Christian Homes and Special Kids. The newsletter provides resources for families who are home schooling kids with special needs or disabilities, and also provides information on children with special needs who are waiting for placement with adoptive families. I am always encouraged to see the work they are doing and be challenged in my home schooling as I listen to the struggles many moms face and overcome daily. That particular newsletter had an article about a set of embryos looking for a family!

Due to the medical history, there was a possibility that these embryos might grow into babies with an illness incompatible with life. The agency was seeking a special family who knew of this possibility but was still willing to give these lives their chance. I was overwhelmed with the idea that we should take them. People talk about God things—for us I guess this was one of those things. I just knew it. I shared my thoughts with Kevin. He wondered about the process, the safety, and details but he felt if it worked out it was meant to be.

We knew that statistics and probability only measure past actions; they do not predict the future. God often works inside the natural boundaries he has created but not always. Parting seas, raising the dead, causing the sun to stand still—all these things are normally not going to happen but that did not stop God. When these babies were statistically likely to do this or that—those numbers only reflected what God had done before, not what he was going to do this time.

The next month was a whirlwind of phone calls and paperwork, but soon we learned that we were to be the parents of these embryos! Months of preparation and planning with the doctor went on and then our transfer day had finally arrived. God chose for four of the embryos to go home that day, and we knew that was His perfect will. We trusted Him. Two of the embryos survived to be transferred into my uterus, and then the long two-week wait began. In our hearts we knew that whatever God chose would be best, whether or not it was the pregnancy we were hoping for.

We were overjoyed to receive the news that yes, we were pregnant! Nine wonderful

months later, we went to the hospital for the birth. We were asked if we would allow a nursing class to attend our labor and delivery. We also had a friend, the wife of the man who taught the Sunday school class, attending. They all asked question after question about embryo adoption. They were very interested and it was a great discussion. Then I finally started labor for real and we had our baby! The nursing students were crying and the nurse on staff was laughing as Kevin had told them all exactly how the labor would go and it did go just as he said. Then, while everyone was so emotional, our friend walked over to the nurse tending the baby and said to all the room. "That, that baby, is what they are talking about when they say stem cell research, when they say trash left from IVE, when they say embryos no one wants anyway, that baby, she was an embryo, she was potential trash or science, except her parents, both sets, valued life. I want you nurses to look at her, hear her cry and remember it isn't just junk science can use. It is people, real people. This is pre-birth adoption of real little people." There wasn't a dry eye in the room including the doctor and while she was firm and forceful her voice was awe-filled and they were all deeply moved and not the least bit offended. Throughout the day and into the next we had nurses stopping in, saying they wished they had known about this before for themselves or someone in their family.

It was an awesome day and she is an awesome gift to us from God and her genetic parents. Daniel 6:27: "He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

A SPECIAL BOOK—NIGHTLIGHT MEMORIES: How to ORDER YOUR COPY

By Stacy Richards and Courtney Atnip

Thank you so much to all of you who sent us your precious photos for **The Nightlight Memories Book**. We enjoyed seeing the bright faces of all your children. We are happy to report that the book is complete! The first copy was used to become the video that was shown at our Gala. We think it turned out beautifully (we may be a bit biased, but since your kids are in the book too, you'll probably be biased as well!!!). While we were working on the book, our kids would peek over our shoulders to see what we were doing. They wanted to know who all the kids in the pictures were. We explained these are all pictures of kids whose families were grown through adoption. Their reply, "Oh! That's just like our family"! That was our vision, to have a book full of families built just like ours.

One lucky family won a copy of the book from the Raffle at The Gala! Want to know how to get your copy? Send a check in the amount of \$170 to Nightlight Christian Adoptions, 801 E. Chapman Avenue, Suite 106, Fullerton, CA 92831 by May 29, 2009. Please be sure to include a piece of paper with your name, address and phone number with your check. We realize the book is on the expensive side, but it includes over 130 families and over 140 pages. This is a discounted rate through Heritage Makers as the actual cost of the book without discounts is over \$400! This is not a fundraiser for Nightlight. The \$170 simply covers the cost of the book mailed to Nightlight and then mailed to you. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to send an e-mail to Kathryn@nightlight.org.

2009 SUMMER TOUR FROM TAIWAN

This summer we are bringing children out from Taiwan for our Summer Tour. Children from 6-11 years of age will visit for two weeks in July. This will be a vacation tour, not a performing tour. The children will stay with Southern California families. We will have a few group activities for the children and families to attend—a couple of festivities at local churches, a pool party, beach party, and most importantly, the Nightlight Picnic!

Opportunities to Help a Child

1. Sponsor a child coming on the 2009 Summer Tour for \$2,000.
2. Sponsor the day at Disneyland for the children (about \$2,000).
3. Donate a lesser amount to support the cost of the tour.
4. Come to the Jabez Cut-a-thon on Sunday, June 7, 2009 to have your hair cut and styled while raising money for the Tour!
5. Host a child in your home (July 8 to July 22, 2009). You must live in Southern California and have a homestudy completed by Nightlight or have begun your homestudy with us. You will need to bring the child to all of the group events.
6. Entertain the chaperones who will be visiting. This may be a dinner in your home or taking them sightseeing or shopping.
7. Host the chaperones in your home for the 2 week period they are here on the tour.
8. Host a pool party for the tour group at your home.
9. Give of your time and talents to help out in other ways, including with the Summer Picnic on Saturday, July 18th.
10. If your church would like to support the tour and would like more information, please let us know and we will be happy to contact them.

CARS 4 CAUSES

If you would like to donate an old car, truck, or van,

regardless of where you live, you may



contact Cars 4

Causes and they will take care of everything.

Phone (800) 766-CARE (800-766-2273). Tell them you would like the proceeds to be given to Nightlight Christian Adoptions. Cars 4 Causes will pick up the car, towing it if necessary, without charge to you. Cars 4 Causes fixes up the car, sells it, and sends a check to Nightlight.

If you have any questions about the program, please call Nightlight at (714) 278-1020.



50TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

The Gala was a big success. We had 250 people in attendance for the celebration. Wiley Bunn, a member of our agency's first Board of Directors (when the agency was Evangelical Welfare Agency) spoke to the group, as did Paul Koch (grandfather to two children adopted through Nightlight), and Ron Stoddart, our Executive Director. Families who had adopted as far back as the 1960s were there, as well as lots of families from all of Nightlight's current programs.



We took a free-will offering during the evening and explained our goals. We have set an ambitious but necessary goal of raising \$50,000 by June 30, 2009. Of that money we will spend \$10,000 on bus bench ads, \$10,000 for ads to reach birthmothers, \$10,000 for birthmother care, and \$20,000 for general operations. We were very grateful to have raised \$15,000 after expenses at the Gala. Will you help us continue toward our goal?

We are also asking for 50 people to commit to pray for Nightlight daily (although we covet all of your prayers whenever you think of us). We want to be good stewards of the money entrusted with us—reaching out to birthmothers and finding families for children in orphanages, children born from crisis pregnancies, and the frozen embryos. We are evaluating where our Southern California office should be—and more importantly, what size we really need. We're considering either scaling back our current office or finding another more suitable site, possibly even purchasing a building where we could set down roots for another 50 years. If you would like to be one of our daily supporters in prayer, please contact us so that we can send you more frequent updates on our prayer needs.

EDUCATION: CLASSES, SEMINARS, AND SUPPORT GROUPS

Nightlight offers the following classes in our offices. If you would like further information on any of these classes, please call us at (714) 278-1020. Pre-registration is required for all of the classes.

ADOPTION CLASSES

Adoption classes are required for all families completing a homestudy through Nightlight. All classes are held in our office. Please call (714) 278-1020 or email info@nightlight.org to register; **registration is required** for all classes.

Classes required for International clients are designed according to The Hague Standards. These classes will help to ensure that the required parent education and preparation for inter-country adoptions has been completed. Clients will receive a certificate of completion at the close of each class to verify that they have attended the class in its entirety.

ADOPTION SEMINARS

These are informational seminars on Domestic, International, and Embryo adoption. **Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon. There is no charge, but registration is helpful.**

Adoption seminars can also be held at local churches. If you would like an adoption seminar offered at your church, please call us at (714) 278-1020 and ask for Kathryn Deiters.

Dates for 2009: May 16 • August 1 • November 7

LIFE-LONG ISSUES IN ADOPTION *(required for all clients)*

Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. Cost: \$50/Couple

In this class we will look at the core adoption issues, which will give you an understanding of how you are linked to the other members of the adoption triad: the adoptee and the birth family. The material is applicable to all types of adoption, including Domestic, International, or the Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program, and will help adopting families develop understanding and compassion for everyone involved in the adoption process. For information on upcoming classes, please check our web site, www.nightlight.org.

Dates for 2009: July 23 • October 22

DOMESTIC ADOPTION DECISIONS *(domestic clients)*

Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.; Cost: \$50/Couple

This class will feature an adoptive family discussing their **open adoption**. They will discuss how the type of contact was agreed upon and how it is working out for them.

Dates for 2009: July 16 • October 15

ATTACHMENT & OTHER ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION *(international clients)*

Wednesday evenings from 4:00 – 9:00 p.m.; Cost: \$100/Couple

Understanding the theory behind parent and child attachment is important for any parent. However, it becomes particularly important when adopting a child internationally. It is most helpful if this class is taken in the beginning of the homestudy process. This class defines attachment and bonding, reviews the theories behind attachment, and provides practical advice on how to develop a solid attachment with your newly adopted child. Please contact Rhonda Jarema, MA, Director of Family Support Services, with any questions about this class, by emailing her at Rhonda@Nightlight.org.

Dates for 2009: July 7 • September 30

MEDICAL ISSUES OF INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION *(international clients)*

Saturday mornings from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon; Cost: \$60/Couple

Dr. Gary Feldman, Medical Director of the Stramski Center at Miller Children's Hospital, will be leading this class to provide an overview of the medical issues commonly experienced by children who have been adopted internationally. Dr. Gary Feldman is an expert in his field and we know those of you in attendance will enjoy this informative class. This class satisfies the medical issues training required by The Hague.

Dates for 2009: July 11 • October 17

LIFEBOOKS WORKSHOP

Getting ready to adopt? Have your children been home over a year already? Anytime is a great time for beginning your child's Lifebook! This treasured book tells your child's story from the day they were born (or created) until the day they joined your family. It helps children answer the question of "Why was I adopted?" and helps fill that void with accurate information. Children are also welcome to attend with their parents. Workshops are held once a month on Sundays from 12:00-4:00 at the Nightlight office. Come join us! Please call Megan Corcoran for class dates.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

There are two ongoing support groups: Moms of Internationally Adopted Preschoolers and Moms of School-aged Internationally Adopted Children. If you are interested in participating, please contact Rhonda Jarema, Rhonda@Nightlight.org, for more information.

EMAIL SUPPORT GROUPS

Snowflakes - If any of you would like to be added to the Snowflake Adopting Parent or Genetic Parent Yahoo groups, please contact Megan Corcoran at Megan@Nightlight.org. The Snowflake families are great about sharing information they learn with others in the group. We would be happy to add you.

Taiwan - Families adopting from Taiwan may join our Yahoo group for this country, which provides a wonderful way to meet other families adopting from Taiwan. Please contact Kathryn Deiters at Kathryn@Nightlight.org to be added to this group.

WEBINARS

Nightlight will begin offering regular webinars for our clients. The following is a list of what is available now. More information on these programs will be available on our web site www.nightlight.org.

- **Starting the Process of Adoption: The Homestudy (South Carolina)**
May 11, 2009, 8:30 p.m. EDT
Cost: free
 - **Starting the Process of Adoption: Financing an Adoption**
May 18 (Mon), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$15.00
 - **Ethiopian Adoptions: An Introduction**
May 4 (Mon.), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: free
 - **Ethiopian Adoptions: Medical and Adjustment Issues**
May 18 (Mon.), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$20
 - **Ethiopia Adoptions: Travel Information**
May 21 (Thurs.), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$20
 - **Domestic Adoptions: Relating to Birth Families (South Carolina)**
May 28 (Thurs.), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$15
 - **Domestic Adoptions: Talking to Your Child About Adoption:**
June 25 (Thurs), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$15
 - **Domestic Adoptions: Are We Ready to Adopt Transracially?**
June 16 (Tues), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$15
 - **China and Taiwan: Adopting the Child With Special Needs**
June 29 (Mon.), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$25
 - **International Adoptions: Facing Transracial and Transcultural Issues**
June 15, 2009, 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$15
 - **Adopting from Eastern Europe and Kazakhstan: Medical and Adjustment Issues**
June 30 (Tues), 9 p.m. EDT
Cost: \$20
-

LOOKING FOR SINGERS

We would love to put together a Chinese Christian Choir to add to our Russian Christian Choir. These two choirs will sing at our Summer Picnic and at churches when we have outreach events and informational seminars. Older children adopted from China or Taiwan are also invited to help out with the Taiwan Tour. If you were adopted from China, Taiwan, or Russia (including any of the other Russian speaking countries) and would like to participate, please contact Kathryn Deiters (Kathryn@Nightlight.org).

THE HARBOR NEEDS VOLUNTEERS



The Harbor is a wonderful Christian organization in St. Petersburg, Russia that helps Russian youth when they leave the orphanages. They provide training in life skills, teach them job skills, and provide a positive Christian home life for the youth so that they can learn what it is like to live in a family.

They are in need of volunteers to go over to teach practical skills that can later be used for a job. This may be cosmetologists/beauticians, computer skills, video production, web site development, ceramics/pottery, carpentry, English, Culinary, business development, among others. Adults as well as kids adopted from Russia and now in their late teens or early twenties (who still speak Russian) are needed. They should



be able to stay for a month or longer, although shorter stays can be accommodated as well. For more information, please contact Alex Krutov at The Harbor (alex.krutov@crmladers.org).

LAILA ROSE FOUNDATION

If you are considering adopting a special needs child, The Laila Rose Foundation may be able to help you with the cost of the adoption. The Foundation was formed in 2006, in loving memory of Laila Rose Engh, who was lost at the tender age of four in a tragic automobile accident, along with her dear mother, Lisa Engh. The family has decided to turn their grief into action and find a way for Laila's legacy to bring the sort of joy to others that she brought to her family's lives as a daughter, sister, granddaughter, niece, and friend.

The mission of the Foundation is to provide needed support to foreign born orphans eligible to come to or already arrived in the United States for adoption, to the adoptive families of such orphans, and to organizations assisting the orphans and adoptive families.

You too may join in helping children by contacting the Foundation at info-lailarose@aol.com or by calling (703) 360-9660.

IN MEMORY OF BABY GRACE

(Note from the Editor: Sometimes things turn out differently than we would have planned, but the following is a beautiful story of love.)

Baby Grace Elizabeth came to us early on Sunday, the feast of the Epiphany and of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton (we think Gracie planned it that way). We waited, praying, while the c-section proceeded. Someone sneezed and we all whispered "God bless you." And the doctor said "That was Grace." What a way to come into the world! Blessed in her very first seconds.

She cried and squeezed our fingers, she turned her fragile head towards the light more than once. I baptized her with water from a tiny cup and we prayed, not knowing how long she would live in her condition. Then she fought for 10 hours before going back to God. She gave up her spirit just after the Angelus bells at 6pm.

For how this day unfolded in the plan of Our Father, we could not have asked for more. We had the tremendous blessing of family, grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins around her, hugging and kissing her all day. Photographs and videos were taken, our pastor came and blessed her, and a dear friend from Maryland came too; he and his wife having lost their own precious daughter at birth, and truly knowing our pain.

We sang "Amazing Grace," we prayed together, and Gracie met her big brother too. We wept, wishing she could stay, but at the end of the day we had a sense that she was going. Family left the room after saying their goodbyes, (over 20 people who had shared time with Grace), and then in our dimly lit room, Rebecca, Seth, Grace and I huddled up. We kissed her and sang hymns, and prayed some more. Seth rested peacefully beside his sister for an hour, allowing his parents the grace to cherish every breath Grace took. For an hour, a holy hour, we kept vigil. And then she went home, and now she is whole.

We are so thankful for all of the prayers of people near and far.

Messages have come literally from all over. What does this mean? That life is precious, that one little life so fragile and so fair as Grace's can have such an impact on our hearts. Grace Elizabeth lived just 10 hours but filled our hearts with enough memories for a lifetime. Every little move she made was magic.

We truly felt "carried" that week by so much love and support. God has been with us at the foot of this Cross. We prayed for one miracle and got so much more...."grace upon grace."

GRACE ELIZABETH DONAGHY
Born - January 4, 2009, 8:04am
Died - January 4, 2009, 6:08pm

Baptized, Beloved, and Beautiful. We will NEVER forget you, our little saint. Rest now, in your Father's arms.

*Love you forever,
Mommy, Daddy, and your big brother
Seth*

LESSONS LEARNED

By Rhonda Jarema

Spending time in an orphanage this past month made me acutely aware of the many children around the world who need good families and homes. The orphanage I visited had about 100 children living there, ranging in age from 4 – 16 years of age. This was one orphanage of thousands throughout the world. As we walked through the facility, there were children working on their homework, taking a music class and one little girl working with a speech therapist because she struggled with consonant pairings. It really wasn't much different than you might see from children anywhere in the world.

The younger children ran up to us, eager to check out whether we'd brought anything for them or would play games with them. The older children seemed just as interested, but were more hesitant to approach us. They came forward shyly as I asked them a few questions, practicing my limited Russian skills. They responded in halting English, eager to practice with me. I gave them some small leather

notebooks I had in my pocket, for just this type of situation. They were aware that at 12 and 13 years of age, they needed to study hard as no one could predict the future that lay before them as 'orphanage children.' They giggled as I asked what they wanted to be when they grew up? It was time to move on. I never heard their answers, but I wondered what was in store for these children.

This past March, I spoke at a conference about the lessons that we've learned in the placement of older children. We have learned that older children can adapt and attach to their new families. It takes lots of education prior to adoption and support afterwards. It is important for families to acknowledge their child's culture and make it part of the family environment. Consulting with professionals throughout the adoption process as well as when the 'going gets tough' helps families to make it through difficult spots. Even families who weren't sure they'd ever love their adopted child as much as their biological child learned that, yes, it does happen, maybe not right away, but it does happen.

Two families came home today with their 'older' girls. Do these families feel that they have missed something? Absolutely, they wish they'd had their daughters years ago! They might have missed their daughter's first step or first skinned knee, but they know they will be there for their daughter's first English word and will be there to kiss and make better any future skinned knees! They will be there for the first day of school, albeit not kindergarten and will be there for their daughter's first date. There will certainly be challenges along the way, but judging from their smiles today, they will treasure today and the future. They will learn right along side their daughters, becoming a family together, enjoying each day and living it to the fullest. Even better, these girls now have parents who will love and guide them through the tough times but also share the joy of the good times. Yes, lessons learned show us that older children can be successfully adopted into families. What will the future hold for those children left behind? Only time will tell.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for Ilya Blazin, now a Lance Corporal in the Marines, stationed in Afghanistan. We're very proud of you, Ilya!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please remember to let us know about graduations and weddings. We'd love to share your happy news with our readers.

Anastasia Bridges Wedding Announcement

Mr. and Mrs. John Bridges, III are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter Anastasia to Oleg Sultseng on December 13, 2008.



Anastasia George

Anastasia is finishing up her junior year in high school and getting very excited about being a senior next year. She is an accomplished equestrian and is hoping to ride for a college team. She's been riding since she was 8 and has her own horse named Jake. We attend United States Equestrian Federation rated shows and she competes against some great riders and usually places in the top 6. Lots of ribbons line her bedroom wall! We're proud of you, Anastasia!

STAFF CHANGES

In our Fullerton office we are very happy to welcome Christine Mina to our staff. It is with sadness—but good wishes—that we say goodbye to Erin Garcia.

ERIN GARCIA

Trey and I are getting married at the end of May and heading straight to Texas after the honeymoon. I have never lived anywhere but Southern California so it will be a big, though exciting, change for me. He grew up in Texas and, believe it or not, is very excited to get back to the humidity! I have been at Nightlight since Sept 2007 and though I am looking forward to the move, I will miss everyone here dearly.



CHRISTINE MINA

Our New Receptionist, with her precious little niece (left).

I graduated from Biola University in May of 2008 with a degree in Clinical Psychology and Biblical Studies. Soon after, I began to pray about a position that would reflect my core values—not just any job. I was immediately captured by Nightlight Christian Adoptions' commitment to life and placing children with loving families. Having met the phenomenal and dedicated staff, I feel proud and very excited to work for such a unique agency!

With our acquisition of Carolina Hope we would like to introduce to you Laura Godwin, the Executive Director and Lisa Prather, the Assistant Director, of our Greenville, South Carolina branch office of Nightlight Christian Adoptions.

LAURA GODWIN, MPH, DIRECTOR

Elizabeth, Erika, Laura and Ray Godwin (right).



In addition to her daily work of overseeing the agency's educational programs, Laura researches and helps develop adoption and orphan related programs, designs educational webinars, writes articles, and maintains contact with families. She has her Bachelor of Science from Bob Jones University and Master of Public Health from the University of South Carolina.

Laura, the adoptive mother of two daughters, has been involved with adoptions for more than 20 years. She was the founder and director of Carolina Hope (now Nightlight Christian Adoptions). She has provided consistent leadership and vision for Carolina Hope, often through very uncertain times in international adoptions. Along with her husband, adoption attorney Ray Godwin, Laura is the co-author of *The Complete Adoption Book*. Laura is the current president of the South Carolina Association of Licensed Adoption Agencies and has recently initiated the

formation of the Carolina Christian Alliance for Orphans.

Laura loves spending time with her husband and two daughters. She is a voracious reader, and she enjoys cooking, gardening, and playing bridge. She is involved in her church, where she teaches children's Sunday school and has volunteered her time with the youth ministry.

LISA PRATHER, LMSW, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Lisa Prather and her nephew (right).



Lisa oversees the international and domestic adoption programs, managing adoption cases, and supervising office operations. She has a Bachelor of Social Work from the University of Oklahoma (1998) and a Master of Social Work from the University of Kansas (2002). Lisa began work at Carolina Hope (now Nightlight Christian Adoptions) in the summer of 2007, and she quickly learned the ins and outs of international adoptions. Prior to coming to Carolina Hope, Lisa had worked 5 years for a therapeutic Christian foster care agency.

Lisa enjoys scrapbooking, traveling, and spending time with her younger siblings and nephews, and she is involved at her church.

WAYS TO SUPPORT NIGHTLIGHT

GOODSEARCH.COM AND GOODSHOP.COM

GoodSearch.com is a Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half of its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. So simply by designating Nightlight Christian Adoptions as your charity and using it as you would any search engine you'll be able to watch those pennies add up!

When you shop online, please try to make your purchases through www.GoodShop.com, an online "shopping mall" which donates up to 37% of each purchase to your favorite charity: Nightlight Christian Adoptions! There are hundreds of great stores, including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy,

eBay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble that have teamed up with GoodShop.com. Every time you place an order, you'll be supporting our programs and helping us help others.

How do you sign up? It's easy! Just go to www.goodsearch.com and enter Nightlight Christian Adoptions as the charity you want to support. Be sure to tell your friends and family too.

DOMESTIC—HELPING BIRTHMOTHERS

While birthmothers are waiting to be matched with an adopting couple, many of them struggle financially. They would love to receive gift cards from places like Target, Starbucks, chain restaurants, gas cards, etc.--\$25 cards would be helpful and greatly appreciated.

IN THE NEWS

If you see **Nightlight** or one of our families in the News, please let us know so we can share with all of you.

On April 13, 2009, Nightlight Christian Adoptions acquired **Carolina Hope Christian Adoption Agency** of Greenville, South Carolina, adding a branch office to Nightlight and many wonderful programs. This acquisition will enable Nightlight to help more children, families, and birthmothers who are facing a crisis pregnancy. For more information, see the article on page 3.

On April 21, 2009, an article on adoption appeared in **ASSIST News** covering Rich Buhler's radio program, "Talk from the Heart". Lisa and Stan Musil were interviewed about the desire Stan had to adopt his wife's children, the children that had been aborted over two decades before. Ron Stoddart, who was also on the program, had been asked to draw up an adoption agreement for the posthumous adoptions. The complete article can be accessed at <http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2009/s09040114.htm>.

Nightlight's Fisher and Wright families were featured in a story on **KPHO** in Arizona on March 31, 2009, sharing how embryo adoption has benefitted their families, enabling them to adopt embryos. The Fisher's have already given birth to their daughter through the Snowflakes program and the Wrights are awaiting theirs.

"Embryo Adoption Giving More Babies Life", was a story that was covered by **CBN News** on March 9, 2009. The Gillingham, Gray and Vest Snowflake families and Ron Stoddart were interviewed for the story about embryo adoption.

The Washington Times covered Obama's change of policy in "Curl: 'Snowflake' baby stars opposite Obama" on March 10, 2009. Rep. Christopher Smith of New Jersey shared that embryos are life, as illustrated by Snowflake baby Will Keating joining him at the podium. He pointed out that successful research into cures for serious illnesses are not coming from embryonic stem cells but from adult and umbilical-cord-blood stem cells.

An article appeared in the **Whittier Daily News** on February 23, 2009 on the "Whittier Octuplets". Nadya Suleman was quoted as saying there was no alternative to using all of her remaining embryos, that she was not willing to destroy them. When interviewed, Ron Stoddart explained that there is an alternative, embryo donation and adoption.

THE TRICYCLE GUILD



Are you looking for a worthy organization to support, volunteering your time and talents? Nightlight has the answer—The Tricycle Guild! We get together and have parties just for fun; we have gatherings to plan upcoming events, and we have "work parties" before our big events.

For further information or if you are interested in joining The Tricycle Guild, please contact Kathryn Deiters at (714) 278-1020 or Kathryn@Nightlight.org.

DETSKY DOM PARTNERS



Detsky Dom Partners is the humanitarian foundation that is helping orphans around the world. The first project of the new organization was to raise money to send sweatshirts to children in the orphanages in St. Petersburg, Russia. Detsky Dom Partners is also providing strong support for the 2009 Summer Tour.

If you would like to support Detsky Dom Partners or would like to learn more about this organization and how you might be able to help, please visit the website at www.detskydompartners.org or contact Kathryn Deiters (Kathryn@Nightlight.org). One way to provide support is through corporations providing matching funds for donations you make. We will be happy to give you any information the corporation needs for this purpose.



Above: Children at Detsky Dom 31

NIGHTLIGHT CALENDAR

2009

May

16 Adoption Seminar

June

07 Jabez Cut-a-thon fundraiser for Nightlight

July

07 Attachment & Other Issues
11 Medical Issues of Intl Adoption
08-22 Summer Tour (tentative)
16 Domestic Adoption Decisions
18 Summer Picnic for All
23 Life-Long Issues in Adoption

August

01 Adoption Seminar

September

30 Attachment & Other Issues

October

15 Domestic Adoption Decisions
17 Medical Issues of Intl Adoption
22 Life-Long Issues in Adoption

November

07 Adoption Seminar

For more information on any of these events, please call the office: **(714) 278-1020**.