



Photo: Jaden

2017 Annual Report



nightlight<sup>®</sup>

christian adoptions

# 2017: Our Best Days are Ahead



Two years ago my wife and I adopted a girl named Aidana from the nation of Kyrgyzstan. The adoption required three trips to the country, so we had to say goodbye twice, for a few months each time. Aidana was five years old at the time and she was impatient to join our family. Repeatedly she asked our in-country representative, Saule, “When are my parents coming?” Saule assured her, “Soon. I just need to fill out some more paperwork.” Frustrated, Aidana said, “I’m not paperwork! I’m a person!” Those words have stuck with me as we work to get hundreds of kids adopted each year. They are not paperwork...they are real children in desperate need of permanent, loving families. Aidana’s comment reminds us of the urgency and importance of our mission.

When I began at Nightlight six years ago, one of our board members, Betty Burnett, said “I believe Nightlight’s best days are ahead.” Honestly, I had many doubts about that. We were facing the impending end of a large government grant that represented 30% of our budget at the time. At the same time, our largest adoption program, Russia, closed the door to all international adoption. That was 2012, and it was a low point for our agency. But looking back, Betty’s words were accurate...even prophetic!

In the last 6 years, Nightlight has grown to nine state offices, offering nearly half of the nation’s population domestic adoption and birthmother counseling services. Our previous president, Ron Stoddart, forged relationships with other adoption agencies giving Nightlight a reputation of trust and competence. That paved the way for mergers with 5 other Christian adoption agencies. We are now working in more countries than ever before, with adoptions in progress in 16 nations. Our Snowflakes® program continues to be the world’s leader in embryo adoption. Our staff has grown to 100 passionate, capable employees, and, most important, we are setting records each year with the number of families served, and the number of adoptions completed!

Here are some of the highlights from 2017:

We completed the merger with Generations Adoptions, an agency in Waco, Texas. With that merger, twelve talented staff members joined our team. This was a major boost to our domestic adoption program, as Generations has social workers in 4 cities in Texas.

Our agency was privileged to have media coverage with NBC, Focus on the Family, Reuter’s Health, and many other stories featuring Snowflakes® families.

Nightlight received new approval to work in Honduras and was reaccredited in Kyrgyzstan. We completed our first adoptions from Colombia and had the highest number of children ever come home from Haiti.

This year we celebrate two monumental program anniversaries – Snowflakes® 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the Embryo Adoption Awareness Center 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We are ending the year with 563 Snowflakes babies born thorough our program. In fact, Snowflakes had more program participation in 2017 than any previous year by both placing and adopting parents, making this our best year ever!

## Key Dates for 2018

- Annual Gala (SoCal),  
March 10
- Summer Reunion Picnic (All offices),  
June 23
- Generations Hope Gala (Waco, TX),  
October 20
- Vivian’s Hope (SoCal),  
November 10
- Monte Carlo Night (SoCal),  
November 10

# Welcome Home!

## International Adoptions

Georgina  
Cheng-Hui  
Elijah  
Madeline  
Samuel  
Judah  
Sienna  
Elizabeth  
Mei  
Jacob  
Halle  
Hallie  
Luke  
Scarlett  
Leo  
Cora  
Steven  
Edelson  
Chrislove  
Emerson  
Marc  
Brian  
Evie  
Jamescia  
Marcus  
Ryan  
Mickenson  
Angelene  
Skarly  
Osney  
Christelle  
Kerene  
Saraie  
Laura  
Kristina  
Anastacia  
Stefania  
Derlandes  
Snovermide  
Berta  
Yesica  
Lina  
Hadassah  
Alina  
Helena

Lily  
Thomas  
Charlotte  
Emma  
Talon  
Sean  
Eleni  
Wade  
Lincoln  
AnAn  
Alexis  
Margaret  
Lucy  
Adele  
Josephine  
Elizabeth Rose  
Esther  
Emmanuel  
Moses  
Gift  
Benja  
Derek  
Vezire  
Senato  
Caleb  
Jia Jia  
Gracewen  
Noah  
Maggie  
William  
Noa  
Paul  
Akwasi  
Shanelle  
Teona  
Angelica  
Hollie  
Lillymay  
Amelia  
Kyrstal  
Alexander  
Autumn

## Fostering Love to Adoption Program

Saya  
Scott  
Abiel  
Marylynn  
Azariah

Benjamin  
Saeuva  
Antwan  
Osiris  
Braydon  
Rebecca  
Soren  
Dean  
Gabrielle  
Ajayla  
Esaías  
Keiona  
Regan  
Rylee  
Reanne  
Bentleigh  
Sam  
Dehilla  
Joseph  
Noah  
Olive  
Rebecca  
Noah  
Isabella  
Marglean  
Marianne  
Milliann  
Christopher  
Gage  
Shayleigh

## Domestic Adoptions

Ryland  
Josselena  
Eleanor  
Easton  
Elias  
Lydia  
Ivy  
Josiah  
Caroline  
Maliyah  
James  
Gracyn  
Everly  
Charlie  
Lincoln  
Annabelle  
Rowan  
Isaac  
Elijah

Grayson  
Sophia  
Jadon  
Vera  
Valeria  
Sadie  
Vera  
Nathan  
Hope  
Kaitlin  
Alexander  
Piper  
Liam  
Victoria  
Clare  
Lila  
Neil  
Grace  
Samuel  
Benjamin  
Liam  
Carter  
Ezekiel  
Eva  
Stone  
Austin  
Ruth  
Jaxon  
Zoe  
Jessa  
Sebastian  
Journey  
Axel  
Eliza  
Hope  
Colby  
Adalyn  
Brooklyn  
Addyson  
Angel  
Austin  
Ava  
Charles  
Cortland  
Edmund  
Madeline  
Maya  
Payton  
Shiloh  
Stone  
William

## Snowflakes Babies

Joshua John  
Connor  
Ella  
Charlotte  
Ansley Kallyn  
Mason James  
Oliver Lee  
Addyson Rae  
Brooklyn Elizabeth  
Henry Robert  
Joseph  
Ave Sophia  
Macabee Justice  
Savannah Jo  
Matthew Jared  
Jack Bartlett  
Boaz Alexander  
Mara  
Emilia  
Emma Lisa  
Clara Emmanuelle  
John Steven  
Bonnie Faye  
Ruben David  
Abigail Jane

Penelope  
Madison Grace  
Glory  
Maximillian  
Joseph Thomas  
Luke Joshua  
Stella Josephine  
Will Oscar  
Marilisa Lorraine  
Adleigh Jo  
Oliver John  
Elliana Faith  
Atlas John  
Tyler Alexander  
Grace  
Ezerie  
Molly June  
Kensley Carol  
Isabella Grace  
Elly  
Jordyn  
Jaxson Andrew  
Samuel Larry  
Ella Kay  
Kai William  
Henry Richard  
John Huckabee



*The Casewell girls*

# Unexpected Family! Embracing a Greater Joy

## Two Families' Story

Countless fertility treatments, failed IVF, failed frozen embryo transfer, a devastating stillbirth, an interrupted adoption. Year after year the Holzapfels longed for children without success. In their wildest dreams James and Monica Holzapfel *never* thought they would be faced with deciding what to do with their remaining frozen embryos!

Seven years and four children later, they realized their family was complete, yet 14 embryos remained in frozen storage. They struggled with the decision of what to do with them. James explained, "Destroying them was not an option. Monica and I wanted to be confident any babies born from these embryos would live in a safe family where they were loved." Their clinic was familiar with the Snowflakes® Embryo Adoption program.

James and Monica weren't 100% sure regarding what sort of future communication they should have with their adopting family. They knew they wanted to be told if children were born. They knew they would like to see some photographs and receive annual updates. Perhaps "someday" they would eventually meet this family. But "someday" arrived much sooner than expected and delivered more than they could have hoped or imagined.

Blake and Stacy Parsons were certain they wanted more children after successfully giving birth to their first son. After three miscarriages they decided to discontinue attempts to conceive another genetic child. But they were determined to bring another child into their family – they had so much love to give! One day, Stacy was sitting at her computer and decided to type "I want to have a baby!" into the search bar. The Snowflakes Embryo Adoption Program was the first item in the search results list!

After Blake and Stacy completed their home study they waited as patiently as possible for a family match. The first match attempt didn't work out. They were discouraged but were buoyed by the Snowflakes team not to lose heart. Very quickly the Parsons were selected by another placing family who had

four children through IVF. The families began having limited communications with one another, their messages delivered through the agency. The Holzapfels sent the Parsons a photograph of their family to encourage them prior to their first frozen embryo transfer.

The Parsons transferred one embryo and learned they were pregnant. Joy! Happiness! *Apprehension*. Would the pregnancy stick? It did and the entire pregnancy was incredibly smooth—absolutely perfect according to Stacy. Blake and Stacy decided to reach out to the Holzapfels and see if they would like to exchange email addresses, which quickly led to an exchange of phone numbers. It was not too long before they established a wonderful, personal relationship.



After the Parson's son Vance was born in October 2016, James and Monica received pictures within minutes. Communication continued almost daily with wonderful images showing how much baby Vance was growing. The idea of meeting face-to-face was raised. Both families were excited, but also a bit nervous about taking this next step. In December 2016, the Holzapfels and the

Parsons met face to face. Stacy recalls, "As the family who gifted us with embryos came into the hotel lobby, I felt an instant connection. I was holding the baby they created; the baby they blessed us with. It is extraordinary to think that before any of us knew each other, or even were born ourselves, God had a plan. God knew this baby and He knew Vance would be a part of our family."

For both families this encounter was an amazing and incredible experience. For the Holzapfels it confirmed that placing their embryos with the Parson family was the right decision. Baby Vance was cuddled and snuggled by everyone. Their time spent together meeting one another was right and good for both families. Now they really were an extended family. The Holzapfels and Parsons continue to communicate with one another regularly. They know the joy and happiness they have experienced in their journey as 'extended family' is only the beginning of more to come.

# A Birthmom's Journey with Adoption

I grew up in a Christian home, actively involved in youth group and seen as an example by many. Pure, sheltered, goody too-shoes. I never even kissed a guy until after college! No one, not even myself, would have ever predicted this part of my story: I got pregnant. Unmarried, far from home, and broke. When I first found out, I was terrified. I had no idea what I was going to do. After the initial shock wore off I started thinking: ok my boyfriend and I will just get married quickly and have this baby. Maybe most people won't do the math.

But my boyfriend had something else in mind. He didn't want a baby. He wanted me to have an abortion. He said we weren't ready for that kind of responsibility and that his family would reject us if we had a baby outside of marriage. I had always been against abortion, but when I found myself in this moment, I'll admit, I considered it. I wondered if maybe it would be easier. I mean, how could I go home and tell my family I'm pregnant? They would be so disappointed.

Abortion sounded horrible, painful and frightening. I couldn't imagine risking my life to have an abortion just so I could avoid telling my parents that I was pregnant. Then there was the moral aspect of it. I would be turning one mistake, one sin, into another even greater one. I already felt ashamed. Having an abortion would be adding more shame, more guilt. I knew I didn't want to live with that. So I told my boyfriend I would not terminate the pregnancy. I then brought up the idea of adoption. I told him perhaps it was a third option.

So we started down the road toward placement. During my first and second trimester I met with the social worker every few weeks. There were days I thought about parenting this child. I thought "I can do this. I'm strong, smart, capable." Well, of course I COULD do it. People are capable of pretty much anything. The question really was "Do I want this for myself and my baby?" I knew that the reality was that I could not provide the kind of home I wanted this baby to have. One day I was praying and I asked God "Would you ever forgive me if I did this? Could adoption possibly be your plan for me and this baby?" He reminded me of a story I'd heard many times about Moses and his mother. His mother gave him up, placing him in a basket in the river, in order to save his life. She watched another raise him. But

God blessed Moses' mother for her choice and Moses became a great leader of Israel. God showed me that as long as my choice was in the best interest of this child, then he would bless it. The couple I was matched with reminded me of exactly the dream I had for my own life many years ago. A dream that seemed out of reach now. I felt they had everything I wanted, a seemingly perfect life. I angrily asked God, "Why should I give them even more by giving them my baby?" But I realized this decision wasn't about them or about me: it was about this baby. As I pictured him with this couple everything just seemed to fit.

I realized if I'd met these people in other circumstances I would have naturally become friends with them. That seemed like a good place to start. They told me, that when the agency contacted them to ask if they could show me their profile they thought, "Wow, this baby is everything we've been praying for. Down to the smallest detail." I knew then that God had handpicked this couple for my baby in the same way he had handpicked my baby for this couple. He had knit together this family with just as much thought and purpose as he knits together a biological family. He knew they were just right for each other.



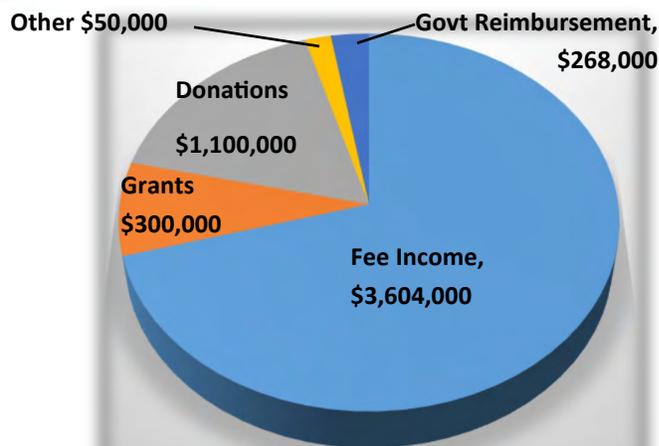
The first month postpartum I went through a variety of emotions. Some days I wondered if I gave up too quickly. I felt alone and empty and I still missed him everyday. But I got a lot of updates those first few months. The adoptive parents and I set up an email account specifically for communicating with each other. They sent me pictures, videos and updates on how my baby was doing. His adoptive parents were so kind to me. They have welcomed me into their family. They made me feel so valued. I was also able to breast pump and send my baby the milk for 3 months as one final way to ensure he gets the best possible start in life.

I don't know what the future will hold. I'm still trying to figure out the role I am to play in his life. I don't know how to be a birthmother. I can't say I regret getting pregnant. I can't say I regret giving my son life. I know that even the small bit I get to know of him (the way he has touched my life already) is a blessing. And I know that one day, when we are both ready, I will meet my son face to face again.

# Financial Information

## How we fund our mission

(2017 Budget)

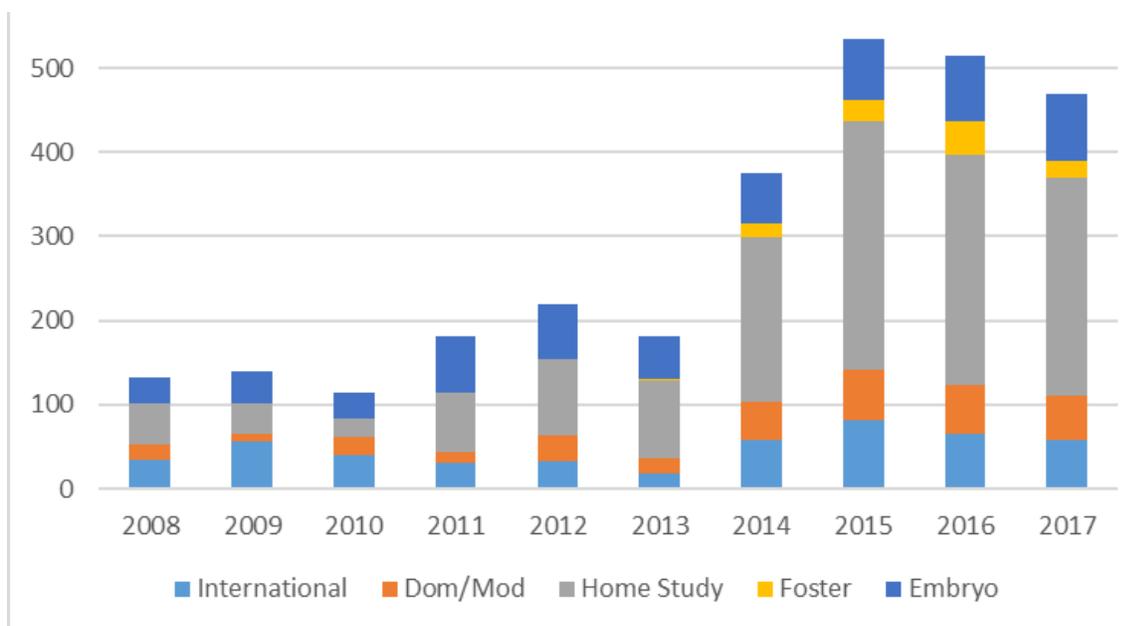
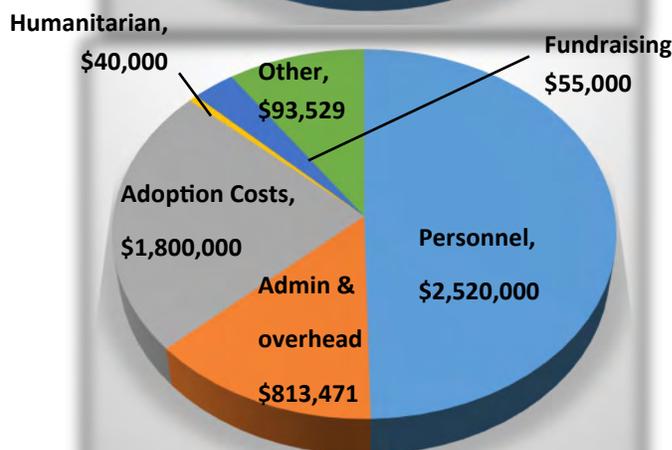


Please consider making a year-end gift to Nightlight with the envelope provided, or online at [www.nightlight.org/donation-opportunities](http://www.nightlight.org/donation-opportunities). Your gift will help with several urgent needs:

- Post-Adoption counseling at our new "Post Adoption Contact Center"
- Humanitarian aid to orphanages in China, Colombia, Haiti and Uganda
- Adoption scholarships with the Nightlight foundation
- Help us eliminate the mortgage on our new building
- Birthmother outreach and advertising
- Our 2018 orphan host program from Ukraine and Colombia

## The cost of our mission

(2017 Budget)



# An Empty Nest Becomes a Forever Family

"FAMILIES STILL NEEDED FOR HOSTING!" became a regular status update on my personal Facebook page as I was recruiting families to participate in a summer hosting program for children from China during Summer 2016. One Saturday morning, after several posts had been made, I received a private message on Messenger from a former high school teacher that said "Hey Dana, this is Chuck Stallard. May be interested in helping as a host family. Got questions. Call me." I told him I was on my way out the door to our adoption reunion picnic, and would call him later. He made it clear that they were only interested in short term as an advocacy family and looked forward to my call. As I was driving to the picnic my thoughts drifted back to the late 80s. I was in high school. Chuck and his wife, Cindy, lived in an adjoining subdivision and I was one of their regular babysitters for their children, Will who was a toddler at the time, and Katie, an infant. I had reconnected with the Stallard's through Facebook and knew they had both recently retired from education, that Will and Katie were married, successful grownups with children of their own and that Chuck and Cindy very much enjoyed their grandchildren who ranged in age from infancy to four years old. I soon had a

telephone conversation with Chuck and received the next message two days later. It simply said "Dana, we're in! Let us know what you need."

It was fun working with Chuck and Cindy to prepare them for hosting. They decided to open their home to 11 year old "Wade" from our list. I met with them at their home on a few occasions to go over paperwork, perform a "home safety check" and go over various Host Parent Education topics to prepare them for Wade's two week visit in late summer. During that time, I had the opportunity to meet a few of their grandchildren and had a great time reminiscing and reconnecting with them again. During one of the visits, Cindy stated, "I know we are too old to adopt, but what is the process for adopting a child from China so I can

educate people while Wade is here?" I replied, "Actually, given your ages and Wade's age, you would be eligible to adopt him or any older child." The side-eye that Cindy gave Chuck did not go unnoticed, and I nonchalantly explained the international adoption process to both of them.

It finally came time for Wade to arrive in Kentucky where he would meet the Stallard family, get to know extended family members, church friends and other acquaintances, and be exposed to American culture, food and rural Kentucky life. During the first week of hosting, Chuck and Cindy were avid Facebook posters, sharing photos of Wade and boasting all about his smart, sweet and helpful personality. Each post ended with "If you are interested in meeting Wade or want more information about international adoption, please let us

know!" I couldn't help but notice that all her advocacy stopped during the second week...and I had an idea why. I did not ask questions and did not push them but allowed them to enjoy their last week with Wade. When we met up at the airport to send Wade back to China, Chuck and Cindy both came to me and said "You are going to think we are crazy but we've decided that we want to adopt him!" I got big tears in my eyes...I already knew Wade had stolen their hearts and would become a Stallard.



*The Stallard Family*

Chuck and Cindy worked at lightning speed to get their home study completed and their dossier submitted and back to China to complete the adoption process and bring Wade back home. They hold the record for the quickest adoption in the 10.5 years I've worked in the China program (aside from children who were aging out or required emergency medical intervention) and completed his adoption in only 8 months! Chuck and Cindy, along with a few of their grandchildren attended our 2017 Adoption Reunion Picnic exactly ONE YEAR after Chuck sent the message saying they were interested in hosting as an advocacy family only. Wade attended with them, officially a Stallard, permanently their son! God always has a bigger plan than we can imagine!

The Gassmans and the Hendersons



## Major Donors

Many thanks to our major donors whose names have not been included on this list either because they have not consented to being listed or would like to remain anonymous. Please contact Daniel if you consent to having your name listed and we would be happy to add you!

### Individual Donors over \$1000

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- The First National Bank TFNB
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- Rancho Community Church
- Southeast Christian Church
- Truth Bible Church
- Highland Baptist Church
- Grace life Fellowship, NE
- Southland Christian Church
- Red Hill Lutheran Church
- Bush's Chicken
- Abel/Weatherwax Foundation
- Bethel Baptist Church

## ADOPTION BRIDGE

Waiting Children | Crowd Funding | Dear Birthmother

At AdoptionBridge, you can view Waiting Children profiles and pictures, view Waiting Family profiles, and contribute to their adoption fundraising. Whether you have completed your home study and are seeking a child waiting for their forever family, are wanting to fundraise your adoption costs through the crowdfunding feature, or want to support those in the adoption process, there is something for everyone on AdoptionBridge.

The site is password protected, but gaining access is free and easy. To learn more about this wonderful site and how you can get involved visit [www.adoptionbridge.org](http://www.adoptionbridge.org).

Adoption Bridge is bridging the relationship between all members of the adoption community.

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