

HOMENews

A Publication of Your Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries



125th
ANNIVERSARY

**Louisiana
Baptist
Children's
Home**
1899-2024

WORDS FROM HOME



Perry Hancock, PhD
President & CEO

We begin 2024 by saying “THANK YOU”

Thank you first for the Christmas gifts you provided for our children on-campus and round the state in our foster homes. I wish you could have seen their faces on Christmas morning as they opened the presents you gave. Thank you also for the parties that brought so much joy to their hearts. Most of all, thank you for providing us with the opportunity to share the true meaning of Christmas with many who have never heard the story of Jesus.

Now, let me tell you about the exciting news for 2024. IT’S OUR 125th ANNIVERSARY! That’s right. The Children’s Home is celebrating all year long. We have several special events planned. By May we will have a new Legacy Room that shows how God has used the ministry of LBCH since 1899. In June, we will have a special Homecoming Reunion for our former residents and staff. In July, we will celebrate the establishment of LBCH by Louisiana Baptists.

This is a great year for your church, group, or class to take a tour of the Children’s Home. We would love to show you how your support is providing love, care, and hope in Christ for children and families in need.

In 2024, we will also be opening our new Compassion Center. The Center will expand our Compassion for Kids ministry to serve more economically challenged children and their families. Twenty-five percent of the work will serve the Monroe area. The remainder will help expand existing compassion ministries throughout north and

central Louisiana. The goal is to provide support and a positive Christian witness for 25,000 people annually.

Also, in 2024, we are hitting the road again to promote foster care and adoption ministries. One of the greatest opportunities we have to reach the next generation of children in need is through foster care and adoption ministry. Louisiana has between 3,000 and 4,000 children in its foster care system. Our goal is to have 100s of children waking up every morning in a loving, Christian home, going to church every Sunday, and learning about God’s great love in Christ.

The Connect1Child Tour begins in February. We have set aside two Sundays for each month so please call soon to secure your date. Our foster care and adoption specialists are also available to help churches and Baptist associations develop foster care and adoption ministries for families in their local area. Call our Family Services office for more information.

These are exciting days at the Children’s Home. God is opening so many doors to reach more children and others through our Christ-centered ministries. Thank you again for your continued support. Together with God we are meeting needs and changing lives in Jesus’ name at your Louisiana Baptist Children’s Home. God bless.

PRAYER CALENDAR...

- Bentley February 10
- Stacey February 11
- Ariana February 12
- Ashley February 13
- Ashton February 14
- Oliver February 15
- Reagan February 16
- Fisher February 17
- Finley February 18
- Fletcher February 19
- Elijah February 20
- Hunter February 21
- Ta’Mojah February 22
- Ronesha February 23
- Zo’Vrecia February 24
- Ma’Rissa February 25
- Josie February 26
- Reynaldo February 27
- Za’lynn February 28
- Euri February 29
- Sheila March 1
- Tiffany March 2
- Sophia March 3
- Carrie March 4
- Claire March 5
- Carter March 6
- LaDona March 7
- Kahlani March 8
- Santana March 9
- Charlee March 10
- Heilee March 11

- Nikki March 12
- Lily March 13
- Shii’Ann March 14
- Major March 15
- Londyn March 16
- Tristan March 17
- Carter March 18
- Sherelle March 19
- Bellamie March 20
- Keighley March 21
- Nasiss March 22
- Reign March 23
- Tyra March 24
- Nahla March 25
- Lai’loni March 26
- Sarah March 27
- Cruz March 28
- Markecia March 29
- Jordan March 30
- Je’Myra March 31

BIRTHDAYS...

- Sophia March 1
- Je’Myra March 14
- Fletcher March 17
- Reign March 19
- Ta’Mojah March 25
- Josie March 26

• OUR MISSION •

The mission of the Louisiana Baptist Children’s Home and Family Ministries is to provide love, care, and hope in Christ for children and families in need.

• OUR VALUES •

- We value the Bible as the foundation and guide for our ministry
(2 Timothy 3:16).
- We value the worth of the Children and Families to whom we minister
(Genesis 1:27).
- We value Servant Leadership as our model for ministry
(Mark 9:35).
- We value Excellence as our standard for ministry performance
(Colossians 3:17).
- We value Personal Integrity as our ministry standard for living
(Romans 12:1-2).

• TRUSTEES •

- Mike Hawkins, Chairman*
 - Jason Lupo, Vice-Chairman*
 - Diane Walker, Secretary*
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Bob Bozeman | Tish Gunter |
| Richard Bullock | Julie Page |
| Louis Charrier | Rikki Permenter |
| Brian Craddock | Melanie Sanchez |
| Mandi Guillory | Johnny Smith |
| Heather Gulde | Diane Uzzle |
- David Goza, LBC President*
 - Steve Horn, LBC Executive Director*
 - Perry Hancock, LBCH President & CEO*
 - Matt Coker, LBCH Asso. Director of Development & PR*
 - Julie Adcock, LBCH Director of Communications*



Campus Spotlight...

A Life Saved By God's Grace

By Sarah Jones

Tristan describes her experience at HomePlace as "a joyful rebuilding." She is a young mother who radiates the love of Jesus and speaks with a smile about her faith and the miracles God has brought about since she arrived at HomePlace. However, her journey has been challenging. She admits to making mistakes that brought her to her knees but ultimately helped her get to where she needed to be.

Tristan was brought up in the countryside of Northeast Louisiana by both of her parents. She remembers having loving parents who raised her in a loving home. She is the mother to an incredible seven-year-old boy named Carter; they both reside at the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home.

Well over a year ago, Tristan found herself at what she describes as the lowest point in her life. She struggled with substance abuse. Suffering from the consequences of her actions while in that chaotic cycle. This lifestyle caused her to be unable to care for her son, Carter, leaving his care to her mother. Tristan knew she had to make a life change, she entered a rehab facility, eventually found herself in a sober living home, which led her to HomePlace, where she currently resides. The path she was on before coming to HomePlace was leading her into destruction. She didn't know how to escape the cycle but understood that she needed the Lord's help. "I turned my life over to the Lord, all I wanted to do was chase after the Lord."

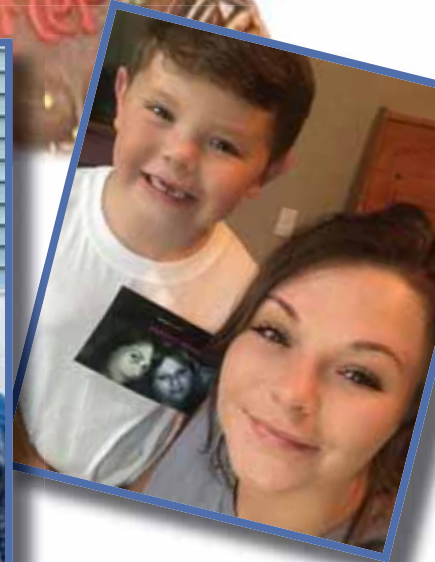
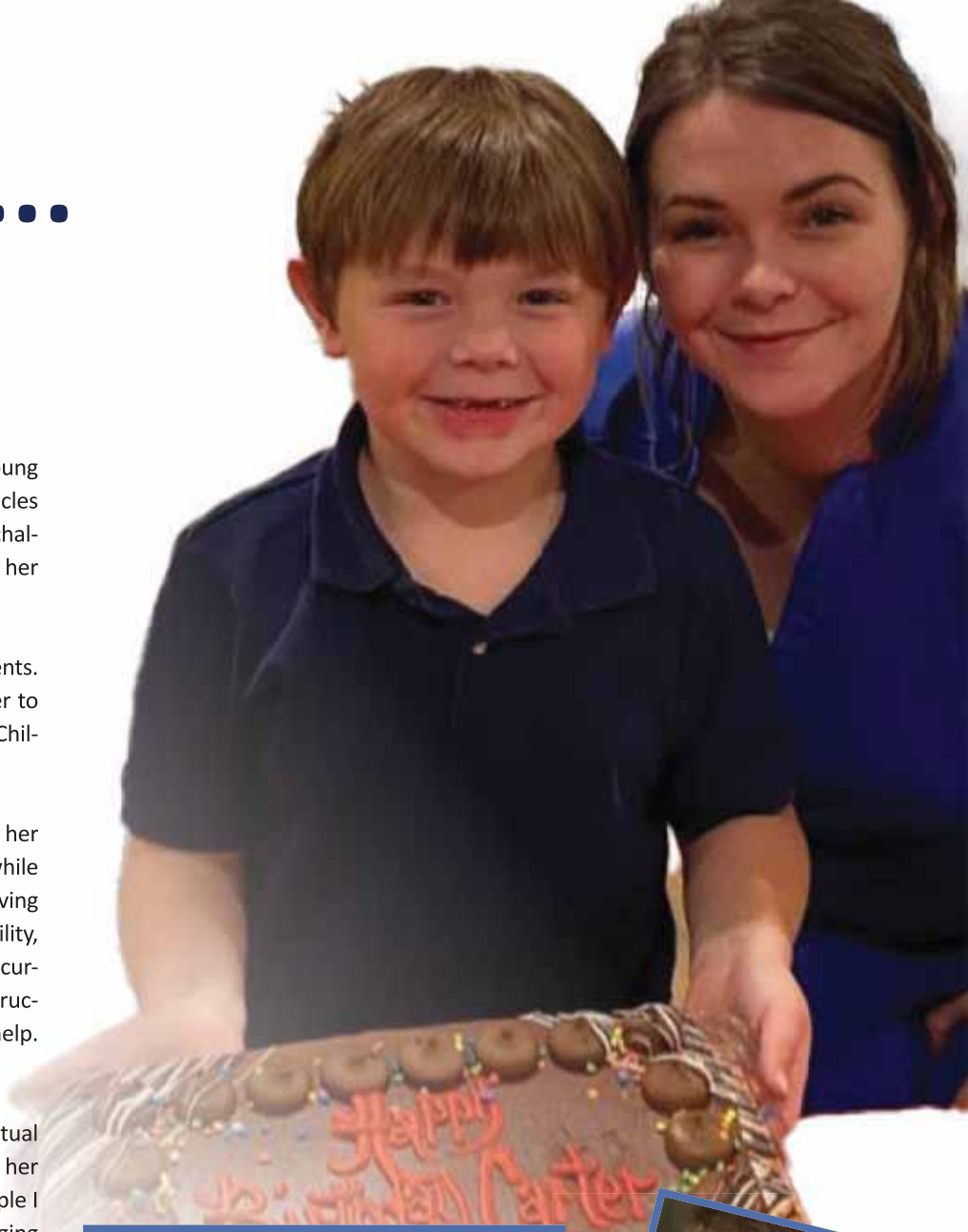
Tristan has been at HomePlace for over four months and has described it as a "spiritual awakening." Sadly, her mother passed away after a prolonged illness in December, and her grandfather soon followed. "I had never experienced anything like that before. Losing people I loved and so close together." She said that she couldn't have made it through this challenging time without the support of the HomePlace community. "They have helped me with my grief. They continue to help me through my grief." They have been a constant source of comfort and guidance during her grieving process. "They are prayer warriors."

Tristan is on a continuous journey of spiritual growth, which she craves and longs for. She has learned a lot and is currently preparing to finish her HiSET, the high school equivalency test. Pursuing her dream of becoming a vet tech, she works for a local vet's office and loves what she does. Every day is different and exciting, and she never knows what to expect. It is fulfilling to provide for her son and their life together. Being a mom to Carter is a joy; they share a close bond.

The HomePlace cottages have a structured program for mothers, which helps them establish a routine for their children. This structure encourages mothers to keep moving forward and create a sense of progress they can continue to use after leaving HomePlace. The cottage atmosphere fosters a sense of camaraderie among the mothers, and they hold each other accountable through their bond with the cottage manager. Additionally, they have weekly bible studies to continue growing in the Word. Tristan notes that this structure has been beneficial for her as a mother.

Tristan and seven-year-old Carter have settled into life at Louisiana Baptist Children's Home. Deborah, their cottage manager, describes Tristan as teachable and eager to learn. "She is hungry for the Lord and has always been respectful and compliant with our structure here." It's clear that she's where she wants and needs to be. She's doing a great job raising her son, that is loved by everyone he meets.

Tristan expresses her deep gratitude to God for leading her to HomePlace. "It has given me the things I need to do life." She radiates light and love that can only come through a life saved by God's grace. HomePlace has provided the tools she needs for life after, but more importantly, it has provided her and Carter with a "joyful rebuilding."



Helping Women Achieve

The Women's Learning Center is about helping women achieve their education and career goals in a Christian environment. We work towards high school equivalency and career training daily. We also exist to offer a place of safety, security, and encouragement to women as they pursue their dreams. I'd like to introduce one of our women this month. Her name is Lyn. She came to the Women's Learning Center for HiSET training. When she first began, her goal was to complete her HiSET so she could gain employment and support her husband who she says has always been her support system. She has worked hard. She studies more than any student I've ever met. Mrs. Lyn is making progress that keeps us all encouraged. She has raised her HiSet reading score by 4 points, over 150 percent since beginning! We are so proud of her but her greatest achievement is her kindness and love for her classmates. Mrs. Lyn states she loves coming to the Women's Learning Center to learn but she also loves the chance to pray for and encourage women to keep going. Mrs. Lyn is a cheerleader for everyone. She is not only a wonderful student but truly exemplifies Christ's love for others.



Lyn

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." 1 Thessalonians 5:11

Alisha Clark
Executive Director,
Women's Learning Center



- HiSET Training and Testing
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Digital Literacy Certification
- WorkPlace Certification
- Bank Teller's Certification
- Paraprofessional Certification



HOMEBUILDERS

A New Year Brings New Opportunities

As we turn the calendar page to a new year, it is refreshing to have the feeling of a fresh start. A new year comes with opportunities to be effective in someone's life. Every day, we get another chance to do as Jesus commanded and "love your neighbor as yourself."

I want to invite you to either become invested for the first time or become more invested in the ministry of the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home! Here are three ways you can provide love, care, and hope in Christ to children and families in need in 2024.

PRAY: Pray specifically for the children placed in our care. Pray for their physical, mental, and spiritual needs as they navigate this cruel and sinful world! Pray for the adults watching over these little ones and providing love and care in Christ daily. Pray for our single, homeless mothers who enter our HomePlace ministry in their time of greatest desperation. Pray for these women to find hope in Christ and that their family trees maybe altered forever. Pray for our Granberry counselors as they listen and provide hope through Christian counseling.

VISIT: If you have never been to our Monroe campus, consider this a personal invitation! See firsthand how God has used the LBCH over the last 125 years to serve children and families in need. Walk (or ride) around these historic grounds and experience how God is working today through

your Louisiana Baptist Children's Home. Call us at 318.343.2244 and ask for me, Matt Coker. We will schedule a tour of the campus for you and/or your group. In 2024, come celebrate 125 years of ministry with us.

GIVE: Your giving can take on different forms. For example, our HomePlace moms and residential children have tangible needs you can meet through gift donations all year round. You can give by referring children and families in need to our ministries such as HomePlace and privately placed children (even short-term placements). Lastly, you can support the LBCH by giving financially. You can give by mail, online at LBCH.org, or text GIVE to 318.269.7440 to make a one-time donation or set up a recurring gift.

In 2024, we will celebrate 125 years of providing love, care, and hope in Christ to children and families in need; this would not be possible without friends like you!

*Providing love, care,
and hope in Christ
to children and families
in need in 2024.*



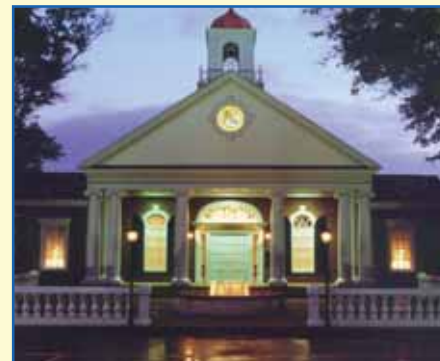
Matt Coker
Associate Director of
Development
& Public Relations

Kappa Delta Donates Teddy Bears...

Thank you to our Kappa Delta - University of Louisiana at Monroe friends for blessing us with a donation of cuddly, stuffed animals... just in time for Christmas! The children love their new, furry friends!



Schedule A Spring Tour!



We're always excited to invite friends to tour our campus! Tours are available for groups or individuals by appointment. We would love to show you around and let you see firsthand what God is doing at your Children's Home!

To schedule a tour contact Matt at mcoker@lbch.org or 318.343.2244.



Julia Letlow Pays a Visit...

It was an honor having Congresswoman Julia Letlow and her children on campus for a tour. We were excited to introduce them to a few of our residents and give them a glimpse of how lives are being changed at LBCH. Thank you, Congresswoman Letlow, for taking time out of your busy schedule to visit with us!



MONTHLY SPONSORS BUILD HOPE, HEAL HEARTS

Dear Friend of Children,

Every child who has been neglected, abused, or abandoned needs a "HopeBuilder."

You can be a HopeBuilder! You can help rebuild the foundation of trust and hope in the lives of hurting children through our monthly sponsor program called HopeBuilders.

When you become a HopeBuilder, you join a special group of people making monthly investments in the lives of precious children, providing them with love, care, and hope in Christ.

As a HopeBuilder, you can be sure that your monthly gifts are going to meet the essential needs that directly impact the children we serve like food, clothing, housing, medical care, education, and counseling.

Jeremiah 29:11 is the foundational verse for our HopeBuilders ministry: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." This is without a doubt the verse we most often share with our children. They not only need to experience God's unconditional love, but they also need to know He has plans to give them hope and a future in Christ.

Recurring monthly HopeBuilder gifts can be set up and made simply and securely with Visa, MasterCard, Discover Card, American Express, Debit Cards, and E-Checks directly from our GIVE NOW page at www.lbch.org. Or you may give by check and simply put HopeBuilder on the memo line and mail to PO Box 4196, Monroe, LA 71211.

Thank you for caring!



Perry Hancock, Ph.D.
President & CEO

**"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."
Jeremiah 29:11**

Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries - P.O. Box 4196, Monroe, LA 71211 - 318.343.2244 - www.lbch.org

Here is my gift of HOPE for the children!

\$100 \$50 \$25 Other \$ _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ PHONE () _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____ EMAIL _____

*Credit Card Info: Account No: _____ Visa _____ MC _____ AmX _____ Discover _____

*Expiration Date: _____ *Code: _____ *Signature: _____

(Optional): I would like to present my gift in _____ memory of or _____ honor of: _____

Please notify (honoree/relative): _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send me info on how to become a monthly sponsor *Required for credit card processing Send me your FREE Personal Estate Planner

**GIVE ONLINE AT
LBCH.ORG
or
Text the word "GIVE"
to 318-269-7440**



Join Our Team! Immediate Job Openings

COTTAGE PARENTS Needed in Monroe (Full & Part-Time)

SOCIAL WORKER Needed in Alexandria and Baton Rouge (Full-Time)

Please send resume to: Susan Nolan at snolan@lbch.org or LBCH, PO Box 4196, Monroe, LA 71211.

CHRISTIAN COUNSELORS Needed in Alexandria (Part-Time) and Monroe (Full-Time)

Must be licensed as LPC, LMFT or LCSW.

Please send resume to: kathy@lbch.org or Granberry Counseling Centers, PO Box 4196, Monroe, LA 71211.

COTTAGE MANAGERS Needed in Monroe (Part-Time)

Please send resume to: Jonann Byargeon at jonann@lbch.org or LBCH, PO Box 4196, Monroe, LA 71211.

For more information on job openings, visit www.lbch.org

Construction is Underway for Compassion Center



After celebrating with a groundbreaking ceremony, construction has begun for the new Compassion Center in Monroe! 40% of children under five in the Monroe area live below the poverty level. The Center, which will be located on the southwest area of the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home campus will meet local needs and partner with churches to expand compassion ministries throughout north and central Louisiana.

Compassion for children and families has been the heartbeat of Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries since 1899. This new regional Compassion Center will be another strategic means of fulfilling our mission to provide love, care, and hope in Christ for children and families in need.

Monroe is currently ranked the poorest city in Louisiana; poorest metro area in America. Forty percent of children under five in Monroe live below the poverty level. The region's poverty rate is higher than the national average, and there is no regional ministry using this model. The goal is to serve 25,000 children and others annually. For more information visit <https://www.lbch.org/compassion.php> or call 318-343-2244.



SCRAPBOOK



Jonann Byargeon
Director of HomePlace



Highlights from HomePlace

The New Year is marching forward even despite bitter winter weather. An Earnest Hemingway quote describes it best: “Gradually and then suddenly.” The approach of the new year seemed slow in making an entrance, but then suddenly, 2024 was underway. In mid-January, the older HomePlace children had the opportunity to experience “snow” on campus. These are some of their responses about the best part of playing in the snow and ice.

Heilee (11-year-old): “Making snow angels and writing in the snow.”

Charlee (5-year-old): “Sliding on my belly on the ice.”

Arianna (5-year-old): “It was cold and freezing!”

This year promises to be another incredible year for HomePlace. In a few weeks, the HomePlace offices will have a new home. Rucker Cottage has been repurposed and remodeled to better meet the needs of the HomePlace staff and families. The entire staff is excited about all the possibilities this building will allow for our program.

Numerous people play a role in the HomePlace program. With their commitment to HomePlace, this program is the ministry it is – because of the support of churches, prayer support, and gifts given to HomePlace.

The foundation of HomePlace is the staff who view this as a ministry and not a job. Five cottage managers, six relief cottage managers, and four cooks are on our campus. We also have one caseworker and an associate director/caseworker. A quick tally of years represented by this staff is 100 plus years. That is amazing! Thank you to all the staff who are committed to this ministry of serving children and their mothers. As HomePlace moves forward, this staff is committed to continuing the ministry of helping families move toward a place of hope and self-sufficiency.

Thank you to the churches, individuals, and Bible Study groups that helped make this past year a fantastic year for our families. Please continue to support the HomePlace ministry with your prayers as our staff continues to prepare for tomorrow and the families who will join us. HomePlace is an incredible and life-changing ministry.

Please plan to visit your Louisiana Baptist Children’s Home this year and visit us in our new home on campus, HomePlace Cottage. We are always willing to have a cup of coffee with you and share how God is working with our families. I hope to see you in 2024!



Kathy Eichelberger
Director of
Granberry Counseling
Centers



Turning from What-Ifs to Trusting God

“Anxiety is the natural result when our hopes are centered in anything short of God and His will for us.” —Billy Graham

When Billy Graham wrote those words in 1965, no one knew how true they would be 60 years later. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the United States, affecting 40 million adults age 18 and older, or 18.1% of the population every year. Anxiety disorders are highly treatable, yet only 36.9% of those suffering receive treatment. People with an anxiety disorder are three to five times more likely to go to the doctor and six times more likely to be hospitalized for psychiatric disorders than those who do not suffer from anxiety disorders.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) defines anxiety as: “The apprehensive anticipation of future danger or misfortune accompanied by a feeling of worry, distress, and/or somatic symptoms of tension. The focus of anticipated danger may be internal or external.”

This “focus of anticipated danger” often comes in the form of What-ifs. It’s important to stay in the present and stay away from the What-ifs that lead to increased anxiety, worry, and stress. When the What-ifs come into our lives, we must ask ourselves if we’re going to judge God by the circumstances we don’t understand or judge the circumstances in the light of the character of God.

Isaiah 41:10 declares, “Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” We can trust God only when our focus is on Him and not our circumstances.

Psalms 141:8, “For my eyes are toward You, O God, the Lord; In You I take refuge...” Here David encourages us to fix our eyes on our Sovereign Lord and take refuge in Him.

Psalms 112:7 says, “They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the Lord.” Only as our hearts are fixed on our loving Lord can we be at peace in the midst of What-ifs. How wonderful it is to be assured that as we choose to fix our hearts on God, He — at the same time — upholds them!

Paul David Tripp shares,

Here’s the bottom line: If you’re God’s child, your life is never, ever out of control. It’s not spinning wildly in who knows what direction with no intelligent administration. It’s not controlled by the hopeless inertia of impersonal determination or abstract luck. Yes, vast pieces of your existence are out of your control, beyond your power to alter. But you must not conclude that your life is out of control. Today you can give way to fear-producing What-ifs or rest in the sovereign care of your wise and gracious Savior King.

Do you remember the account of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in Daniel 3? Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king, demanded that these Jewish young men bow down and worship the golden idol he had made. But if they did not worship the idol, they would “immediately be cast into the mist of a furnace of blazing fire.” They found themselves in a genuinely anxiety-producing situation. They knew the right thing to do, but they had no guarantee from God that He would save them. However, they were confident that their lives and eternities were in His hands.

So, instead of wondering What-If the king follows through with his threat and we lose our lives, here is their response to Nebuchadnezzar: “Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to the king, ‘O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to give you an answer concerning this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire; and He will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up.’” (Daniel 3:16-18).

These faithful men met their anxiety about What-If with the confidence of Even-If. They focused on the character of their Sovereign God, not their circumstances, and took refuge in Him. In the end, God did deliver them.

If you are struggling with anxiety and need help overcoming the What-ifs, our Granberry counselors are called to care and here to help!

“Anxiety is the natural result when our hopes are centered in anything short of God and His will for us.” —Billy Graham



Louisiana Baptist Children's Home

1899-2024

This year, Louisiana Baptist Children's Home and Family Ministries celebrates 125 years of helping children. Established in 1899 by the Louisiana Baptist Convention, the ministry has seen many changes but remains steadfast in providing love, care, and hope for children and families in need.

As we celebrate through out the year, we want to share stories from the past and present to give a glimpse of life experiences from those impacted by the ministry.

At right is a letter written by former resident and staff member, Effie Mae Eggerton Bailey when she was a teenager living at LBCH. Effie was a resident of the home from 1946-1951 and was on staff for 36 years beginning in 1954. Effie just turned 90 years old and is still an active supporter of the Children's Home.



Top: Effie Bailey during her time at LBCH; Right: Effie today

Letter from Former LBCH Resident Written in 1949-50...

My name is Effie Mae and the year is school year 1949-50. I live in Mary Goss Cottage. I am one of the "big girls." We are called big girls" not because we are the largest but because we are the oldest.

Every four months we "change work." Mr. Black our superintendent, assigns the "Big girls" to the kitchen, or dining hall, or laundry, or one of the cottages to help with the younger children. He puts the list up on the door of the dining hall and when we come in from school on that day (and everybody knows when that day is), we get off the bus in front of the chapel and check the list out. The rumor on campus is that when Mr. Black puts the list up, he leaves town for a few days.

Well, today is "the day." I was hoping maybe I would get in the laundry because you don't have to iron in the mornings before school but you do have to iron every afternoon as soon as you get in from school. If you don't finish during the week then you have to iron on Saturday until you get through. Well, I didn't get in the laundry, I got in the kitchen. The kitchen is not so bad even though we have to fix breakfast and supper. After all we are learning how to cook, the big boys have to come to the kitchen to deliver milk and sometimes they hang around after supper and walk us home. So, kitchen duty is O.K. I checked the assignment list in the kitchen to see what my assignment for the first week is. Mary Alice and I have to make biscuits. We have to get up and be at the kitchen at 5 o'clock. We have to make biscuits for about 180 people and if they eat 2 or 3 biscuits each, and some of the big boys do, that's a lot of biscuits. We make drop biscuits. We stir them up in a big dish pan and drop them by spoon fulls into big baking pans. We have to hurry because breakfast is at 6:30. After breakfast we have to clean up the kitchen and hurry back to our cottage and get ready to catch the school bus by 7:45. Sometimes we finish cleaning the biscuit dough from our fingernails on the bus to school

They tell us this is good experience and training for us and I'm sure that's right, but when I get married and have a family I sure hope I don't have to make biscuits at 5 o'clock in the morning and besides how am I going to know how to make them for just two, three, four or five people?

I've got an idea. Maybe when I get married I'll marry a man who grew up in the Children's Home and Maybe, just maybe, he won't like drop biscuits. Hey, it could happen!

Bringing Joy to Children in Foster Care Across Louisiana



Kamiron May
Foster Care & Adoption Specialist

As the New Year has arrived, it brings a sense of anticipation and excitement for what lies ahead. It is a time when we eagerly embrace the possibilities and opportunities that come with a fresh start. However, amidst all the excitement, it is important not to forget the achievements and triumphs of the past year. During the festive Christmas season, our dedicated Family Services and Connect1Child staff worked tirelessly to bring joy and happiness to children in the foster care system across the state. Their unwavering commitment and hard work ensured that the Christmas season was truly magical for these children, creating memories that will last a lifetime.

The excitement and joy began to fill the air as November rolled in, marking the start of the Connect1Child ministry's efforts to distribute pallets filled with donated toys from LBCH's Compassion for Kids ministry. These pallets were sent out to numerous locations, from Shreveport to Alexandria and Denham Springs to DeRidder. Each pallet was a treasure trove of toys, ranging from classic board games to beloved Legos and toys suitable for preschool-aged children. In total, Connect1Child was able to generously donate ten pallets, which were then distributed among eight churches across the state to distribute to their local children in the foster care system. The impact of the donations was truly heartwarming, as various churches organized special shopping days for foster parents to select Christmas gifts for the children under their care.

In the Eastern Louisiana Baptist Association, LBCH's Coordinator, Bridget Dickson, hosted a Christmas Party for children in foster care. This delightful event provided a much-needed break for foster parents, who were able to drop off their children for a few hours of respite care. The highlight of the party was when Santa Claus himself called each child by name and presented them with Christmas gifts. The children also had a blast engaging in snowball fights, exploring their creativity through arts and crafts, and enjoying delicious snacks. With the assistance of 12 dedicated volunteers, the Connect1Child Christmas party successfully served five families, consisting of a total of 25 foster and biological children. Looking ahead, Bridget is eagerly anticipating

future parties and committed to providing ongoing support to the foster parents throughout the year.

Our Beauregard Baptist Association Coordinator, LeAnn Bailey, organized a festive Christmas celebration in Beauregard Parish. The air was filled with excitement as children bounced in the bouncy houses, eagerly awaiting their turn to meet Santa Claus. Amidst the joyful atmosphere, the attendees were given the opportunity to listen to a reading of the Christmas story reminding everyone of the true meaning of the season. This event served 27 foster parents and 49 children, as they were showered with the gift of new clothes and toys ensuring that their Christmas would be filled with happiness.

Apart from the Christmas parties in the southern region of the state, Christy Goodwin, Connect1Child Foster Care & Adoption Specialist, also hosted a special event for the extended youth in care in the Shreveport region. With her dedication and hard work, she managed to bring delight to 15 young adults by providing each of them with a generous gift card for Christmas. The party was a huge success with a fantastic turnout and everyone thoroughly enjoying themselves.

In the Monroe Region, Foster Care and Adoption Specialists Alice Yates and Kamiron May were able to bring delight to 28 local foster children by providing them with Christmas gifts. We can only imagine their faces lighting up with excitement and happiness when opening the presents on Christmas day. Of course, we could not forget about our children on the Louisiana Baptist Children's Home campus either. Each one of them received special Christmas gifts tailored to their interests and wishes. It was a wonderful way to spread the holiday spirit and make sure that every child felt loved and cared for during this festive season.

This past year Family Services and Connect1Child staff had the privilege of being a part of children and families' Christmas celebrations, which brought great joy. As we look ahead, we are filled with hope and faith, praying for the path that lies ahead for our ministry. May the New Year bring you and your family an abundance of blessings.

MEMORIALS

Memorial gifts are received in thoughtful tribute to the memory of a relative, friend or loved one. Names of deceased persons are printed in all caps followed by the names of those making the memorial gifts.

December 19, 2023 - January 25, 2024

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HOME NEWS

A Publication of Your Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries

Louisiana Baptist Children's Home & Family Ministries is a faith-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing love, care, and hope in Christ for children and families in need. Established in 1899, the Children's Home is an agency of the Louisiana Baptist Convention and is governed by a 17-member board of trustees elected by the Convention to serve three-year terms on a rotating basis.

The Children's Home receives no state or federal funding for the care of children. Approximately 56% of all funding comes from individuals and churches. 25% of funding goes to administrative costs; 75% goes to direct ministry services; 7% of funding comes from payment of services.

Our major service areas include: Residential Child Care for Children ages 5-17; HomePlace Residential Family Care for Homeless Children and Mothers; Women's Learning Center providing job and life skills training and certified HiSET preparation and testing; Granberry Counseling Centers with 14 statewide locations; Connect1Child Foster Care & Adoption Ministries; and Orphans Embrace International.

Our dedicated Christian ministry team strives to offer the highest quality of services. Services are provided without regard to race, gender, religion, or ability to pay.

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