

## A Donor's Loving Response

On August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2005, a caring adoptive family "lovingly responded" to an urgent need of CFS. The vehicle that CFS was using was old, had extremely high mileage, and was very unreliable. In answer to a plea given to CFS' followers for a "good, reliable, good gas-mileage vehicle," one family not only stepped up, but they went the extra mile and purchased a brand new Toyota Camry for CFS. They said,

**"We simply want to help bless others as CFS has blessed us."**

To say that we at CFS were speechless would be a great understatement!

Fast forward 10+ years. That same car with **289,000 miles** had only had the tires, brakes and battery replaced.

It *was* a great car.

That car's productive life was cut short when a driver ran a red light and Jerry was "T-Boned" on the driver's side. Thankfully he was not hurt, but insurance has ruled the car a total loss. (see photo)



CFS is once again without a reliable means of transportation.

*That car helped CFS bless 134 babies with Christian homes & families.*

*That car helped CFS: visit, counsel and touch with God's love, well over 500 Birth Moms.*

If God has blessed you through CFS, if you have been wanting to partner or do something special for CFS but didn't know what, or if you want to help insure that this vital ministry continues to be a blessing to moms/babies/families, **please be prayerful and open to what God may be leading you to do.**

God always answers our prayers. We don't know whom He will choose to work through this time. We don't know what the answer might look like (used, new or a donation towards the purchase), but we do know that this ministry to the "fatherless" is very special and dear to His heart.

God is looking for a **loving response** to once again bless the CFS ministry.

# Family Times

Christian Family Services

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## A Mom's Loving Response

Imagine you are a 32-year-old single mother with two sons. Your steady job barely makes ends meet. Plans of school to complete your degree and qualify for a better paying job seem unachievable.

**Flashback:** With your **first son**, you were convinced that there was no way you could provide for a child much less be ready to parent. An aunt, with whom you were very close, offered to "adopt" and raise the child for you. You knew your aunt and her husband were unable to have their own children, so you seriously considered the offer. At the last minute in the hospital you decided to parent. A little over a year later you were **pregnant again**, now as a struggling single mother of a toddler. Your aunt again offers to raise the new baby. You considered it, but again decide to parent.



**Present Day:** Now you are the mother of **two growing boys** (ages 11 and 9). Times are still hard, but your sons bring you joy. You're still determined to find a way to work, raise your sons, and finish school. **Once again you are pregnant.** The father of this baby did not turn out to be a person you wanted in the child's life. Now what?

**For the first time, an abortion seems like an option.**  
**Your faith triumphs, even though the future is uncertain.**

As you struggle to figure out how you will raise a baby and provide for the boys you have, once again, your aunt offers to take this baby. You have become more and more aware of your aunt's grief in not being able to have children. You seriously begin to consider this new option.

When you contact a local pregnancy center, they put you in touch with CFS. You are able to discuss in depth your situation and desires with the CFS caseworker. The CFS caseworker talks extensively with your aunt and her husband; you now have a real **adoption plan.**

**For the first time in eight months, you feel like there is a tremendous weight off your shoulders.**

See "A Mom's Loving Response," next page

Online Shopping! The ministry of CFS can benefit from your:



Corporate Gift Matching through your work place!

Directed donations through



Become a Regular Monthly Donor

Gator Game Day Parking Season Passes \* Daily Parking



*It may be the Friend of a Friend who needs CFS to answer their call!*

"So guys, Share this if you love your Children who are very lucky to have you and to have a beautiful home. Lets hope that Everybody reads this especially those who consider adoption as a taboo and are against it. It's perfectly fine to adopt. It is a gift of Life. The desire of your heart can give a child a home." [sic]

A Loving Response to Adoption from a post on Social Media, author unknown

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Christian Family Services ☺ A Christian Alternative 2720 S.W. 2nd Ave ☺ Gainesville, FL 32607 ☺ 352.378.6202

Toll-free 800-226-2367 Fax: 352-378-6205 Email: info@cfsfl.org  
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## An Adoptive Family's Loving Response

A loving response to a number of hurdles is what I witnessed through the adoption of Moriah. What began as a desire to add a daughter to a family ended with that same addition. But just as the Lord declares "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," the addition of this child had many unforeseen obstacles.



Amy cuddles Moriah.

When Amy and Tony were matched for adoption of a daughter, they shared, "...We have prayed for her for years. God has truly answered our prayers, and there is no doubt in our minds that she is the daughter God chose for us."

Their response to trials through their placement brought out their faith and the Rock they put their Hope in.

"...We believe that all of this is God's plan. Even this, as hard as it is. We know that something great will come of this."

While much of the first year with their daughter was overshadowed with unforeseen court proceedings, they also dealt with the typical ailments of newborns.

"...Moriah had to have tubes put in her ears. After the surgery, we expected her to start making some progress with crawling and eating and sleeping and speech. We had assumed all of her delays were caused by the pressure in her head and the hearing loss. But after the surgery, although she was infection free for the first time without antibiotics, she was also not making the advances we had expected."



Tony holds Moriah as they celebrate her finalization.

Moriah was diagnosed with "x chromosome microdeletion." **She is missing 46 genes on one of her X chromosomes.** Most rare childhood disorders or diseases are caused by one gene mutation. Amy shared:

"...Now I know that what we were dealing with was scary and complicated and not our plan, but I assure you that God's hand on it lifted my spirits and gave me strength to face whatever was lying ahead."

While Amy, Tony, Isaac, Symian and Julian have loved on Moriah, they have discovered other families who face this same type of rare disorder. There are only 10 known cases in the world. They have begun a foundation to work

towards research efforts for treatment of the disorder. A *loving response* from an adoptive family!

With special thanks to Amy for sharing these excerpts from her blog:

**Message That Brings JOY:** <https://messagethatbringsjoy.wordpress.com/>

Soon to be a 501 c 3 foundation: **Xtraordinary Joy** <https://www.gofundme.com/xtraordinaryjoy%E2%80%8B>



Ready for a sister! Isaac, Symian and Julian welcome Moriah to their home.



## A Mom's Loving Response, cont'd from front page.



You now choose to place your baby where she will be loved and better cared for. You know that this choice will allow you to focus on raising your sons. Even though the pain is beyond description, you know beyond a shadow of doubt that this child is exactly where she needs to be. And, you are thrilled that you were a part of God's plan of making your aunt's dreams come true. [A True Story]

Now that is a *loving response* from a birth mom to her *daughter*, to her *sons* and to the *adoptive family*.

*The prospective Adoptive Mother from this article is shown being instructed in the care of the premature newborn. The placement of a child with an adoptive family can be surreal to them. As one adoptive mother put it "...when I see my baby (sleeping in her crib), I feel I need to pinch myself. Is this real?"*

## Recent Finalizations



March 8, 2016: **Clarity Nightingale** officially became the daughter of Scott & Jenna, and sister of Holly, Von, Liberty and Gus. Their adoption was finalized via phone from their home state.

March 8, 2016: **Brooklyn Eloise** poses with her parents, John and Stacy and brothers Noah & Jacob, in front of the Alachua County Courthouse after her finalization.



April 26, 2016: **Joshua & Jacob** are happy the proceedings with Judge Donna Keim are complete! Art and Rosy were excited to welcome a second set of twins into their family. Their daughters, Madelyn & Katelyn, became helpful big sisters with their twin brothers. Debbie and Jerry enjoy seeing CFS families proceed from the beginning of the adoption process through finalization and took the opportunity to join in this photo shoot.

April 26, 2016: **Abram Chaistain** is held by his happy parents, Zach and Ashlie, after the judge signed his order of adoption!

Donna Keim of the Eighth Judicial Circuit of Florida officiated the adoptions shown on this page

If the standard route for creating a family had worked for me, I wouldn't have met this child. I needed to know him. I needed to be his mother.

I know now why all those events happened. Or didn't happen. So I could meet this little boy.

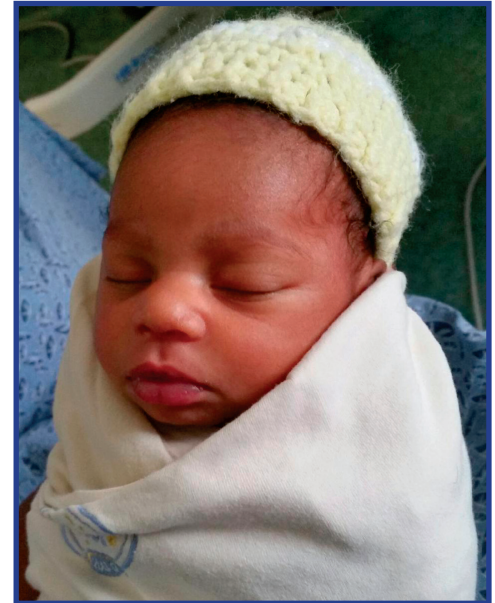
He is, in every way, my son.

*Adoptive Mother,  
Author Unknown*

## Recent Placements



It was a surprise for Colton and Abby when they received the call that a baby boy was ready for them in Florida! Maverick met his parents March 23, 2016.



Sweet Kaamya, born in March, is enjoying her new forever family.



## Volunteers' Loving Response



Any time service is done for God, those who are serving are blessed. When a baby girl was born at 25 weeks and would have an extended stay at a Jacksonville hospital, CFS needed people in the area to assist with her care. When God presented this need to the Englewood Christian church family, calls were made, and before the end of the day, a long list of names had been compiled.

*The Cuddle Team*, as they were affectionately called, tended the baby for a month.

♥ Due to hospital regulations, a core group of six CuddleTeam members spent part of each day (Monday through Friday) with the baby girl, rotating their service around their schedules.

♥ Team members saw her health improve following two surgeries. They witnessed her growth; she became more responsive.

♥ Nursing staff expressed their thanks for the Cuddle Team and said the baby thrived from these visits.



The Cuddle Team invested much in going to the hospital. We trust God blessed all involved for their loving response to this special request.

Thank you to Englewood Christian Church, Jacksonville, Florida, for being The Cuddle Team (some of the team is shown at left), and providing this article to CFS. "Clarity" is now 49 weeks old and thriving (see her finalization photo with her family).

## Adoption: Making It Legal (Part 4) Finalization

*In his last of four installments, Attorney Mitch Albaugh describes the Finalization stage in the process of adoption.* Once the parental rights are terminated, the child is adjudicated available for adoption and I move into the Finalization stage. This stage begins with an email to the adoptive parents advising them that their child's natural parents' rights have been terminated. I provide the Finalization paperwork, a Fee Agreement and a questionnaire. I prepare the **Petition for Adoption**, which must be signed under oath by the adoptive parents. I e-file this Petition, a certified copy of the TPR Judgment and the adoptive parents' preliminary home study.

The case is assigned its third case number. From this time, by law, it can take no less than thirty (30) days for Finalization. Timing will depend on the post-placement visits and the final home study. Once completed and e-filed, I can ordinarily schedule a Final Hearing on the judge's next hearing date (there are generally two adoption hearing dates each month).

The Final Hearing is the last step of the legal process. At the Final Hearing, the adoptive parents will testify and the judge, upon accepting the adoptive parents' testimony, will sign the Final Judgment of Adoption. ***This action completes the child's identity transformation.***

Adoptive parents are required to appear in person but if circumstances prevent their attendance in court, a motion to appear by telephone can be made by me and granted by the judge. As a cost-saving accommodation to CFS and its adoptive parents, I am always allowed to appear by telephone.

**The Final Hearing is casual and cordial. My questions are easy and judges like it when no one is fighting. I have yet to encounter an adoption judge that didn't enjoy making a fuss over the child and his or her siblings (some of which were adopted in the very same court). Adoptive parents are encouraged to bring close friends and relatives and capture the moment with pictures. (See following page.)**

After the Final Hearing, the last thing I do is order the adoptive parents a certified copy of the Final Judgment of Adoption and their child's new birth certificate. The court file will shortly be sealed, but I will maintain a digital copy of the file until the January following the sixth year after the entry of the Final Judgment.



**About the author. Mitch Albaugh** has been practicing law since 1980 and is primarily a construction and complex commercial litigator. Mitch and wife Leslie recently celebrated their 34<sup>th</sup> anniversary. They have three grown sons, Zach, Andrew, and Matthew. Mitch currently worships with the First Christian Church of Winter Park, along with his law partner. Mitch's original offer to work with CFS was made in April of 1993, when he worked in the Tampa Bay area. **We at CFS appreciate Mitch's 23 years dedicated to serving in this role.**

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"I hold my son in my arms and thank God for bringing him to me."  
♥ Quote by a CFS Adoptive Parent