

# CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES FAMILY TIMES



VOLUME XLI ISSUE II

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## GOD ONLY KNOWS

Ever feel like no one else could ever understand what you are experiencing or going through? Ever feel so *lost, ashamed, doomed*, that you just want to give up and not try; **“What’s the use?”**

I’m sure we have all been there at some time or other, but were able to get through it. We overcame those feelings *by leaning on our faith in God*, by the *help of our family or close friends*, and sometimes by the *prayers and encouragement from our spiritual family/the church*.

There is a song by **King & Country** called **“God Only Knows.”** The words to the song are powerful in that they paint a picture of someone, like the moms that CFS works with, who are in this type of mental state:

*God only knows what you’ve been through  
God only knows what they say about you  
God only knows how it’s killing you  
God only knows the real you  
But there’s a kind of love that God only knows*



Photo thanks to Hannah Olinger d on Unsplash



Photo thanks to Aditya Romansa on Unsplash

Now imagine: that you do not have a strong faith in God, or you believe that God has turned His back on you; *you don’t have a dependable significant person* in your life or family, or friends who you can turn to; and *you definitely don’t feel like you have a “church family” that you can reach out to who would be a support and encouragement*. In fact, that is the last place you would turn because they are the ones who are so “condemning” and “judgmental.”

**This is what many of the moms in the community, whom we often ignore, are experiencing and the condemnation they feel.** No wonder abortion becomes a considered option, even for moms from good Christian homes.

**Why is it that those who are supposed to be closest to us and/or those in the church, feel a need to state the obvious and “beat a dead horse.” Instead of us running to wrap our arms around them, to lovingly comfort and assure them that they are not alone (much like the father with the Prodigal Son) we often do the opposite.**

GOD ONLY KNOWS

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*During placement, Case Workers ask Birth Mothers if they are sure they want to go through with the adoption, and if there may be any other way for her to proceed other than an adoption plan. One mother answered:*

*“I know them (the adoptive family)  
well enough to know  
they’re good people.  
I know she (her birth child)  
will be happy.  
A CFS Birth Mom*



Photo thanks to Colin Maynard on Unsplash

# Our Journey with Brad

I am thankful for our son Brad, he has always been a joy. People say he looks more like me than my other (biological) children do.



I want to share a little of Brad's journey to meet his Birth Family, specifically, the family of his birth father.

*People say he looks more like me than my other (biological) children do. After seeing pictures of his birth father, I think he looks much more like his birth father.*

My heart was touched by the outpouring of love and good wishes from Brad's birth father and the family members Brad didn't know about. The Facebook page of my son, Brad Brunson, explains some of the details of how he found some of his biological relatives.

Brad shared via Facebook:

*"Last night marked the end of a 39 year search and the beginning of something new! Thank you to my Martinez family for having such open hearts and minds."*

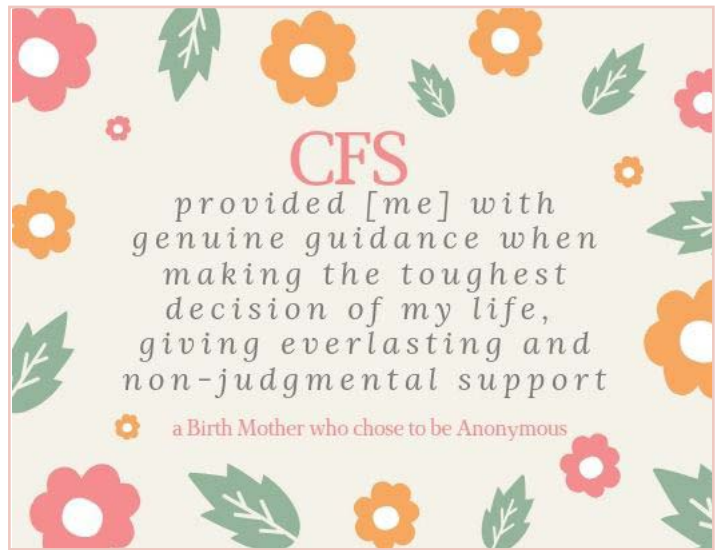
*A few days later: " So, many of you know or have pieced it all together by now but 38 years ago I was given up for adoption at Birth. My birth mother did not tell anyone that she was pregnant or that she had a child, including my biological father.*

*Using what little information I had I was able to find and contact my birth mother but despite several attempts to communicate with her she was not and still is not ready to communicate. So my search for my biological father had stalled.*

*Continued on facing page*



Brad and his parents



Give Birth Mothers the  
*option of adoption*  
through giving at your place of work



## Memorial Gifts

- ♥ **Patricia Apple**  
Don & Joyce Price
- ♥ **Elijah Morgan Bielling**  
Kyle Allen  
Bethany Anderson & Family  
Jeff & Robin Bielling  
Chris Cacho  
Julie Calvitt  
Celebration Choir of  
Parkview Baptist Church  
Judy Chaistain  
Susan Cummings  
Daniel Ferris  
J.P. Green  
Keith & Laurie Hall  
Hobo Tractor Co., Inc.  
Glenn & Martha Khachigan  
Rachael Lackey  
Lindsey Lightsey  
Wanda Odom  
Amanda Phelps  
Carrie Pridgeon  
Thomas & Delayne Redding  
Carlos Rinaldi  
Jada Russell  
Teresa Stevens  
University of Florida's  
Herbert Wertheim  
College of Engineering  
Ricky Whitney
- ♥ **John Bryant**  
James & June Garrett
- ♥ **Tedd Allen Case**  
Linda Case
- ♥ **Roger Cloutier**  
Don & Joyce Price
- ♥ **Kenny Coleman**  
Bill & Mary Freeman
- ♥ **Marion Clouser**  
Tom & Jo Brown
- ♥ **Leroy Frison**  
Louvenia Gainey
- ♥ **Stephen Izard**  
Dr. & Mrs. March  
Naturchem, Inc.  
Patricia Tracy
- ♥ **Carl & Annie Ruth Jacobsen**  
Linda Jacobsen
- ♥ **Sam Postlethwait**  
Don & Joyce Price
- ♥ **Wayne Martin**  
Robert & Carolyn Harrell
- ♥ **Bettye Roberts**  
Don & Donna Brooker
- ♥ **Edith Robinson**  
Ruby Lee Horne  
Carolyn Jackson  
Patricia & John Zylinski
- ♥ **Bob Spainhower**  
Tom & Jo Brown
- ♥ **Phyllis Smith**  
Nigel & Elsie Charles  
Don & Joyce Price
- ♥ **Dick & Marth Whitehead**  
Robert & Carolyn Harrell

Photo thanks to Leonard Wong on Unsplash

## Our Journey with Brad Continued... Brad

Brad's Facebook post, continued:

*In November, two friends convinced me to take the 23andMe DNA test knowing that I have always been interested in finding out my Origins and perhaps I would match up with a relative. Initially, I matched with many 4th and 5th cousins based on my DNA but after 2 months there really wasn't a match close enough that could give me the answers that I was looking for. I had given up.*

After those postings, the wall of comments began and the story unfolded about Brad's search for his birth father and his connection with a birth family that he didn't know existed.

***I want to honor Brad and his birth father, and I want to honor God by making a special contribution to Christian Family Services. The events of the past week have truly been a blessing.***

My prayer is that God will touch the hearts of everyone in this story and the ministry of Christian Family Services will continue to touch the lives of families in the future as it has in the past. Barbara and I are truly grateful to God and we hope Brad's story will give hope to others who have been searching for answers. Won't you join me in sharing your financial blessing with Christian Family Services today?



*Barbara & Jimmie, Brad's parents. Like many adoptive parents, they are sincerely grateful to God for Brad finding and being embraced by his biological family.*

**Your gift will be a blessing to the ministry of Christian Family Services as it continues to meet the needs of birth mothers, birth fathers, adoptive families, and of course, individuals whose lives have been touched by the adoption process.**

Use the enclosed envelope to join in this special contribution for CFS. OR use the link found on the CFS Website: <http://christianfamilyservices.com/support-our-adoption-ministry/#donate>

**Read the entire 2-part story on our blog at**

<http://christianfamilyservices.com/our-journey-with-brad/>

<http://christianfamilyservices.com/brads-birth-father-our-journey-with-brad/>

## RECENT PLACEMENTS



**Jennifer and Sean** welcomed **Roam Gray** to their family. **Major, Addyx and Beckett** were excited to learn of Roam's arrival (another brother!!) to their family!



**CFS Baby Boy.** His Birth Mother made an adoption plan and would have placed her son. He was delivered still-born by Caesarian Section on March 10th, 2019. His was an "Eternal Placement."



**James and Beth** made a quick trip to Florida so **Naomi Grace** could join their family as their third child. **Abigail and Julius** also made the trip and got to spend some time at the beach with their new baby sister.



**Lauren and Ethan** review the paperwork that places **Graham Christopher** into their home as their son. After all was signed, the new family headed home to introduce Graham to extended family.



**RIGHT: Sierra & Gabby** sold lemonade at their stand in Tallahassee, FL, and sent the proceeds to help the ministry of Christian Family Services! Who could resist a cup of cold lemonade from this pair?? Gabby was a CFS baby! Thank you, Cynthia Poole, for assisting these ladies and providing the photo.

Did you know CFS receives funds from donors through the



# A Visit & Update

Placed with her family in December 2016, Jayli was a preemie with heart issues and a feeding tube. Jayli weighed 3 pounds 13 ounces at birth, and 6 1/2 pounds at placement (3 months old).



Jayli after one of her many hospital procedures

At her first visit with a doctor after returning home with her forever parents, she weighed 8 pounds, 4 ounces!



Jayli and her family stopped by to visit CFS on their Florida vacation. At 2 1/2, Jayli is a 30 pound, active toddler.

Jayli pulls her mom's hair and squirms as we try to get a photo with her parents, Jennifer and Joseph.



## Items for Birth Mother Gift Bags



Jasmine recently inventoried the items on hand for Gift Bags for CFS Birth Mothers.

When Jasmine sent out a SOS on social media for the items needed, **YOU** responded!

Most of the items requested have been received. We **Thank YOU** for reading the list we provided and supplying this need.

Some of the items have already been gifted!

### Gifts in Honor

- 📄 **Becky Barclift**  
Marilou Heckman
- 📄 **Evan Brown**  
Ralph & Leah Brown
- 📄 **Kaya Brown**  
Ralph & Leah Brown
- 📄 **Rachel Brown**  
Ralph & Leah Brown

Photo thanks to Georgia Delotz on Unsplash

**GOD ONLY KNOWS** -- contunited from the front page

Do we really believe that this mom doesn't know and hasn't already "judged" herself a hundred times? What would it take for us to have the attitude of Jesus who was always meeting people "where they were." He didn't gloss over their sin, but was willing to focus initially on their needs. He didn't berate them for the mistakes or poor choices they had made. He showed them love first and foremost. Then when appropriate, He pointed them in the right direction.

Those who profess to follow Jesus, the church, should be viewed as a safe place for a young mom to turn to in a

desperate time of need. We need to have the reputation in the community of truly being "Pro-Life." Might that mean also caring for this mom and her baby holistically if she chooses to carry the baby to term? Where do we fit in if she does decide to parent, or to place for adoption? Are we going to come alongside and help her learn the life skills necessary to be a good parent who is able to provide for her future family? What if God wants her to experience His love through us?

That's the kind of love that "God only knows."

*Jerry*

Partner with Christian Family Services as we reach out to birth mothers dealing with an unplanned pregnancy. Christian Family Services, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization as determined by the Internal Revenue Service. 100% of the contributions received by Christian Family Services, Inc. are retained by the agency. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION (CH4221) AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-435-7352, WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

## RECENT FINALIZATIONS



**Ilyah** and her parents, **Galen and Larnni**, appeared before **Judge Groeb** to make it "official"! Ilyah received her new last name and **Tess** officially became a big sister!



There are a lot of SMILES in the court on finalization day! **Zeke, Sunshine, Judge Groeb** and **Elli** show us what a joyous occasion the event was for this new family.

**W**hen we began our home study process with you, we did not know what to expect. You made it so easy and made us feel comfortable.

**A**fter we moved out of Astate and had to update our home study with another entity, we found out that it is not always the way we experienced it (home study process) like we did with you.

-- a CFS Adoptive Family



**Justin and Holly** hold son **Judah** following the court proceeding that gave him his new last name. **Debbie and Jerry** attend most court appearances.

We have two prayers:

*First, that we will receive a child.*

*Last, that we will raise them to know **God.***

-- a CFS Adoptive Family

Photo thanks to Aaron Burden on Unsplash



**Game Day Parking**  
at all UF Home Games

Give Birth Mothers a Christian Family to place their baby with when you donate to the ministry of CFS. There are many ways to support CFS: Your workplace, direct donations, Game Day Parking, Baby Bottle Boomerang Campaigns, or other fundraisers.



**Staff**

Jerry D. Callens, Exec. Director & Case Worker  
Debbie Callens, Case Worker  
Jasmine Pierce, Case Worker

Donna L. Brooker, Ministry Assistant  
Becky Barclift, Bookkeeper  
John & Charlotte JeBailey and their children, Foster Family

**Board of Directors**

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www.ChristianFamilyServices.com



Photo thanks to Marjan Grabowski on Unsplash

### Help Reach Her:

- Pray for Birth Mothers to find CFS
- Pray for Christian families to adopt
- Host a fund-raiser at your church or organization
- Use your talent to host and/or plan a Birth Mother event
- Use your talent in the CFS office
- Donate funds through United Way, Choose Life, or matching donations in your workplace
- Follow, share, like CFS social media platforms
- Write a review for CFS at Google.com



### ***I Will help a baby have life and a Christian Family to raise him/her through the Ministry of Christian Family Services:***

My One Time Gift Today: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Monthly Gift (*Hearts for Hope* donors pledge \$84 month or \$1000 year)

\$250  \$100  \$75  \$50  Other \$\_\_\_\_\_

#### **Memorial option below.**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email:\_\_\_\_\_

This donation is sent in Memory or Honor of:\_\_\_\_\_

My relationship to this individual:\_\_\_\_\_

Please notify: NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

*Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.*

James 1:27

#### CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES

A Christian Alternative  
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