

CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES FAMILY TIMES



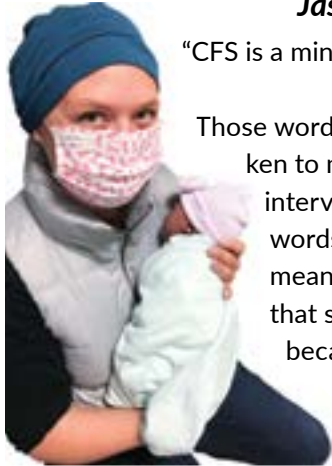
VOLUME XLII ISSUE I

WINTER 2020

More Than a Ministry

Jasmine Pierce

“CFS is a ministry.”



Those words were spoken to me during my interview. Empty words with no meaning. Sure, that sounded cool, because yes, I know CFS is Christian based,

that’s why I applied. But this is a job I’m applying for, not a pulpit minister job. I had no idea what Jerry meant by “CFS is a ministry.”

It didn’t take long to learn just what Jerry had meant. I first noticed in the way I was treated as an employee and witnessed how other employees were treated: with compassion and understanding. I felt like my first few months I just kept getting some sort of bug and missed a day here and there. I didn’t have to explain or get a doctor’s note, and I wasn’t let go even though it was during that “90 day trial window” most employers have. I was simply told, “to feel better soon.”

I learned more of what being a ministry was about during my training when I witnessed how Jerry treated women with unplanned pregnancies with nothing but love, respect and compassion. Regardless of their background or circumstances, everyone was treated the same way. We pay for groceries, housing, food and

bills. Even more unique, this same love, respect and compassion is shown to the women we work with who decide last minute to parent. They are supported and loved, and we strive to keep in touch with them just like we would have if they had placed. They aren’t asked to pay us back. Working with birth moms, I’ve

The longer I’m here, the more meaning “CFS is a ministry” continues to have ... The love and respect we have for our adoptive families is very real.

learned exactly what it means to be part of a ministry, and I absolutely love it. The longer I’m here, the more meaning “CFS is a ministry” continues to have. We also strive to be a ministry to our adoptive families. I’ve learned one way we do that is charging on a sliding scale, striving to keep costs as low as possible and not passing on birth mom expenses like other agencies do. But it’s more than that. The love and respect we have for our adoptive families is very real. We want the best for them, and strive to be “more than an agency” throughout their adoption process. Whether it be answering a question, rescheduling homestudy visits, a listening ear to vent to, celebrating with them as they become parents or holding them as they cry after they were so close to being parents, only to experience a (for lack of better phrase) “failed adoption.” Yes, CFS is a ministry.

Now, over 2 years later, I’m relearning how seriously CFS lives out our mission. At the end of September 2019, I was

diagnosed with Breast Cancer. I was only 26, so to say I was shocked is an understatement. I was terrified for several reasons. However, I was made aware the one thing I didn’t need to be afraid of was losing my job, my health insurance, or any sort of pay. In fact, it was around the same time a new health insurance plan needed to be chosen, and Jerry combed through them all to make sure I would be covered without overwhelming co-payment costs. Having completed all 8 chemo treatments, with at least 2 surgeries in the very near future, Jerry has stuck to his word. I’m home more than I’m at work, have worked maybe 4-5 full days in the past 4 months, and am usually told “not to overdue it” and sent home early before I even need to ask to take off after a half-day. My coworkers pray for me daily, and have spread the word so I can have more people praying.

[Continued on page 2](#)



WINTER 2020



Continued from page 1

I'm so blessed and thankful to work for CFS: a job where employees, adoptive families, and birth moms are treated like family, a job where I'm not made to feel guilty for being sick and missing work.

Christian Family Services truly embodies the spirit of Christ, like all Christians are called to do. CFS is a worthy ministry, in every sense of the word, to donate to. We strive to help as many women as possible. Please consider helping us help them.

Thank you.

A Legacy of CFS Blessings

Rick Linn

Debra and I know the frustration of longing to have a child but being unable to conceive, compounded by the knowledge that all around us in the world people make the choice to terminate their pregnancies seemingly without regard for the precious gift that they have been given.



Melissa Linn, a CFS baby, poses for a photo with mom, Debra, & dad, Rick



Melissa Linn Jones with her CFS baby Zachary

We thank God for mothers who choose to give their children life in adoptive families and for agencies that facilitate the process. Thirty-four years ago, Christian Family Services served God's will to answer our prayers by placing a precious baby girl in our family.

So many blessings have flowed from our daughter, Melissa, not only in the process of raising her, but now in adulthood as we continue to share so many things in common – our faith in and love of God first, a love of children and now a heart for adoption.

God blessed her and her husband, Jason, with the adoption of their second son, Zachary, through Christian Family Services. By choosing to adopt, Melissa has placed a huge stamp of approval on her own adoption.

How comforting to know that she appreciates and endorses our decision to adopt her. How ironic that she would end up adopting a child through the same agency through which she was adopted? Life has come full circle.

"The Lord has remembered." That is the meaning of our grandson's name. Yes, He has remembered our prayers and answered graciously. And we remember that Zachary is a precious gift and nothing, not even life itself, should be taken for granted. We pray that God will bless him with the same appreciation of his own divine blessings and a desire to give in return. May the cycle repeat.



Bubby boys! Dad, Jason, with his sons, Ben & Zachary



Jerry poses with Chris Rose, center, and one of his fellow lodge members, who collected donations to support the ministry of CFS.

Making a Difference

CFS is blessed with support from several avenues: Churches, grants and individual donors. Usually new donors come from within churches who know about the ministry of CFS. One day, a new donor began [online giving](#). When CFS staff contacted him to discover where he had learned of the ministry, Chris Rose said he had found [CFS online](#). Chris, like many pro life individuals, wanted to make a difference. Chris chose to support giving the option of adoption to a woman with an unplanned pregnancy and garnered much support from friends and colleagues

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.

YEAR IN REVIEW 2019



Iylah



Graham



Blayze



Zachary



Roam



Naomi



Faith



Judah



Cole



CFS baby boy

IN 2019...



12 families
received a placement



10 babies
placed through CFS



1 stillborn (eternal placement)



27 average age of Birth Mothers



50% of CFS Birth Mothers had other Children



40% of CFS Birth Mothers had significant financial need



62% Birth Mothers full or part time employed



2 Safe Haven babies

2019 FINALIZATIONS

Galen & Larnni with Lylah



Justin & Holly with Judah



Zeke & Sunshine with Elli



Sean & Jen with Roam



James & Beth with Naomi



Jeremy & Nikki with Blayze



Jason & Melissa with Zachary



Family of Placements in 2019

1. Lylah officially became the 2nd daughter of Galen and Larnni and little sister of Tess 4/10/19.
2. Justin and Holly were all smiles when Judah officially received their last name. 5/15/19
3. Elli joins parents Zeke and Sunshine for a photo outside the courthouse after finalization. 5/15/19
4. Sean & Jen become proud parents for the 4th time welcoming Roam with siblings Major, Addyx and Beckett. 6/19/19
5. With sparkling eyes, Naomi poses with parents James & Beth & siblings Abby and Julius. 9/23/19
6. Blayze beams with parents Jeremy and Nikki & brother Ryland, final on 10/21/19
7. Zachary and big brother, Ben, sport a great smile with parents Jason & Melissa, final on 11/7/19

Give to Christian Family Services

through any of these convenient giving platforms



- As a 501 (c) (3) organization, giving to Christian Family Services is **tax deductible**.
- Did you know donors have several other **options** to donate to the ministry? Check with your Financial Advisor or Tax Preparer and consider if the following options would benefit you and your gifting practices:
 - If you are **70%** or older and have an IRA, you can transfer up to \$100,000 per year to qualified charities.
 - If you hold stocks, evaluate them to determine if giving it to charity may be a **greater tax benefit** than giving cash.

•Become a monthly donor. Set up bill pay at your bank, use [PayPal](#), or use the enclosed reminder card and envelope.

•**Become a Legacy** by naming Heartbeat International in you will or life insurance

CHRISTIANFAMILYSERVICES.COM/SUPPORT-OUR-ADOPTION-MINISTRY/#DONATE

In Honor of

Kent & Becky Brand

Jim & Debbie Mackey

Brunson Family

Don & Donna Brooker

CFS Caseworkers

Ed & Jo Murphy

Gabby and Sierra

Hill & Cherri Raines

Retha Hatcher

Jannett Frison

Kathy Miller

Lilian Estelle Luter

Edna Reavis

Tom & Jo Brown

Charles & Elaine Reavis

Dr Russell J Snyder

Robin Chambers

The Greatest Warmth from the coldest days

Birth Mother Testimonials



"I want everyone to know my rights to be a mom and the options I have chosen since from the beginning of my pregnancy...This is my decision for my daughter because I don't want to say I'm not capable of being a mom. Yes, I made a mistake, but my daughter is a blessing to me.

I'm not doing the adoption just to give her up, but to give her a better future. This is what I'm looking forward to. Its hard for me, but nobody's in this with me but me, and that's what I've decided from the beginning.

I ask God for forgiveness everyday. It's not that I don't care about her by giving her up for adoption, I really care about her future."

❄️ A CFS birth mom

"I'm doing it because I feel like its better for him. So that he can be in a two-parent environment, with a solid foundation, people around him and a good influence in his life...I know I'd be an excellent mom, but we'd just struggle. I don't want that for him...I want better for him."

❄️ CFS birth mom, C

In Memory of

Clyde Anderson

Daniel & Rebecca Wharton

Rick Allen

Linda Allen

Jan Berryman

Bob & Fran Poppell

Frank Bogle

Don & Joyce Price

Willis Booth

Bob & Fran Poppell

Rick Brannan

Bob & Fran Poppell

Kenny Coleman

Bill & Mary Freeman

Evelyn Florence

Tom & Jo Brown

Wally & Lee Rich

Carl & Melissa Vinson

Nina Hawk

Don & Joyce Price

Stephen Izard

Cliffard & Carol Brown

Rom & Robin Kellis

D & N Lockney

Carl & Annie Ruth Jacobsen

Linda Jacobsen

Margret & Ira Mackey

Jim & Debbie Mackey

Joel McKnight

Robert & Susan McKnight

Mytrice Poppell

Bob & Fran Poppell

Ann Putnal

Bob & Fran Poppell

Jenny McMillan-Guiterez

Kirk & Sherry McMillan

Christine Rabon

Tom & Jo Brown

Mary Ellen Callens

Ella Jean Rispress

Zimmie L. Harris

Edith Robinson

Don & Donna Brooker

Dee Simmons

Dave & Chris Dillard

Michael Thomas

Linda Case

Heather Turney

Linda Jacobsen

Herb Williams

Robert & Susan McKnight

Sharron Williams

Bob & Fran Poppell

Ouida Yates

Mary Ellen Callens

CELEBRATING OUR MOST RECENT PLACEMENTS OF 2019!



Omoni & Gloria looking forward to a new life with baby Faith, placed September 19, 2019



Steven & Kimberly proudly welcome Cole into their lives, placed November 18, 2019

Extended Family

Christian Family Services believes in family!

For CFS, family doesn't stop when we place a child from the heart of the birth mother, and often the birth father, into the loving arms of the adoptive parents; we believe in family for the duration.

At CFS, we are family which makes helping your families a natural extension of ourselves. CFS is the continual link of communication between many adoptive families and birth families. With other placements, CFS fields many search and reunion requests near an adoptees 18th birthday.

One recent request for communication from a Birth Father to his now 18 year old birth son

shows CFS' commitment to continue to assist families of all ages. This Birth Father asked CFS staff if we continued to help birth families communicate with their birth children once they became adults. When we answered "yes" he said, **"Thank you, thank you for all you do for families."**

When the call concluded, Donna Brooker, Ministry Assistant, had this to say, "I wish I could reflect the happiness/relief he expressed to me in his voice. **SO SWEET!**"

Grown, but Still Their Babies

To date, CFS has placed 510 babies for adoption.



They don't stay little forever, as Leah, a CFS (adoptive) mom, recently reminded us with photos of two of her children! Last December, Evan graduated from Army basic training while Kayla graduated from the University

of West Florida. Congratulations on achieving these milestones!



Staff

Jerry D. Callens, Exec. Director & Case Worker
Debbie Callens, Case Worker
Jasmine Pierce, Case Worker
John & Charlotte JeBailey and their children, Foster Family

Donna L. Brooker, Ministry Assistant
Becky Barclift, Bookkeeper
Karen Chamusco, Graphic Design Intern

Board of Directors

Jimmie Brunson
Fran Poppell
Rick Worley
Jackie Collins
Don Price

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



CHRISTIANFAMILYSERVICES.COM

info@cfsfl.org



Continue to make New Beginnings

through the ministry of CFS

- 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:

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

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

My One Time Gift Today: \$



CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES



CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES