

CHRISTIAN FAMILY SERVICES FAMILY TIMES



VOLUME XLVI ISSUE I

SPRING 2024



THIS YEARS BEEN HOPPING



First a girl, then a boy. Then, a second girl and another boy-born within 18 hours of each other.

YOU made sure that CFS was ready to receive a baby whose birth mom chose adoption via Florida's Safe Haven Law. The baby was born drug dependent. The newborn remained in NICU as her little body was weaned off the drugs in her system. Her forever family arrived to be with her, to love her and eventually to take her home. Baby one of 2024!

Then, there was a boy. YOU make sure CFS is available to people caught between two generations-or guide them to other sources for help. Close kin, usually grandparents, contact CFS concerned about how they can become legal guardians for a loved one. CFS staff continued to answer questions from a grandparent until a decision was made, and placement two occurred.

Days continued as usual at CFS. Jerry and Kim met with birth moms, birth dads and adoptive families. I continued to process paperwork and Becky continued to keep the CFS books in order.



At the same time, in another city in Florida, a granddaughter told her grandmother of her unplanned pregnancy. Together, they visited a local pregnancy center. The expectant mom wanted adoption for her unborn child. The pregnancy center suggested speaking with CFS. This mom made an appointment to meet with CFS the following week. However, the baby arrived earlier than expected! The Pregnancy Center adoption specialist kept Jerry and Kim informed about mom's delivery. Jerry and Kim re-scheduled their prior commitments of the day and were able to be with this new mom and her extended family to discuss adoption for her newborn.

The same day, a mom Jerry had been working with for several months thought she was in labor. With an earlier pregnancy, she had a quick delivery, so she was concerned that history would repeat itself. She had been turned away by the hospital two times that week (this is not a slight to any hospital; I can't go into further details of pre-childbirth in this account). Jerry was aware the heavily expectant mom was in a lot of pain. He took her to the hospital where, again, she was unable to be admitted. Jerry took her to her home, only to then call an ambulance to pick her up. Her son arrived later that evening and the adoptive family were with mom and child at the hospital.

At the end of that day, Jerry was with the mom and an adoptive family at one hospital while Kim was with the mom who had delivered her child earlier than expected. The new mom, together with her dad and grandmother, reviewed adoptive family profile books with Kim. The following day,



this extended birth family met with the chosen and selected adoptive parents.

A couple days later, Jerry, Kim and I returned to the city where both mom's were waiting to be discharged from their respective hospitals. Two placements, the same day, the same city, but two different hospitals. Placements three and four of 2024.

In these last two placements, birth mothers were able to meet the adoptive parents. This establishes a meaningful connection of family for the child.

YOU made it possible for Jerry and Kim to be available to both women who made adoption plans for their child. YOU gave women Christian Families to choose from to raise their daughter or their son. YOU provided a father to the fatherless. James 1:27. WE thank YOU.

Donna Brooker



SPRING 2024

PLACEMENTS



Cali Jean
1.31.24



Kaden
2.1.24



Lucia Jane
2.11.24



Micaiah Noble
2.11.24

DECEMBER-FEBRUARY
2023-2024

HONOR TO:

- Jim & Barbara Brunson**
Laura Hall
- Addison Clark Ellis**
Ashley Sherlock
- Emma Edwards**
*Love, Dad & Mom
(Greg & Donna Edwards)*
- Fran Poppell**
Jackie Collins
- Joseph & Jennifer Salisbury**
Thayer & Cheryl Salisbury
- Barbara Brunson**
Carolyn Harrell
- Kay Martin**
Carolyn Harrell
- Jeanie Shaw**
Carolyn Harrell

A TESTIMONY OF LOVE

I want to express how much the CFS organization means to us. When we were at the start of our adoption journey, lost and trying to find the path God was laying out for us, you were there with open arms. You all made it a seamless process and made the waiting seem less painful. We knew immediately we could look to you for guidance, prayer and support. Every anxious thought, you calmed. Every question, you answered. We know without doubt you are lead by the spirit of God and doers of His work. Through our waiting and eventually our miracle, you became family!

Fast forward (very fast) from when we held our miracle for the first time, we celebrate daily the answered promise from Heaven. Judah is almost 5 now and we tell him about the people who helped us find him. The people in photos who held him and loved on him he doesn't see often. You are part of his story... our story...and always will be!

Love,
Holly, Justin & Judah



Malachi's mom made sure he was ready to enjoy his time outside.

I want to find someone that will take care of this baby in ways that I cannot in my present situation.

-Quote from Birth Mother



A YEAR IN REVIEW 2023

2023 FINALIZATIONS



ENSLEY GRACELYNN 5/9/23
Chase & Lauren

Chase, Lauren and big Brother Grayson officially welcomed Ensley Gracelynn to their family on 5.9.23.



MARZELL MALACHI 5/23/23
Jesse & Jenna

Jesse & Jenna are a family of three after Marzell Malachi's day in court 5.23.23.



NOAH JAMES 5/23/23
John & Stephanie

John & Stephanie and son Jack now share their last name with Noah James 5.23.23



EMMA GRACE 5/23/23
Ryan & Callie

Ryan & Callie added daughter Emma Grace on 5.23.23, making Will a big brother.



ANNABELL GRACE 6/13/23
Keith & Elizabeth

After meeting the judge in court on 6.13.23, Annabell Grace officially became the daughter of Keith & Elizabeth.



MAVERICK RENE 6/13/23
Samuel & Racheal

Samuel & Racheal waited patiently for son Maverick Rene's court date-his adoption was finally finalized 6.13.23!



2023 PLACEMENTS



NOAH JAMES
2/10/23



EMMA GRACE
2/10/23



ANNABELL GRACE
3/17/23



BABY BOY
5/23



MARZELL
MALACHI
2/9/23

IN 2023...

- 10 CFS Families received a placement,
- 4 CFS Families received other agency placements (Not Shown Here)
- 29 Average Age of Birth Mothers who placed
- 38 Average Age of Birth Fathers who placed
- 78% Of CFS Birth Mothers had other children
- 78% Of CFS Birth Mothers had significant financial need
- 44.5% Were Employed
- 44.5% Were Unemployed
- 11% Student



MELODY HOPE
7/31/23



ENSLEY
GRACELYNN
1/15/23



NAVY GAIL
12/2/23



CAMDEN EDWARD
11/12/23



HARLEY GRACE
10/09/23



MONEY, TEENS, & LIFE

CFS, in an effort to be more proactive, is now sponsoring financial curriculum in two high schools in the city, predominately in East Gainesville (Gainesville HS and Eastside HS). This curriculum has a proven track record of imparting "Foundations in Personal Finance," which leads to better decision making and self-discipline. Following graduation, many students come back and share how they have successfully applied the principles they learned. The sooner young people can learn this the better choices they can make regarding money and debt. Our prayer is that this may also equip them for other aspects of their life involving "counting the cost" and "self-discipline." Many of the clients we work with have never learned these principles and as a ministry, our hope is that it will be one more way to keep many from needing our services in the future. (The curriculum is produced by the Dave Ramsey Education Team.)

What students are saying about this curriculum:

"I used to believe that you had to borrow, now I know better, you make a choice to borrow."
— Caleb, Foundations student

"This class helped me stop only thinking about the present but to start thinking and planning for the future that I want."
— Foundations student

"This class might not have been the most exciting class of mine, but one thing I can say is that I have learned more in this semester than I have in all my years of being in school."
— Miles, Foundations student



OTHER WAYS TO DONATE TO CFS...



YOU WILL BE MISSED

As Jerry ministered to the two moms mentioned on page 1 he was receiving updates on his mom, who was under Hospice care in Mississippi. Following a full second day with the moms and adoptive families at their respective hospitals, he received a call from his brother that Mary Ellen Callens had passed. Jerry was able to officiate her service on 2/16/2024.



Mary Ellen Callens
November 5th 1937-February 10th 2024

DECEMBER- FEBRUARY
2023-2024

IN MEMORY OF

Cheri Bartlett

Linda Case

Mary Ellen Callens

Mark & Sue Apple
Don & Donna Brooker
John & Eva Ford

Kenny Coleman

Bill & Mary Freeman

Nick Dotson

Linda Case

Myron Edwards

Linda Case

Carl & Annie Ruth Jacobsen

Linda Jacobsen

Joe Jacobsen

Linda Jacobsen

Mindy Knuckles

Carolyn Harrell

George Fletcher

Larry & Faye Jonas

Tom Filipiak

Linda Case

Leroy Frison

Jannett Frison

Daisy Martin

Don & Donna Brooker

Janice Parent

Linda Case

Dave Parks

Linda Case

Robert "Bob" Poppell

Don & Donna Brooker
Linda Jacobsen
Gary Evan Williams
Laurie Smyly
Theresa Hollingsworth
Jerry & Debbie Callens

Barbara & Michael O'Rourke

Linda Case

Bob Spainhower

Joan Spainhower

Heather Turney

Linda Jacobsen

Mel Underwood

Linda Case

Melissa Vinson

Jerry & Debbie Callens

SPRING 2024



TALENTS OF DONORS

The ministry of CFS is only possible because of donors like YOU! Did you know that three authors have provided financial donations to CFS from sales of their books?

Lanelle Waters (1937-2020) authored several books and Bible lessons. Beginning in 2012, half of the proceeds from her book "The One Another Way" were given to CFS.

Faye Lamb writes emotionally charged stories with a Romans 8:28 attitude, reminding readers that God is always in the details. Faye donates 100% of her royalties to Christian charities.

Leigh Lincoln's inspirational, edgy Christian novels will lead you on a heartfelt journey as you follow each character along life's broken road. Her newest series leads readers through a journey based on adoption.

Craft Talents

Pat Curry enjoys making baby bibs, receiving blankets and burp cloths but did not know who might need them. Jackie Collins, a CFS Board member, let Pat know about the ministry to moms, babies and adoptive families.

Thank you to ALL donors for gifts you give from your talents to CFS.



[Click the books to view the authors and their works](#)



Dear CFS Family,
Thankful does not even begin to describe how we feel. Working with CFS has been an absolute pleasure and joy. Thank you for helping us become parents to our sweet boy, Malachi. You will always be such a special part of our answered prayer!
LOVE,
Jesse+Jenna

Navy is safe at home with us. Our heart is so full. Miranda and I can't thank you all enough for everything you do for families like us.

-Justin, CFS Dad

Staff

Jerry D. Callens, Exec. Director & Caseworker
Donna L. Brooker, Ministry Assistant
Kim Tang, Caseworker
Becky Barclift, Bookkeeper
Katy Horton, Social Media & Graphic Design
John & Charlotte JeBailey, Cradle Care
Dan & Tess Hunting, Cradle Care

Board of Directors

Jimmie Brunson
Jackie Collins
Sherri Daume
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