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Newsletter / December 2011

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Prayer Requests

- We encourage you to pray fervently for the children of the world who are waiting for their families to find them.
- Pray for the adopted children and their families, particularly as they go through the sometimes-painful process of getting to know each other and becoming a family.
- Pray for The Shepherd's Crook Ministries: that God would bless us financially and allow us to continue doing this important work in His name

From the Director

It's Christmas time. I really love Christmas. I love it for many reasons. I love Christmas because of the special feeling that seems to hang in the air. I love it because it is a celebration of the ultimate gift given to us by God, incomparable in its beneficence and scope. I love it because of the Christmas songs that are so familiar and so comfortable—though I wish we could at least get into the month of December before being bombarded by them. I love it because of the wonder and excitement reflected in the eyes of my children. And I love Christmas because it is the story of an orphan child with a mission and a legacy.

Jesus was born into this world without an earthly father. He was raised by Joseph as his own, and though we don't know whether any legal documents were executed, we have every reason to believe that Joseph adopted him as his own son and heir according to the standards and practices of that day. If you think about it, it's actually pretty cool that the Savior of the world was raised as the product of adoption. Whereas we are all adopted spiritually into God's family, God the Son was adopted temporally into a man's family. We all know the theology behind this, but the practical aspects are pretty interesting, too.

The Shepherd's Crook exists with a twofold focus: (1) we strive to bring glory to God deliberately and intentionally; and (2) we strive to help special-needs orphans in a variety of ways, and especially through helping to find adoptive families for as many as possible. It is poignant, at least to me, that both of these themes are included in the incarnation of Christ. His reason for coming—His very mission among us—was to glorify God and to do His work. And had Joseph not adopted Him, he would have been considered an orphan by the society He was born into; instead, He was adopted into a family.

As we all celebrate this Christmas season, I challenge you, as I challenge myself, to keep in mind the reason we celebrate Christmas, as the fulfillment of God's redemptive plan for mankind. And I also challenge you to keep in mind that this very special adopted "orphan," Jesus Christ our Lord, has called on us to minister to His special ones in His name, and to spend ourselves on behalf of the poor and needy. (Isaiah 58:10)

In closing, we at The Shepherd's Crook Ministries want to thank all of you for your support, both in prayer and financially, during 2011. We could not do this work without you, and you have blessed all of us with your faithfulness and generosity. We are all looking forward to seeing what God will do in and through TSC in 2012.

Soli Deo gloria!



Spotlight: China Listings

The requirements for listing children from China have changed dramatically over the last few years, and especially over the last several months. Many of our agencies are still trying to sort out what the most recent changes mean to the way these children can be listed, both on their own websites and on third-party sites such as TSC's. In most instances we are not allowed to post photos of the waiting children, we are not allowed to indicate the actual country the child is from, and as of very recently, we are in some cases not allowed to indicate the child's special need. Our China listings are included under East Asia on our website because of these restrictions.

All of these restrictions make it more difficult for a family to determine whether or not they might be interested in pursuing the adoption of any given child, or even whether or not they might need to request additional information. We are permitted to provide additional information upon inquiry, but not until asked specifically. Please bear in mind, as you look at the list of children on our East Asia page, that each and every one of them is a real child, created in God's image and needing a family. Pray for these children, as we do, and pray that God would lead you as you seek guidance in choosing a child to adopt, or in asking for additional information about waiting children.

Completed Adoptions

The following children have come home to their adoptive families since TSC began in 2000. We include them as representatives of all of the children who have come home. Their faces provide just a glimpse into how significantly these lives are changed, as the children transition from the hopelessness and aloneness they once knew, to the comfort and security that come from belonging to a family. Thank you for helping us make these dreams realities, both for the adopted children and for their families.



Adam,
in Uganda



Adam, at home in
Alberta (Canada)



Ali,
in China



Ali, at home
in Ohio



Jeane,
in Uganda



Jeane, at home in
Alberta (Canada)

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