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Prayer Requests

- Pray for our newly revived Orphan Supplies Project.
- 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

Recently, an American family traveled to Ghana, Africa, to complete the adoption of a sibling group of four children. Their story is a sobering reminder that the world of international adoption is not necessarily a safe one.

Sol and Christine Moghadam began their adoption journey in answer to God's call on their lives. They both knew, even before they were married, that they were being led by God to adopt. The Moghadams have been married for ten years and have two biological children, both boys. In December, 2011, they initiated the process to adopt a sibling group of four—two boys and two girls, ranging in age from two to thirteen—from Ghana, in West Africa. The process completed rather quickly, and in June, 2012, Sol and Christine traveled with their two children to pick up and complete the adoption in Ghana. On Friday, June 22, the entire family, including the four adopted children, was about to board an in-country flight at the Kotoka International Airport in Accra, when they were detained by authorities. An anonymous tip to the police alleged that the Americans were engaged in child trafficking and were attempting to leave with four abducted African children.

"I can tell you that we are investigating a couple who arrived at the airport with six children—four blacks and two whites—which aroused the suspicion of security officers at the airport who stopped them from traveling," Comfort Miah, an official with the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit of the Ghanaian police, told The Associated Press. "They say the children were adopted and we are investigating to find out if this has been properly granted by a court of proper jurisdiction."^[i]

The four African children were returned to their orphanage; Christine and Sol were taken to a detention center; and their two biological children were placed in protective custody. The Moghadams had papers which demonstrated that they had been given legal guardianship of the four children—in accordance with adoption procedures in Ghana—but their papers were not sufficient to prevent their arrest.

"The couple had documentation, but we have had cases where such documentation is fraudulent, so we are having it verified," said Frank Kwofie, director of operations for the police's criminal investigations department.^[ii]

Pause with me for a moment to consider what I just sketched so briefly. This young American family had fulfilled a dream of over a year in the making: they were traveling together to experience the culture and people of the homeland of their new children, and their trip was to culminate in the successful adoption of four new family members. Suddenly, their dream turned into a nightmare. They were approached by police at the airport and accused of kidnapping four African children. They were separated from their newly adopted children *and* their two biological children—who were only seven and three years old. They were taken into police custody and delivered to a Ghanaian detention center for incarceration. They were not even allowed to call the American embassy. The fear and panic must have been overwhelming. I can't even imagine it.

After spending the weekend in custody, the Moghadams were finally reunited with their children on Monday and were immediately free to leave the country, though they could not bring home their newly adopted children until U.S. immigrant visas could be obtained for them. (According to the U.S. Department of State, this can take as long as six months following the completion of the adoption in Ghana.) As of July 7, Christine's blog indicates that the four adopted children have not yet received those visas and so are still waiting to come home.

This harrowing experience punctuates several important points. First, God is in control. Period. The Bible tells us that nothing can happen in all of creation that is outside of God's wise and loving control. Though we may not see all of His purposes nor understand the wisdom in any particular situation, we are assured that His plans are always directed toward His glory and our good.

Second, rescuing children from their hopeless situations can be risky business. Satan will fight to derail our efforts and, if possible, bring dishonor to God's name, specifically because the work of adopting needy children is (or can be) so God-honoring. We will rarely have to deal with potential arrest or detainment, but there will often be uncomfortable questions, disapproving looks, and rude or inconsiderate interactions with locals and even officials.

And third, this work is worthwhile, because it does bring honor to God and it does minister to the needy, as we have been commanded to do. James 1:27 tells us that God is pleased with our religion, our attempts to know Him and honor Him, when, in His name, we minister to the poor and needy in tangible ways. As the parents of fourteen adopted children, I can tell you that rescuing children from lives of hopelessness is some of the most satisfying and rewarding work we can do as disciples of Christ—which is not justification or the basis for doing the work, but rather the benefit conferred on us by the One who calls us to do it. May we all be found as faithful and steadfast as the Moghadams have proved themselves during their ordeal. And may we all pray fervently, both for the waiting children all over the world and for all of the families working so hard to bring their children home.

Soli Deo gloria!

^[i] *Sol And Christine Moghadam, U.S. Parents Detained In Ghana For Trying To Adopt*, Francis Kokutse and Rukmini Callimachi / HuffPost Social Reading / 06/26/12 07:54 PM ET

^[ii] Ibid.

Spotlight: International Adoption

By Greg Godwin, Administrative Assistant

Several times in the past, I've used this space to focus on a particular country that some of the waiting children on our site are from. This month I want to do something similar, but a bit broader in scope.

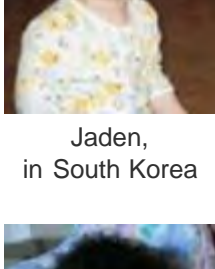
When people think of international adoption, it seems that China, Russia, South Korea, and Ethiopia spring to mind first. When we meet new people and they discover that we work with a ministry involved in international adoption, it is not at all uncommon for them to respond with a comment like, "Oh, my sister adopted from China," or, "Yeah, my friends have a little girl from Russia." The fact that these four countries are the most familiar to people is not that surprising, for if you look at [adoption statistics](#), you'll see that for several years in a row now, these four countries have been in the top five each year. In fact, for nine of the past ten years, these four countries together have accounted for more than half of the children adopted to the U.S. We are very glad that so many of the orphans from these countries are being adopted, but I want to point out how easy it can be to overlook the waiting children in other parts of the world.

A lot of the inquiries that come through TSC's website are regarding children from these countries, especially China and Ethiopia. (On our website, these are included in the regions of [East Asia](#) and [East Africa](#), respectively.) Given that and the general impressions that people have regarding international adoption, we don't have to work too hard to draw attention to those lists of waiting children. So, I want to focus on the regions that are not quite so popular. When you go to our waiting child page, you'll notice that there are more than four regions listed. We'd love to see some more adoptions of children from places like [Pacific Asia](#), the [Caribbean](#) (especially following the earthquake in Haiti in early 2010), and the various European regions. How many of you have friends or family who have adopted from Georgia or Ecuador, for example? Probably not very many. People usually don't seem to come to our site specifically to see how many children we have waiting in Latvia the way that they might check specifically for children in China. Consequently, we don't see very many people inquiring about these children, let alone committing to adopt them. I recognize that the issue is a complicated one, and it would be an oversimplification to assume that the only reason we don't get many inquiries about children in these countries is that people forget about them. The process in many of these countries is difficult and frightening. China has one of the most predictable adoption processes of any of the countries we work with. Ethiopia and Korea require very short trips. These things appeal to many adoptive parents, and in some cases, make the adoption possible for them. Many South American programs require extended stays, sometimes as long as two months. Many of the European countries will not guarantee a child to a family until after they have traveled at least once and often two or three times. That makes it possible for a family to reach the very end of the adoption process only to lose their child. We recognize that these are obstacles that make it more difficult for people to adopt children from some of these regions. Even with all these additional challenges, adoption from these other countries is just as rewarding and exciting as it is from any of the more well-known and familiar countries. The truth is, though, that there is some degree of unpredictability and uncertainty in any adoption process. God tends to use this process to increase our trust in Him, and He often uses such uncertainty and difficulties to move us to deeper trust and obedience.

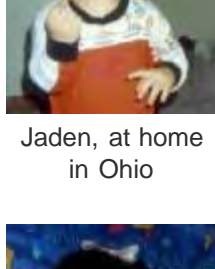
It is our hope and desire to continue bringing these forgotten children to people's attention so that those who are able to pursue their adoptions will do so. It would be great to see these children find homes, not only for the benefit of the child being adopted, but also for the other orphans in that country. Ideally, we'd love to see the numbers for every country increase. Our dream is that some day the numbers of children adopted from these less-known regions might be as high as China and Ethiopia currently are. The next time you visit TSC's website, check out some of the children who are waiting in some of these more obscure regions. When you think about adoption and talk about it with others, remember that there are orphans in every country of the world.

Completed Adoptions

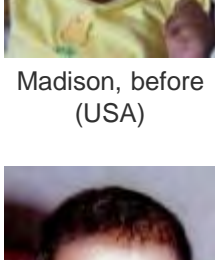
The following children have come home to their adoptive families since TSC began in 2000. We include them as representatives of all of the children who have come home. Their faces provide just a glimpse into how significantly these lives are changed, as the children transition from the hopelessness and 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.



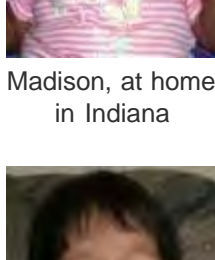
Jaden,
in South Korea



Jaden, at home
in Ohio



Madison, before
(USA)



Madison, at home
in Indiana



Sarah,
in China



Sarah, at home
in Montana