



Orphan Care Ministry

Isaiah 1:16-17

¹⁶ Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your deeds from before my eyes; cease to do evil,
¹⁷ learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the **fatherless**, plead the widow's cause.



Fall 2015

Upcoming Events

[3 rd Sunday of the month]	Orphan Care Support Group 5 Sherwood Drive, Oswego from 2:00-4:00PM
[Oct 11th]	Safe Families Information Meeting Starting at 12:30PM
[Nov 7th]	Prayer mtg at the Conley's 1040 Canham St., Plano starting at 6:30PM
[Nov 8th]	On Orphan Sunday, Christians stand for the orphan!
[Nov 11th]	Envelope care packages for Uganda Sponsored kids. & Shoe box care packages for Operation Christmas Child

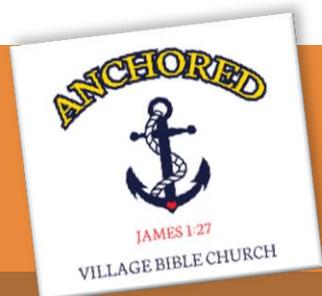
Willing Abandon

By Darnell Duncan - "And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies." Romans 8:23

Reflecting on Romans 8:23, I admit that I don't "groan inwardly" and "wait eagerly" for my adoption into God's family and my redemption as I should. However, the adoption of our daughter has brought new meaning to these words. In the book *Willing to Abandon* by Jennie Allen, the author talks about being willing to abandon this life in order to yield to God's will for us. A wave of emotion came over me while studying 'abandon'. When we were preparing to adopt our daughter, abandon was at the forefront of our training. However, abandon in the adoption world isn't a choice we make as in the context of the book but rather the result of pain and tragedy.

Abandon: to leave completely and finally; forsake utterly

I was heartbroken reflecting on my daughter's abandonment...left completely and finally, forsaken utterly. Yet I was incredibly blessed to see God's redemption in her life...NOT left completely and finally, NEVER forsaken. Praise God!! Turning my attention back to the context of the book, I realized how desperately I wanted to abandon my ways so that I can experience His will. Through the life of my baby girl, I saw that abandonment had to happen in order for His redemption plan to be made complete...placing her in our family. I will miss His redemptive work if I don't abandon my ways. In abandonment there is pain, but adoption can bring joy and redemption. What an amazing promise God has made..."I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5) I don't want to miss seeing His promise played out because of my reluctance to abandon my will.



Other thoughts...

"Lord, on the days where helping just one more person seems like too much, help me to choose you. On the days when Satan whispers 'You can't save everyone, why are you trying?' let me choose you." - Katie J. Davis



Partner

It takes Village Bible Church to raise a child!

There are many ways YOU can partner with others in caring for orphans...



LISA O'BRIEN

It's a life-changing six months. Intensive Bible classes. Living with people from different backgrounds. Ministry outreaches around the country. ABIDE (Amagara Bible Institute of Discipleship and Evangelism) is one of Juna Amagara's programs in Uganda. High school graduates choose to give up time that their friends are using to earn money for university, in order to be transformed in Christian faith, character, and leadership. Many of our students are orphans, with few opportunities available for them. But when they join the ABIDE family, they are changed forever to make a difference for God's kingdom, wherever He takes them. Would you be willing to provide a scholarship for a student? It costs ABIDE about \$600 per student to cover expenses from January to July. If God moves you to get involved with a one-time gift, or monthly support, we will be grateful. Email Lisa O'Brien at golisaobrien@gmail.com for more information. Or go directly to Juna Amagara Ministries' website to make a donation to ABIDE at www.amagara.org & click on "Donate Now."

WHY CHILD SPONSORSHIP IS IMPORTANT ~ Eliezer

There is this part of you that may wonder what it looks like to be a

sponsor to one of the children in the other parts of the world. Child sponsorship is the most effective way of changing the children's world. When you sponsor a child, you will join with other sponsors, grants, product donations and other donors to address challenges in poverty stricken communities. The beauty of child sponsorship is that child sponsorship funds are used to drive change at the local and national level, making improvements that benefit everyone in the sponsored child's community and beyond. That's what makes it so important. It's not about providing for the sponsored child but it's about changing the nature of a community for the benefit of everyone. ~ **Eliezer Ahumuza (Socialworker - Uganda)**

SOZO MARKET ~ Despy

God sends missionaries to all the nations to reach, rescue, serve and empower the needy and the broken. Orphans, widows, and victims of human trafficking are given food, shelter, medical attention, and most importantly, the love and freedom found in Jesus Christ. Empowering includes providing resources and education/training to create unique handcrafted goods enabling them to earn a sustainable income. Sozo Market, a retail store in DeKalb, IL, exists to be a channel to get these

handcrafted products to buyers and return profits to the missionaries and the people they serve. These unique products include jewelry, kitchen and home décor, unique and colorful clothing, headbands, and handbags, quilts, Christmas ornaments, baskets, artwork, bath and body products, coffee, tea, baking mixes, and much more. "Sozo" is the Greek word for "rescued, healed, saved."



665 East Lincoln Hwy
Open Wed thru Sat
10AM to 4PM

WILL YOU SPONSOR ONE OF THESE CHILDREN THROUGH JUNA AMAGARA?





Active Partner

Village family actively caring for children through Foster Care, Safe Families, and Mission Trips.

Temporary care for long term gain...

JAMIE AND AMY BENJAMIN

We gladly serve our God and currently are serving within the Safe Family ministry. We have had the privilege of hosting two children so far.

The first child was just what we were looking for – she was polite, well-mannered, funny, and affectionate. Overall, we felt great about ourselves and what we were modeling for our children.

A very bitter, scared and angry child entered our home next. This child opened our eyes to a number of our own sinful imperfections that we really didn't know were there (or at least forgot about. . . .) Sinful blind spots hidden from our plain sight like a snake in the grass waiting to strike at the first sign of stress and weakness. We dealt with hitting, throwing, lying, tantrums, and the like. Our hearts hardened and became cold at times. We agreed that "this is not what we signed up for." We just wanted a little superficial blessing like our first placement. We found ourselves wanting to get back to our comfortable 'Christian' life.

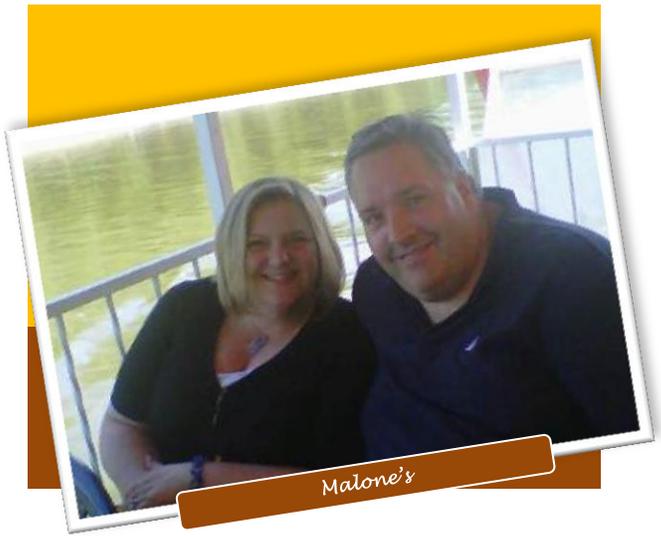
It was so painful to see our sins within us when we allowed Satan to take control of our hearts. We allowed satan to triumph in more than one instance. Thank goodness that we pray to a loving and forgiving God. It was prayer that helped us through the second placement and we certainly needed the Holy Spirit to guide us. God used this opportunity to help a mother and child in a time of need, but for us, He used this opportunity to show us how far we have to go on our walk with the Lord. We learned a very important lesson: we cannot attempt to be the hands and feet of Jesus without God's special favor and grace. Thank you Heavenly Father.

SCOTT ETCHISON

Juna Amagara has always been the "ministry in Uganda" until I was a part of the team that went to minister there this summer for three weeks. Sponsoring a student in Uganda has been a privilege for our family, and then meeting the boy that we sponsor was INCREDIBLE! As a family, we are investing in the eternity of that boy - who means even more to me because now I've held his hand, walked along the road with him, visited his home, met his mother and some of his siblings, and looked into the eyes of a mother who greatly appreciates our investment in the life of her son and family. Without our financial assistance, he might not even be in school. Now he's getting a Christian education, three meals a day, clothing and school supplies, and is a boarding student because of my simple investment in his life.

Beyond that, I was able to meet so many students, and they just loved the attention. I worked with large groups and was a part of some small group discipleship as well that started in Uganda and has continued thanks to Facebook for many of the young men that just don't have a father/father-figure/or someone they can trust to communicate with directly. I have contact with roughly 15 high school age boys, college age men, and adult men on a regular basis because of the relationships that I was able to build in the short time in the country. I was able to catch the vision that Reverend Ben cast before our congregation and see the ministry that Godfrey and Michael and Lisa are building in helping students seek to walk in obedience to Christ; helping to equip them to be disciple makers as Ben, Godfrey, Michael, and Lisa disciple them through Juna Amagara, the HOLD, and the ABIDE ministries.

All of this would not have been a reality if God had not called me to be a part of the team this year, and if my friends had not come alongside the vision of Juna Amagara and financially supported the trip. This was a life-changing experience for me, and I encourage each person reading this to seek God's wisdom to determine if they should be a part of the ministry and how they can participate. It may be writing a check to support someone going, or sponsoring student(s) and making care packages for the student and family, and praying for the spread of the gospel. More importantly we are investing Christ's love in them as we pray for and support the students in these programs. I'll finish with the story of Patrobas, a graduate from the ABIDE program this year. He has returned to his village and is busy building a youth group, ministering to teens to help them get out of or stay out of the lures of this world, preaching the gospel in his church during Sunday services, and called by God to make a difference in his community. I met Patrobas, a shy, quiet young man just out of high school and graduating from ABIDE and he asked me, "Would you disciple me, so that I can grow in the Lord?" There are many people like that who just need someone to invest in them. Romans 10:15 says, "And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!'" Patrobas is preaching. God sent me to go and preach. How is he calling you to come alongside this ministry and partner with the work being done in Uganda?



Forever Partner

Village family providing a forever family through adoption.

We praise God for the provision of family...

THE MALONES

As some of you may know, Darin and I have been on our adoption journey for the past 2 ½ years. At present, we have a precious, beautiful, rambunctious, energetic, mischievous, gregarious, delightful, affectionate 4-yr-old boy who has been living with us since July 4. That's the good news. It's not the only news.

I can sum up the journey so far in three words – everything is more. More confusing. More frustrating. More painful. More everything.

When we started our journey, I thought the hardest thing was going to be choosing the right adoption agency. Once we had that decision made, a highly skilled and gifted (and I might as well add organized) individual would get to know us as a couple and be able to recommend all the right things for us – the right program (domestic vs. international), the right country, the right age group, the right everything. Nothing could have been further from reality.

After much prayer and contemplation, we settled on an agency and decided to pursue a domestic, healthy, newborn. We filled out paperwork. We filled it out again (yes, the same paperwork.) And, in some instances, we filled it out again. I know there are families who have had to fill out far more paperwork than we did! That thought was probably the only thing that kept me sane, as I was signing my name for the 500th time. Others had it worse. I had been warned that we were in for a real roller coaster ride. UNDERSTATEMENT OF THE DECADE. Confusion abounded as rules changed, stories changed, plans changed. Oh, and by the way, we'd need a lawyer, too. (A lawyer, Darin? Did we know we were supposed to retain our own attorney?)

We were appointed temporary guardianship that was set to expire on September 1. We were told there was a "reasonable expectation, though no guarantee" that our adoption could be completed by then. Not. A. Chance. I knew we were in for some frustration, and probably more frustration than I thought there would be. Except there was even MORE than that.

There's also the painful loss. More pain and more loss than I thought there would be. For every sweet hug and kiss I get, for every sleepy morning cuddle, there's someone who's not getting those anymore. For 4 years our son lived with his birth mom. And he doesn't anymore. He has asked me if she misses him, and my heart breaks a little every time.

Then there's the joy. So much joy! MUCH MORE JOY than I ever expected. Joy at hearing him exclaim, "Hey, I live there!" as we pass our subdivision. Joy as he runs through the house at the sound of the garage door opening, yelling, "Da-y's home! Da-y's home!" Joy as I watch him meet yet another cousin, aunt, and uncle and tirelessly ask, "You wanna play [with] me?" God is good. He is the giver of joy. And I am the unworthy recipient of so much of it.

We got our court date today. November 12. NOVEMBER TWELFTH? SERIOUSLY? TWO AND A HALF MORE MONTHS OF THIS? Two and a half more months of waiting, of dealing with social workers whose presence in my life I'm beginning to resent (a little transparency never killed anyone), of waiting to make everything OFFICIAL. To be a real family. November 12. I'm going to need a lot of prayer (more than I thought.)

ADOPTION PROCESS

There are quite a few families currently in the process of adopting. Take a minute to ask these families how their process is going and how you can pray for them.

Jamie & Amy Benjamin: China

Darin & Anne Malone: Domestic

Chris & Jen Mehochko: Domestic

Fred & Sue Spencer: Domestic



References

- www.villagebible.org/orphan-care/
- www.orphansunday.org/
- www.amagara.org
- www.safe-families.org
- missions@villagebible.org