

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

TAKE TWO

About International Adoption Ministry Bethany Christian Services

While the No Child Left Behind education campaign may be a faded memory for many, a different and immediate cry of orphaned children is unified and loud. Today, 163 million children have lost one or both of their parents. To put that number in perspective, according to the World Atlas, 163 million is a little less than the population of Bangladesh, a small country in South Asia. With such an alarming number, it is no surprise that many new orphan cases begin in the Commonwealth of Virginia and some in cities where hundreds of churches, ministries and other faith based community programs operate. To respond to the global orphan crisis one organization, Bethany Christian Services, is creating additional links to form Forever Families for children in need.

Of course helping children in need is not a new concept. In fact, listening to the members of organizations like those of The Virginia Baptist State Convention, Inc. will reveal that they have a great and diverse territory to cover, and that their passion to support and enable organizations that increase services provided to children has been central to their mission. One recent example is The Children's Home project, which the Convention's Executive and Corporate Board continues to tackle in its discussions. At the forefront of these discussions is a desire to provide a safe haven and Christian environment for under served children to dwell, learn, grow and to be loved. Together The VBSC and Bethany Christian Services are addressing a critical need that as Christians everyone is charged with - caring for children.



SINCE 1944 "BETHANY", AS IT IS COMMONLY REFERRED TO, HAS GROWN TO BECOME THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST ADOPTION AGENCY...

and they're making their services better known in Virginia. Not only are they doing God's work domestically, but internationally they've grown a multi-service network which effectively services countries on five continents. "The challenge to answer the orphan crisis exceeds Bethany's ability to face it alone, and most important we're not supposed to. We're reaching out to conventions, various ministries and faith based organizations across the state to combat this epidemic. Our Vision is to see a world where every child is cared for in a loving home", said Mary Beth Bova, Executive Director of Bethany Christian Services, Virginia.

Bethany has offices in Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Fairfax, and they have service locations throughout the entire state to ensure convenient access to expectant moms who wish to consider making an adoption plan, and also families who feel called to adopt. They've partnered with their Tennessee offices to ensure coverage in the south western corner of the state, and they work directly with the Bethany office in the Virginia Beach region as well.

“WE WANT TO PREVENT EVERY SINGLE ABORTION FROM HAPPENING...”



As one might imagine, a likely choice many expectant moms contemplate is abortion. According to Ms. Bova, “We want to prevent every single abortion from happening by helping expectant moms understand just how much they are loved and how many people are ready and willing to help them sort through what is a difficult process. Nearly all of our expectant moms are single, with the majority of pregnancies being unplanned. Ideally we’d like it if all our clients were in a position to care for their children without having to consider an adoption plan, but that’s not always

the case. Many find that they’re simply unprepared for the commitment, especially due to a lack of financial stability and family support, and so the relationships we’ve created with churches and other organizations help spread awareness within families where they may not be able to conceive for whatever reason, or where they feel called to help those in need, both domestically and internationally.”

Bethany Christian Services has a 1-800-Bethany crisis hotline which is manned 24/7 and also its impregnant.org site provides immediate access to information and resources that mothers need. “These two resources allow us to reach out to women in the middle of the night, where ever they are in the midst of their cry. We do this because we know that poor decisions are made in times of desperation and when there is a belief that there is no other answer.” According to Ms. Bova.



Bethany’s Vision responds to the needs of the community in several ways:

We help children in need **-through our global outreach**

We help expectant moms **-through our pregnancy center and resources**

We help families seeking to adopt **-through subsidies via donations from individuals, churches & businesses**

“We firmly stand by the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all that we do. Mark 9:37 tells us that whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me. Our country is protected by borders which protect our sovereign land. Just as our borders are protected by vigilant service men and women, we want children, not only in America, but across the globe, to be protected, cared for and most important, loved by vigilant and Christian parents. We aren’t simply hearers of God’s word but doers, and so planning fund raising events each year to help families in need is important to us.” said Ms. Bova.

*Written by: Sis. Akia T. Garnett, Vice President, Board of Directors
Bethany Christian Services, Fairfax, Virginia*

This coming October Bethany will have two different fundraising fellowship dinners in Virginia, one in Fredericksburg on Friday, October 7th and one in Fairfax on Friday, October 28th - both with a goal to raise money which goes toward our mission. Sponsorships opportunities are available for both fellowship dinners. **Call Mary Beth Bova at 540.373.5165 or email her at mbova@bethany.org**

