

SPRING 2011

# Reflections

Reflecting God's heart in the lifelong journey of adoption and orphan care



Loaves and Fishes

*More than we can  
ask or imagine*

# Hope's Promise

Spring 2011 Volume 7 Number 1

## Adoption & Orphan Care

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Sawyer, born July 2010, and Addison, born April 2007. Domestic adoptions by Jonathon and Cody Newcome.

Photo by Tanja Butler-Melone: [www.contemporaryexpressions.net](http://www.contemporaryexpressions.net)



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Cover photo: Kristie and Alexis Hanneman  
photo by Corrie Kraft Photography: [www.corriekraft.com](http://www.corriekraft.com).

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Reflecting God's heart in the lifelong journey of adoption and orphan care.

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# A Picnic Offering

From the Director



Ever question God or your adequacy in a situation? I do! Yet I'm not sure why. I've been near the front row of the picnic and seen God provide in miraculous ways. Thankfully, "aha" moments, those epiphanies that occur unbidden when you finally get it, also mark our journey. I experienced one this week.

Bryan and Cheryl Jones happened to be in the neighborhood and stopped by for a visit (they live in Nebraska). During our conversation I asked Bryan to share his "Picnic in the Meadow" story. It grew from his longing to help orphans. His loaves and fishes inventory included a collection of songs he'd written, dating back over twenty years; it's his offering. Proceeds from the sale of this CD will further support our orphan care ministries.

About twenty years ago, during the start-up of Hope's Promise, my family and I rented a condo in the mountains over Christmas break. Sun streamed through picture windows one morning as I read about Jesus feeding the

hungry crowds with five loaves and two fishes. At that time I was feeling overwhelmed with little to offer. I probably sounded like the disciples, whining and complaining as they took stock of their inadequacies when Jesus asked them to feed the people. Aha! That's the point! With great compassion, Jesus multiplied what was freely given so they could accomplish what He'd asked them to do. What loaves and fishes did I have to offer?

I compiled my list that day. Woefully inadequate by any standard, it included a few dollars to open a bank account and one portable typewriter. God has multiplied that offering thousands of times over in ways I could never think or imagine!

Individual journeys spanning twenty years, people who had never met, a song writer and a social worker, gathered in my office this week, pieces of a much larger puzzle tumbling into place. A new offering emerged... a CD and an organization committed to adoption and orphan care that reflects our Father's heart.

*"But he answered, 'You give them something to eat... how many loaves do you have?' he asked. 'Go and see.' When they found out, they said 'five—and two fish'... Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves... They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish."*

*Mark 6:37-38, 41-42 TM*

**With Great Expectation!**  
**Paula Freeman, MSW**  
**Executive Director**

# Would You Dare to Believe?

## An Adoption Journey

By Colleen Briggs



Kristie and Troy entered the domestic waiting pool of Hope's Promise adoptive parents in the first week of November 2010. They felt crushed with new disappointment each time a birth mother reviewed their profile and did not choose them. Memories haunted Kristie as the holidays approached. This time last year, while joyfully preparing for a baby, she suffered her first miscarriage. Every day since then felt like an eternity as she held fast to trust in God but wrestled with grief, frustration, and aching questions: "Does God not want me to be a Mom?"

On December 18<sup>th</sup> at 10 am in the morning, she and Troy set out for a walk in a light-hearted mood. They joked that maybe if they talked about names, God would decide they were ready for a baby. Kristie looked up into the sky and playfully called out, "I'm ready!" They briefly mentioned the name "Alexis Grace." Kristie commented, "Well, I guess in a pinch, at least we have a girl's name!"

At noon, the same day, the phone rang, and Troy eagerly switched to speaker phone. Beth Woods, Hope's Promise case-worker, called to say that a healthy baby girl had just been born and her birthparents had chosen Kristie and Troy to be the child's parents! Eight hours later, the couple walked out of the hospital with their newborn daughter, Alexis Grace.

With palpable wonder, Kristie reflects, "If I could have scripted the absolute perfect story, it would have been this." From the details of Alexis Grace's ethnicity, which matches Troy's; to the birthmother's special connection to the name "Grace;" to the timing of Alexis' homecoming which coincided with difficult memories from the previous Christmas, Alexis' adoption story became more than Kristie could ask or imagine.

Kristie reflects, "I know now that Alexis couldn't be our daughter if we hadn't gone through all the pain of the journey. I have renewed hope that God really is there. While He doesn't necessarily cause hurt, He can use it for good."

As Kristie drove to a doctor's appointment, she sang along to a favorite song on the radio, "Before the Morning" by Josh Wilson. In the parking lot after the appointment, as the lyrics once again flashed through her mind, they took on searing poignancy, "*Would you dare to believe that you still got a reason to sing? 'Cause the pain that you've been feeling can't compare to the joy*

*"Would you dare... to believe (that) the pain that you've been feeling, is just the dawn before the morning?"*

*Josh Wilson, Before the Morning*

*that's coming.*" The doctor did not find the baby's heartbeat. Devastated, she resonated with the song's heart cry, "*If there's a God who loves you, where is He now?*" She clung to hope; there was a reason she heard that particular song right before discovering the loss of her second pregnancy.

Whenever Kristie and husband Troy discussed getting pregnant after that day, she felt terrified and burst into tears. Troy had entertained a feeling since childhood that he would someday adopt and had mentioned it in passing to Kristie, but it was never an idea they dwelled on. Almost immediately after the second loss, the couple began to talk seriously about adoption. Both felt a flood of excitement and peace.



# Adoption Legacies

## Family Album



Abigail Sharon with big brother Matt, born Jan. 14, 2011. Domestic adoption by Mike and Tori Furno.



Habtamu Travis, born Feb. 2009. Adopted from Ethiopia, 2010, by Travis and Shannon West.

### *Welcome Home*

- Makai son of Travis and Shannon
- James son of Jose and Rachel
- Libby daughter of Dwight and Brittany
- Isaac son of Danny and Tanya
- Jackson son of Andrew and Colleen
- Elias son of Andy and Sarah
- Duncan son of Derrick and Shannon
- Clara daughter of Christopher and Christine
- Blaise son of Bill and Michelle
- Xander son of Andrew and Nancy
- Clayton son of Craig and Nancy
- Jaden son of Matt and Shelby
- Nicole daughter of Sheila
- Kensie daughter of Justin and Dara
- Macie daughter of Andy and Beth
- Abigail daughter of Matt and Monica
- Alexis daughter of Troy and Kristie
- Kally daughter of Andy and Lisa
- Wyatt son of Bryan and Pam
- Jonah son of Joshua and Tiffney
- Chloe daughter of Enoch and Brittany
- Abigail daughter of Mike and Tori
- Lila daughter of William and Andrea
- Kasen son of Kendall and Theresa
- Mia daughter of Michelle
- Dylan son of John and Diane

### Program updates

Please visit [www.hopespromise.com](http://www.hopespromise.com) for information about specific adoption programs including domestic adoption, inter-country local services, and international adoption.

Kensie, born Nov. 2010. Domestic adoption by Dara and Justin Ricketts.



# Loaves and Fishes

## Offerings for Orphan Care

By Colleen Briggs



Debbie Lee with a Sanctuary of Hope child in Kenya.

we've been able to share about orphans with hundreds of women. Some have become HP child sponsors and several have gone to Kenya on one of HP's Short Term Mission trips. We can only sit back in awe and thank God for blessing our efforts."

Another HP friend, writer Angela Breidenbach, wanted to "deepen the experience of her book 'Gems of Wisdom' and also to enrich the lives of children." She collaborated with Pamba Toto to create a line of jewelry to complement the book, advocates for HP at speaking engagements, and also included an "ad" about HP in the book. Angela says about the project, "I feel God's smile."

An anonymous investor set aside \$10,000 as "seed money" in an account with any future growth designated for HP. He describes his "loaves and fishes" as "faith and Irish/Scot boldness and stubbornness that God would see to it that this money would be multiplied, have a big impact, and not be desperately needed by us in our old age." He joked with his financial advisor, "No pressure intended, of course, but you do realize that you are now responsible for God's money." The

investor describes joyful satisfaction in knowing that he is matching action to his deep-seated concern for orphans.

Debbie Lee speaks for all these HP friends when she sums it up, "Tapping into my passion and desire to serve God through caring for orphans is the most gratifying thing I've ever done." For anyone who dreams of making a similar offering, Debbie promises, "God gives us all such unique gifts and abilities; and to be able to say, 'God, what would you have me to do?' and then to run with what He says, is the most amazing way to live."

### How to access these HP friends' offerings:

[www.picnicinthemeadow.com](http://www.picnicinthemeadow.com)  
[www.pambatoto.com](http://www.pambatoto.com)  
[www.MyGemOfWisdom.com](http://www.MyGemOfWisdom.com)

### So, you are standing in a meadow with crowds of orphans in need. You want to do something! Where do you start?

1. "Always start with your passion. God's placed it inside you. He already has a plan. Your job is to be open to that plan." Angie Breidenbach
2. Make a list of your unique talents and assets and offer them to God. "Realize that it's all His 'stuff' anyway." Investor
3. Wait for Him to answer. "Watch out! It may be something you never expected. That's the beauty and wonder of being His child." Debbie Lee
4. Act! "Be mindful that when God gives you something to do, you had better do it." Investor

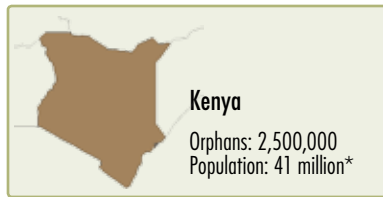
*H*ave you ever longed to launch into action your heart for orphans, but wondered how to even begin? Read on to discover how picnics, jewelry, gemstones, and Irish/Scot boldness are "loaves and fishes" surrendered into God's hands by a few inspiring Hope's Promise friends.

Musician Bryan Jones chokes up as he expresses his desire to help orphans, "I knew I could just give money. I also knew it wouldn't be enough. But I told the Lord, 'I have these music gifts.'" This sacred beginning unfurled in 2010 into a band called "Picnic in the Meadow" and an album project called "Livin' in Me." Bryan traces his inspiration, "All these people are in a meadow, having a picnic. And there He is, in their midst. Most of them don't even know where the food came from, but the Lord has just fed 5000 people with a small amount of fish and bread." Like this long-ago offering, Bryan is maximizing every opportunity afforded by the album to educate others about orphan issues and has pledged proceeds from the project to fund the opening of a new HP orphan home.

After Debbie Lee's life intertwined with that of a ten month old baby in an orphanage in the slums of Nairobi, she "couldn't let go of the idea of doing something, anything to help orphans." Starting a business had never before entered her mind, but she stumbled on the concept of hosting jewelry home shows as a platform to raise money and awareness for HP. Completely independently, the very same week the idea emerged for Debbie, an artist friend grabbed hold of a vision to make jewelry for the same purpose. When the two friends shared their intentions with one another, they were stunned and grateful. Four years later, Debbie expresses her wonder at God's multiplication, "Through our business 'Pamba Toto' (Swahili for 'Adorn a Child'),

# Around the World

**KENYA** After serving in the poorest of slums in Kenya during a Jan. 2011 Hope's Promise (HP) Short Term Mission trip, God asked me, "What are you going to do with what I have given you?" Just as Jesus could not turn away a small child, I cannot turn my back on what my



eyes have seen through the ministry of HP Kenya. With arms wide open I am giving up my trips to the gym (my loaves and fishes) to sponsor Esther, one of 22 orphans in Sanctuary of Hope, with faith that God will use my sponsored child to bless thousands! In Kenya, I saw beacons of light that God is using to change the world, one orphan at a time. In the book "Hope Lives" by Amber Schooneveld, Dr. Wess Stafford says, "You change the life of a child, you change a family. You change a family, you change a church. You change a church, you change a community. You change communities, you change a nation." I pray God will use my small contribution to give Esther hope and to multiply hope to those around her. *Joan Johnson*



**VIETNAM** We are sponsoring Thang because we have a love for children and their innocence, especially children who may not have parental figures in their life; and we believe in the vision of Hope's Promise. We believe that the innocence, joy, and pure love of children are extremely fragile and must be nurtured and protected in a loving and supportive environment. It is so important to cherish children, and we hope that we are helping at least a little bit to make this happen for Thang. *Dave Nguyen and Mengting Shieh*

**NEPAL** As I held the information packets mailed by Hope's Promise, my heart was stirred reading Binita's profile. I wept inwardly as I read about her father's passing, leaving her mother to raise a family alone on day laborer wages. After receiving Jesus, their family was kicked off the land they had worked for many years, leaving their mother in a desperate position. I found myself aching and rejoicing as I pictured her leaving Binita at the Hope's Promise Home, knowing she would be cared for physically, but more importantly that she would continue to learn about our precious Savior, who has a future and a hope for her. In honor of her mother's sacrificial love, we've gladly welcomed Binita as an extension to our family. *Joel and Shannon Schulz*



\*Sources: Orphans: Unicef report, 2007. Population: CIA Factbook, 2011

## Make a Difference, Co-sponsor a Child!



Faith, age 7

© Moses Castillo



Mark, age 8

© Debi Lee



Trung, age 13



Tai, age 10



Binu, age 8

© Vicki Trautler



James, age 6

© Vicki Trautler

Visit [www.hopespromise.com/orphan-care/child-sponsorships/](http://www.hopespromise.com/orphan-care/child-sponsorships/) to co-sponsor a child, or call 1-303-660-0277.



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## Save the Date!

### Hope's Promise Adoptive Family Picnic

Saturday, August 6, 2011

11 am – 2 pm

Rhyolite Park in Castle Rock

### Orphan Ministries Annual Banquet

October 1, 2011

The Wildlife Experience in Parker

© Carrie Kraft Photography

HP Picnic, 2010

## Hope's Promise Calendar

### Birth Mother Tea

sponsored by Plum Creek Church Women's Ministry

May 21, 2011

1pm

Castle Rock

### Infant Adoption Training

April 13, 2011 Denver

June 15, 2011 Grand Junction

July 14, 2011 Alamosa

### Free Adoption Informational Meetings

**Thursdays, 7-9 pm**

Castle Rock

Hope's Promise  
309 Jerry Street #202  
Castle Rock, CO 80104

April 7      May 5      June 16

July 17     Aug. 4

**Colorado Springs**

6755 Rangewood Drive  
Colorado Springs Fire Station 20

April 21    May 19    June 16

July 21    Aug. 18

### Adoptive Family Trainings

Grace Chapel  
935 Evalina Street  
Castle Rock, CO 80104

Friday, April 15, and Saturday, April 16, 2011

9 am to 5 pm.

Friday, October 28, and Saturday, October 29, 2011

9 am to 5 pm.

To register or for more information, please call the Hope's Promise office at 303-660-0277 or email [adopt@hopespromise.com](mailto:adopt@hopespromise.com).