

TENNESSEECHILDREN.ORG

# SUMMER

@TBCH 2020

**AFTER THE STORMS,  
TBCH IS SAFE, SOUND  
& READY FOR  
SUMMER!**

**"...FOR IT HAD BEEN FOUNDED  
ON THE ROCK"**







## A NOTE FROM GREG

Through the years my wife, Jeri, and I have had the opportunity to be a part of several different mission teams which were involved in cleaning up after hurricanes and tornadoes. Gallatin, Tennessee, Dauphin Island and Ider, Alabama are just a few of the locations where we have served.

Most recently, Jeri wanted to spend her birthday helping in her hometown of Lebanon the day after this year's March 3rd tornado. It turns out that the place we stopped to help clean up some fallen trees just happened to be the home of one of her former high school classmates! And by the grace of God, I must say that while we have encountered some very close calls, we have never been negatively impacted by a natural disaster.

We have, however, encountered some serious "life" storms. Several of these storms will be encountered by virtually every family such as the death of a parent (Jeri's dad who I called Mr. Fred), and the sudden death of a close friend (Steve, a fellow staff member while serving at FBC, Portland).

But there are other storms that we have experienced that many but not every family will have to endure. I am talking about the death of a child. Our second child, Austin, would be 27 years old this month if he had not died eleven hours after his birth. His older sister, Jennifer, was 5 at the time.

We buried him on my 30th birthday. Some of you know the kind of heartache this kind of storm brings. There is not enough room in this brief article to even begin to explain it. Suffice it to say, Jeri and I found ourselves in the middle of an excruciating storm.

A year and a half later our son, Seth, was born. He weighed 1 pound, 8 ounces! Another storm. Seth spent 135 days in Nashville's Baptist Hospital miraculously overcoming numerous physical challenges and even death itself. He is now 25 years old, a quality young man, and we will celebrate his marriage to his high school sweetheart, Taylor, in July!

I tell you all of this so that I can tell you what we learned on a deeper level during these storms: JESUS IS OUR ROCK! We have tried to build our house on Jesus and His words. We have not always gotten it right, but we have learned that the rain will come, the winds will blow, and the house built on the rock will stand. "On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand."

When you pray for, serve with and give to the Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes you are helping us teach children and young people, who are experiencing the storms of life, the importance of building their lives on the Rock of Jesus. Their futures depend on it. Thank you!

*Bro. Greg*

Bro. Greg, President/Treasurer



## TENNESSEE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES

### RESIDENTIAL CARE

Christian houseparents serving in family-style homes on three campuses across the state, providing safety and biblical guidance so children can thrive.

### FOSTER CARE

Training and support for Christian foster parents through The George Shinn Foster Care Program, providing certified foster homes for children across TN.

### FAMILY CARE

Working with churches and other organizations to create a network of local resources, changing the trajectory of families for the better.

**1-800-624-8591**

[www.tennesseechildren.org](http://www.tennesseechildren.org)

[office@tennesseechildren.org](mailto:office@tennesseechildren.org)

P.O. Box 2206, Brentwood, TN 37024



*Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock (Matthew 7:24-25).*

129 years ago, Georgia Eastman and a group of ladies in Nashville founded this organization on the Biblical mandate to care for orphans. They heard and acted on the words of Christ and in effect built the future homes of TBCH on a rock. Today we are living out the promise that such a foundation ensures that no threat from physical storms, worldwide pandemic, or economic uncertainty can cause our eternal homes to fall. We are still trusting our Rock, Jesus Christ.

May this collection of the ups, downs, ins and outs of life in the homes and offices of TBCH be an encouragement to you as you weather your own storms. May you also find in these pages a confidence in facing the future, a commitment to get involved and make a difference, and many silver linings in the dark clouds.

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Dorean's home was damaged inside and out.



TBCH residents and houseparents pitched in to help.

# Disaster Recovery Brings a Ministry Home

Pastors sometimes preach that if you are not headed out of one of the storms of life you might be headed into one. Dorean Carr experienced the literal truth of that sermon, and within a few weeks went from helping storm victims to needing that help herself. And with a second layer of irony, the help she received came from the very ministry in which she herself works.

Dorean is the TBCH Campus Ministry Assistant in Chattanooga. Her storm story begins about five years ago, when she first became involved with Tennessee Disaster Relief. She has been on six trips, some local and others in various other states. After a fiercely destructive tornado cut a path through Middle Tennessee on March 3rd, she willingly volunteered again to help victims recover. "I love this work and being part of a team spreading the love of Jesus by being His hands and feet, but it doesn't prepare you for when you are affected by a disaster."

On Easter Sunday, and into the next day, another round of deadly weather cut through Chattanooga, where Dorean and her husband David live. What happened that night gave her a new and chilling perspective on storm relief. "I woke up to my cellphone warning of a tornado but chose to ignore it. A few minutes later I heard things hitting the house. As I sat up to go to my 'safe place' the ceiling caved in on me from a large tree falling on the house. Surprisingly, I was virtually unharmed, and David and I and the dogs made our way to the basement."

In the light of morning, they were in shock as they surveyed the extensive damage to their property. Trees and debris were everywhere. One of their dogs, missing during the storm, was injured, and died a few days later. Dorean and David now found themselves on the unfamiliar side of disaster recovery. "After taking some pictures, I sent them to my local Disaster Relief Crew chief and requested help. The Disaster Relief team was awesome, not just working long days helping us, but others in the area."

Her TBCH family also answered the volunteer call. "TBCH was a HUGE support the first week after the tornado. One co-worker texted me an hour after the storm to check on us, then later delivered a homecooked BBQ meal." TBCH staff showed up with a chainsaw, generator and a willing group of teenage girls — residents of one of the Chattanooga campus homes. "The housemother and teenage girls helped me sort through the damage and pack up salvaged items... another set of houseparents almost daily delivered food to us, allowed us to come and take hot showers at their home, and fed us dinners. Others texted, emailed, and Facebooked us offering words of encouragement and prayers." The ministry for whom Dorean works began working as a ministry for her.

Repairs are extensive, so she expects that getting back to normal will take some time. Thanks to a gracious neighbor they have a place to stay. In the midst of this stormy chaos, Dorean recognizes a bright and hopeful break in the clouds. "God spared me from major injury and saved my life. So many people have been displaced by this storm. Now when I do disaster recovery, I will have a different perspective on how these people feel."



# “Initial” Response from the Heart of a Housedad



When we signed up to be houseparents nearly five years ago, we had no clue on just about everything. We have learned a lot and things have gotten easier. We get great training and support to serve these children. However, there is one thing that is still hard, and I don't think training will help. These days are hard and happy at the same time. Today we watched two of “our kids” go home to their mom after fourteen months. Of course, we are so excited for them, but it is always hard to say goodbye when you connect to small kids.

My smart bride had the idea to buy these letters when we get a new kid to hang above their bed. When they leave, we can write a note on the back and send it with them.

I don't know how much they appreciate them, but I choose to believe they will keep them forever. It helps me cope with the heartache of the day...In your prayers remember these kids moving back in with their mom.

## OUR SUMMER PLANS

Summer activities always include kids and houseparents working together to keep the campus grounds cleaned up.

## RESIDENTIAL CARE

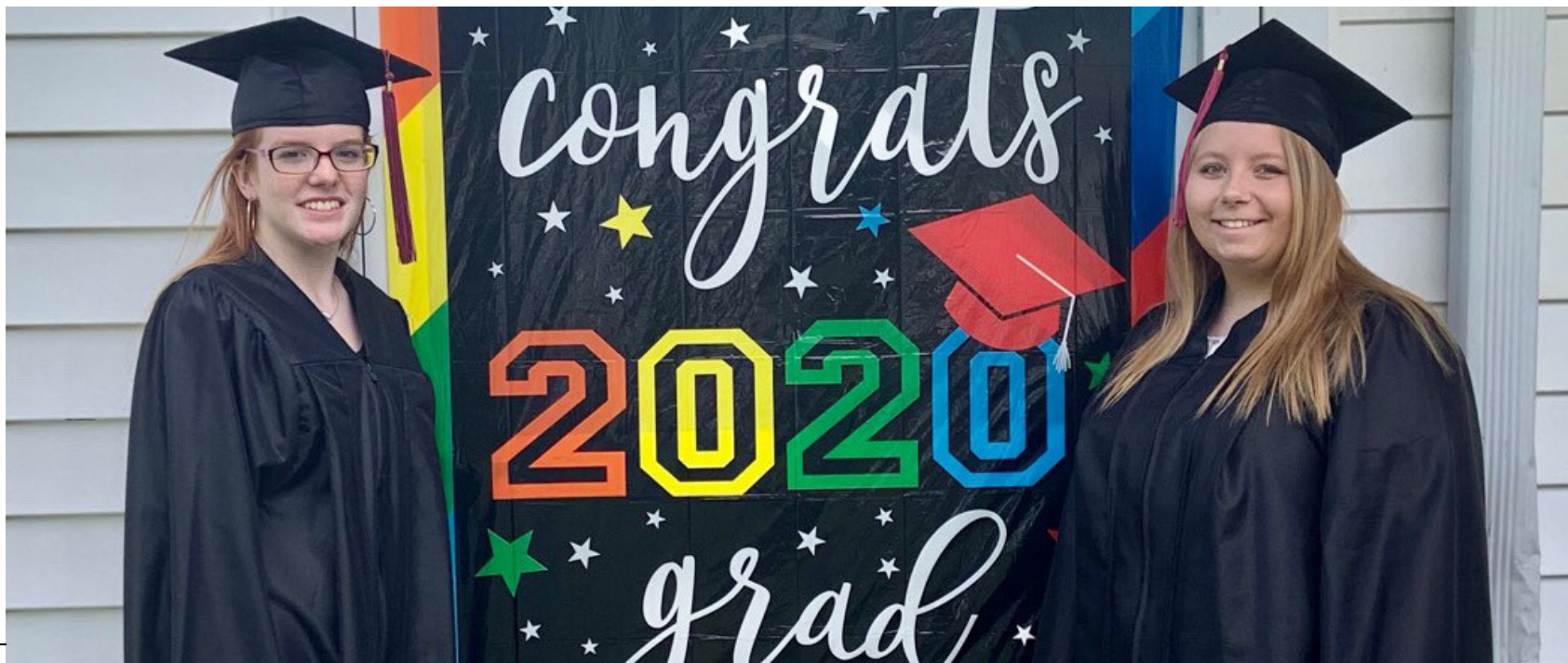
Interested in our Residential Care Program? Visit our website at [www.tennesseechildren.org](http://www.tennesseechildren.org) for information about our campuses, houseparenting, and how to contact us about how to get involved in your region.





# CONGRATS CLASS OF 2020!

CONGRATULATIONS TO JESSICA, AMY, CHEYENNE,  
TREVOR, AND ALL OF OUR 2020 GRADUATES!





# “OUT OF ALL BAD COMES SOME GOOD



Meet David Daniel, whose chance visit to TBCH opened a treasure trove of memories for him, a treasure trove he gladly shares here, with the hope it may help someone facing similar circumstances. “I want my story to impact someone! To see that out of all bad comes some good. To see that if you keep God close to you, He'll take you places that you don't see in the now, yet you'll see in the future.”

David moved into the campus home then known as Harper Cottage for three years in the mid-1980s. “I remember my first roommate, Jim. I felt so alone and scared at times, mostly at night. That's when the nightmares would start and would last the entire time of my stay.

Jim would help me with my issues while dealing with his own. He would take me to the gym to meet people and play basketball, movie night, etc. He also took me to the bicycle shop to get my first bike on campus.”

He remembers first grade at Lipscomb Elementary as “so different from where I was coming from. I can also remember looking out the window of class during a storm and wondering if that tower (the historic WSM broadcast tower at Tower Park) would or could fall. I had my escape route planned out in my head. Yes, we as children have an odd imagination.”

“We all would go to church on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday. We learned the Word of God, and to trust, believe, and have faith in Him. I'll never forget the day I gave my life to the Lord Jesus Christ. It was at church camp in Alabama. We went there every summer. It was the best time ever...and the people we got to meet was a blessing in itself.”

For part of his time at TBCH he also lived in Gaither Cottage. “We boys would get up every morning and feed the cows before breakfast and school. We would also feed at night before bed...the worst part was

having to clean the barn and stalls out. Cows poop a lot! The goat, Jimbo, didn't really like me, well, maybe just a little. He liked to ram me—maybe that was his way of playing, but it wasn't mine!

I would also learn to wash my own clothes, how to vacuum, dust, wash dishes, make my bed as I got out of it, this list goes on. I wasn't fond of this then. Boy am I now! I would take my allowance and run to the commissary to get a coke and candy. Wish I had saved that money. The dentist is not cheap.

After life at TBCH I went back home to Clarksville, finished school, got my diploma, started work and that story is still going. I got married and have three sons of my own. I took what I learned from TBCH and taught my boys and I'm still doing so.”

David says he's never really shared his story because he didn't want anyone to feel sorry for him, but now he feels like opening up about TBCH might help someone. “No matter what life throws at you, you can and will adapt and overcome as I did. I'm still doing this today just in adult form. Never lose faith in God! I have so many fond memories of TBCH that it would take a lifetime to tell. It taught me so much that no matter the cards you are dealt in life, there are people who care. The staff taught me love, respect, loyalty, compassion, and so much more. I truly don't know where I would be today without my stay here.”

*“Never lose faith in God! I have so many fond memories of TBCH that it would take a lifetime to tell. It taught me so much that no matter the cards you are dealt in life, there are people who care.”*

# PRAY. SERVE. GIVE.

## ➔ PRAY

Our houseparents are on duty 24/7 to serve these children. Please pray for their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being, especially during this critical time.

The children at TBCH have already been in hard places. Please pray that they will experience the love and peace of Christ in a way that overcomes any anxiety or fear they may have because of these circumstances.

Please pray and ask God to continue blessing and providing for the ministry of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

## ➔ SERVE

Call the campus offices directly to schedule dropping off meals, food and supplies.

Order food and supplies online and have them shipped directly to campuses. Meals are still welcome! While we can't invite you in to visit, you can still relieve some of the burden of the houseparents by dropping off a meal, or providing gift cards for restaurants with drive-through or delivery service.

If you are sick, please reschedule any drop-offs or deliveries.

## ➔ GIVE

Please donate online at [tennesseechildren.org](http://tennesseechildren.org), by mail, or by calling 1-800-624-8591.



**You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. (Psalm 32:7)**

Protecting our children is always a top priority, so TBCH has been taking extra precautions to limit community contact and minimize potential exposure to COVID-19. Because TBCH relies heavily on the faithful support of community donors and volunteers, we recognize how difficult this might be, so we encourage you to continue praying, serving, and giving. With your help, we will protect these children while continuing to provide safe places for them to call home.







# HOPEFUL FUNDRAISERS



TBCH is donor-supported and doesn't receive any government funding to provide for the children in our care. Instead, we rely on your heroic efforts through events like The Big Payback and the Mother's Day Offering to meet our annual budget.

"Safer at Home" and social distancing have created a challenge for TBCH fundraising this year, which we have met with faith, hope, and a little creativity.

As a result, supporters helped us raise more than \$72,000 during The Big Payback online giving event—well over last year's total! Out of 988 organizations who participated, TBCH finished in the top 10. A few days later, supporters gave another several thousand dollars at our first ever "Drive Through Mother's Day Offering."

The Mother's Day Offering has also been extended to accommodate the many churches who are participating after they resume face-to-face fellowship throughout the rest of the year, and for health and safety concerns, we encourage everyone to consider giving online or by phone.



**THANK YOU FOR CONTINUING TO PROVIDE FOR THE KIDS AT TBCH!**

# FAMILY RESOURCE GUIDE

An April news release from Tennessee Department of Children's Services reported the number of TN Child Abuse Hotline calls decreased 19 percent in March, believed to be a result of at-risk children being out of the public eye due to social distancing for COVID-19. ([tn.gov/dcs](http://tn.gov/dcs)) In response to this concern, DCS Commissioner Jennifer Nichols shared a comprehensive Family Resource Guide, and made a public plea for increased community involvement for the safety of children and families.

*"Dear Fellow Tennesseans, Tennessee's Department of Children's Services is aware that children and families across the state may need additional support during this unprecedented and challenging time. As always, our priority is ensuring the safety, permanency and well-being of children by building strong, healthy and empowered families. You can help us achieve this goal by looking out for the children and families in your community. If you identify a family that may need assistance, reach out with a helping hand to link them to important resources found in this guide. By taking care of the children in our communities, together we can make a difference.*

*Sincerely,  
Commissioner Jennifer Nichols"*

The guide includes online links and phone numbers for a wide range of resource agencies beginning with the Tennessee Community Services Help Line (Call 2-1-1). Among the many resources in the guide are TN Family Resource Centers, Children's Advocacy Centers, and contacts for domestic violence and child abuse prevention. Under Tennessee law, it is every citizen's responsibility to report known or suspected abuse or neglect. TBCH has a no-fee contract with DCS which allows us to welcome children in hard places into certified foster homes across the state.

**Tennessee Child Abuse Hotline**  
**877-237-0004**

The complete Family Resource Guide can be viewed online at:  
[tn.gov/dcs/covid-19.html](http://tn.gov/dcs/covid-19.html)



# FAMILY CARE UPDATE

*Coronavirus.* This word first appeared in my notes on March 9, 2020, having been brought to our attention at a quarterly staff meeting. We talked about the severity and likelihood of the impact it might have on us and our ministry.

Soon after this discussion, the concerns around COVID-19 began to undo a series of meetings and events, like Empowered to Connect conferences, Stewards of Children trainings, and a scheduled breakout session at the WMU Get Together & Connect. Michael Hyatt, author of *The Vision Driven Leader*, posted the question, "What does this make possible?" which led me to consider that instead of feeling sorry for myself and my fractured schedule, maybe there is something I can do now to prepare myself and others for what happens next.

Yes, I can do something. I began to fill my days reaching out to those who worked so hard to coordinate those cancelled events, emailing and talking with people on our staff, reaching out to our ETC conference partners, and calling on the directors of Child Advocacy Centers across the state. I decided to absorb as much helpful information as possible through webinars and online meetings to pass along to others.

*Most children are experiencing anxiety similar to what we see in neglect." This statement, shared in an online Darkness to Light presentation, caught my attention. The impact of stress on children and the trauma associated with stress has been magnified by COVID-19. Foster and adoptive families are dealing with children who come from hard places, and confinement at home may create an even more challenging situation for some of these families.*

*Where does Family Care go from here? With schools closed many states are seeing a decrease in the number of child abuse reports. This is not a good sign. In most states, more than half of child abuse reports come from schools, so as communities reopen, a significant rise in reports is expected. TBCH has five staff members trained in presenting the abuse awareness and prevention program Stewards of Children. Our call to action is an open invitation for churches to use this resource to educate and equip their leaders and members to better identify the signs of abuse.*

*The schedule may have changed, but the Family Care Program of TBCH is still ready to help connect people and churches with resources to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. You might remember the phrase, "Now is the time for all good men to come to the aid of their country" from a high school typing class. Maybe a revision is in order. Now is the time for followers of Christ to come to the aid of families in crisis.*



Kelly Campbell, TBCH Family Care

## WANT TO GET MORE INVOLVED WITH FAMILY CARE?

Email [kcampbell@tennesseechildren.org](mailto:kcampbell@tennesseechildren.org) for more info.

## WRAP-AROUND CARE ABSORBS THE COST

When a family opens their heart and home to a foster child, they are saying yes to all aspects of care, including the financial responsibility. Although in many cases a stipend is available to offset some of that cost, every little bit of help and support makes a difference. Many churches participate in "wrap-around" care to foster families in their communities. These services often include volunteer babysitting, picking up groceries, and helping with transportation to court or doctor appointments. Or, in the case of First Baptist Church Concord, collecting a car full of diapers to be shared with foster families caring for infants. Gifts like these can be a huge blessing, especially for emergency placements when the need for supplies is immediate. On behalf of our foster families across the state, TBCH and The George Shinn Foster Care Program are grateful for the generous support of churches who step up to "wrap-around" and absorb the cost of fostering a child.



# BIG HEART & HOME FOR A BIG GROUP

Children need safe homes. Usually siblings need a home together, and sometimes a big group of siblings needs a big home. Currently more than half of TBCH foster homes have sibling groups, many with three or more siblings. Congratulations and blessings to the Hill family, and all our foster families who have opened their homes and hearts to children who need them!



## “SAFER AT HOME” (IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE)

From the first mention of “safer at home” measures at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, families across the nation were faced with the challenge of limiting the contact their children had with the world. Foster families were no exception, and in many ways their challenge has been even more difficult.

To have the greatest impact on a child, foster parents need resources like school and church involvement, and access to healthy relationships and activities outside the home—things that are limited by “safer at home” measures.

But foster families also have a great deal of practice facing adverse circumstances. Front yards have become the new playgrounds and technology has helped fill the gaps in social and educational interactions. TBCH applauds the patient, steadfast, and creative ways foster parents have continued to keep the children in their care “safer at home.”







# YOU'RE AWESOME!

One TBCH foster family from each region of Tennessee was chosen to receive "You're Awesome Awards" from the staff of The George Shinn Foster Care Program. Case manager Brittany Naylor delivers this one to Michael and Sarah Dawson in West Tennessee. TBCH recruits, trains, and supports evangelical Christian foster parents to provide homes for children all across Tennessee.

## PATIENCE FOR A LITTLE BROTHER

*Tricia is a 16-year-old big sister to the foster kids in her home. As a biological child in a foster home, she shares unique insight about relationships, resolutions, responsibilities, and lessons that can be learned from foster siblings."*

Back in January, every girl in my church group was told to choose a word of the year. Instead of attempting (and likely failing) to follow a list of New Year's resolutions, we each committed to focusing on this word throughout the year, using it to strengthen each of our relationships with God. My word was patience. Little did I know what was to come! Quarantine has definitely tried my patience, especially when it comes to my 6-year-old foster brother. Since my parents both have work to do, and I want to be helpful in whatever way I can, I agreed to help my parents semi-homeschool him on certain days of the week. Though I don't at all regret it, it certainly isn't a walk in the park. Six-year-old boy plus feeling like school is over plus ADHD doesn't exactly equal easy homeschooling, even when it's the makeshift homeschool I've been doing. After five minutes of crying that he doesn't want to do school today, ten minutes of trying to play with everything in the room, and fifteen minutes of flopping around instead of writing just one sentence, my patience has most certainly been tried. But, I never cease to be impressed with just how bright he is, with just how much he picks up on when I'm convinced he hasn't listened to a word anyone said, and with just how much he's able to learn from a lesson his school did their best to make home-friendly, combined with my attempts at 'teaching.' I'm grateful for the opportunity that quarantine has given me to grow closer to my little brother, to grow in my own patience, to grow closer to God, and to fulfill my 'not' resolution."

# WE LOVE OUR DONORS

45 families from Clearview Baptist Church collected two carloads of supplies for TBCH kids!



## **TBCH receives envelopes, emails and online gifts, often accompanied by encouraging notes. The following actual notes reflect the generous hearts of our donors, whom we love and appreciate:**

*"My mother, father and I visited TBCH when I was a child...I was an only child in the mountains of Tennessee. We were not able to adopt and I was never told why. I'm guessing it was because we just simply couldn't afford it. My Mother was a schoolteacher and loved children. I'm sure it broke her heart not to have another child in the home. When I became an adult, I promised her that I would donate to ya'll whenever possible. When she died and I sold her property, I was able to donate more than usual. This donation is part of my stimulus check. I pray for the children there every day and for the staff and I pray that y'all are able to get the money you need to continue this ministry. I will continue to give when possible. Thank YOU for the work you do for the children and may God bless your work."*

**Another supporter emailed us. Prompted by job uncertainty, he asked about canceling his monthly donation, but before we could oblige his request, he contacted us again and wrote...**

*"Thanks, but I have decided against canceling after some thought. Your team and the kids need the money more than I do. God will prevail as He has throughout time."*

**And a sweet young man named Isaac sent a heart-melting note in green crayon:**

*"Dear TN Baptist Children's Homes, We know you have been through some struggles and we are giving you this gift to make things easier. Love, Isaac"*



# NOT OUR FIRST TIME AROUND



**The Spanish Flu of 1918. I had never heard of it until I came to work at TBCH.**

By the time that pandemic made its way through the United States, Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes had been welcoming children in hard places for 26 years. It opened its doors in 1891 as Tennessee Baptist Orphan's Home in the former Hotel Delaware in downtown Nashville. After ten years and more than 100 children served, the single structure of the former hotel was proving to be close quarters for the many girls and boys in residence. The Orphan's Home board of directors needed a larger area for the children.

After much prayer and research, God led Major C.T. Cheek (of Maxwell House Coffee fame) to not only sell his 75-acre farm to the board for the care of children but also to donate almost half of its \$12,000 purchase price. That farm was located at what is now

1310 Franklin Road, today's Brentwood campus of TBCH.

The children moved from downtown and spent their first night in three new dormitory buildings on June 9, 1912. The open space and fresh air provided a wonderful rural setting for the children. The new setting also changed the home's operation to a self-sufficient community since the stores of the city were now twelve miles away. The children thrived working in the garden, milking the cows, and taking their turn with domestic chores. School lessons and Sunday worship were also held on campus.

Childhood diseases like measles and scarlet fever were not uncommon at the time but no one knew that a flu pandemic would visit the campus in 1918. A total of 98 children and staff became ill with influenza in October of that year. Every infant in the Baby Building was sick, as were 35 of the boys in Barton Dormitory. Two Nashville nurses learned of the

need for help with the sick and joined in the task. One of them soon got the flu and both returned to the city. Quite a few of the children became seriously ill and treatment was lacking because even the doctor who called on the children was sick.

By the time the outbreak ended, TBCH leadership gave thanks to God as all 98 children survived.

Tending a garden, milking cows, and the Spanish flu are all part of campus history now. The development of Brentwood brought conveniences like grocery stores with it, and today, TBCH continues to provide care for children in hard places here and across Tennessee. Their needs are met through the prayers, service, and gifts of supporters—from the nurses back then to individual, church and business donors today. As a result, TBCH has welcomed children with the love of Christ through every challenge for more than 129 years.

*Thank you to staff member Kim Burke for contributing.*



## Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes

*Welcoming children in hard places with the love of Christ*

**1-800-624-8591**

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**[office@tennesseechildren.org](mailto:office@tennesseechildren.org)**

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