

# Winter

@ TBCH



Seeking a  
Safe Home



# A Note From Greg

**No rooms available.** You've likely had the experience of traveling without hotel reservations thinking that there would surely be a room available in whatever town you decided to stop for the night. After a couple of these types of experiences my wife, Jeri, and I have learned the wisdom of having reservations in strategic locations!

Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, didn't have modern-day technology that would allow him the luxury of advanced reservations. Just one brief line in the Gospel of Luke tells us that there were no rooms available by the time Joseph and Mary, Jesus' mother, arrived in Bethlehem. Thus, the reason for all those Christmas Nativity sets!

Like Joseph wanted a safe place for Mary to rest and ultimately give birth to Jesus, TBCH wants to provide safe homes for children in hard places. Thank you for helping us provide these homes! Many of you have prayed for us this year. Many of you have shown up and served on one of our campuses while others have committed to being foster parents. Others of you have given financially so that we might be able to provide homes for children in crisis.

On behalf of our children and our staff, thank you! Thank you for helping TBCH say, "Yes, we have room for you!"



**Greg McCoy, President/Treasurer**

A handwritten signature of Greg McCoy in a cursive, black ink style.



# Seeking a Safe Home

**“And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.” (Luke 2:7)**

Jesus and his earthly parents were well-acquainted with the need for a safe home. Settling for a Bethlehem manger as His birthplace, then fleeing to Egypt and later taking refuge in Nazareth, they could easily identify with children and families who find themselves in hard places, seeking a safe home.

They also received gifts, guidance, and help along the way, not unlike the children who find a safe home at TBCH.

It gives us great joy and hope that our Lord understands and has been allowing TBCH to welcome children since 1891, primarily through the generosity of our supporting champions. May the stories and pictures in this issue bring you joy and hope and remind us that we all can play a part in the story of the Nativity.

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**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.

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✉ [office@tennesseechildren.org](mailto:office@tennesseechildren.org)  
🏠 P.O. Box 2206, Brentwood, TN 37024



# A Psalm & a Smile

A few ways the Lord has blessed the kids at TBCH



This is the day which the Lord has made;  
Let's rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalm 118:24)



In peace I will both lie down and sleep, For  
You alone, O Lord, have me dwell in safety.  
(Psalm 4:8)



Taste and see that the Lord is good; How  
blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!  
(Psalm 34:8)



When he falls, he will not be hurled down,  
Because the Lord is the One who holds his  
hand. (Psalm 37:24)



And in Your majesty ride on victoriously,  
for the cause of truth, humility, and  
righteousness... (Psalm 45:4a)

## Sweet Support from Local Baker

Some of the sweetest support TBCH receives is from local businesses and organizations, and Sugar Drop Café & Dessert Boutique is a great example! Owner and Chief Sprinkle Officer Brooke O'Dell is sharing Christmas cheer and generous support with TBCH again this year through an angel tree event and fundraising with Santa at her shop in Franklin. "Our customers loved being able to support you guys last season, as did we, and we hope to do it bigger and better this year!" When it comes to helping make the holidays special for our kids, we think she really takes the cake!



## Silverdale Volunteers Serve Chattanooga

Silverdale Baptist Church really blessed our Chattanooga campus as part of their annual "Serve the City" emphasis. Many thanks go to Pastor Gus Hernandez, group leader Chuck Bacha, and the 35 volunteers who came out to serve. Some volunteers cleaned up flower beds, gave several areas a much-needed pressure washing, and most of the group undertook a massive fence-painting effort. Longtime friends of this campus, this is one of many times Silverdale has served and supported TBCH through the years. Providing safe, nurturing homes for children takes a lot of talent and teamwork, and Silverdale brings both!

## Interested in our Residential Care Program?

Visit us online at [www.tennesseechildren.org](http://www.tennesseechildren.org) for information about our campuses, houseparenting, and getting involved in your part of the state.

# The Big Picture in Numbers

In the last year, your support has allowed us to serve **more than 250** children and their families! While numbers may change daily and fall short of telling the stories of each individual, they help us understand a bigger picture of ministry. Numbers also represent the reason TBCH exists—to welcome children in hard places with the love of Christ! According to our most recent reports, since December 1, 2020...

**81** children have been served in our Residential Care Program.

**175** children have been served in The George Shinn Foster Care Program of TBCH.

**43**

reunifications

**26**

adoptions

**11**

professions of faith

**9**

baptisms

**100%**

of our kids have heard the Gospel and seen it lived out in safe, Christ-centered homes!

**27**

new foster homes have been approved.



# Strong Beliefs Motivate New Supporter

**Barry Nordblom is not just sensitive to the needs of children in substitute care, he takes them very personally.** A retired Coast Guard physician assistant and law enforcement chaplain, he began financially supporting TBCH at the beginning of 2021, which was an expression of both his faith and his family roots.

Upon retiring, he and his wife moved to Tennessee, the birthplace of his mother. “She was born near Double Top, TN. At a very young age she had been orphaned and taken to northern Indiana. Eventually she and her two sisters were placed in an orphanage in Muncie. It had been a desire of mine for many years to find my roots and lost family members.” The Nordbloms have two adult children and two grandsons.

“We started directly supporting because of God’s leading and beliefs deeply implanted in me by my mother, who was raised in a state orphanage. Through her I came to realize just how important it is to a small child who may have lost everything they ever knew in life, to be accepted and raised in a loving environment with individuals who will show and give them that love they so desperately need—given with Christian charity and acceptance.” For Mr. Nordblom and his wife, supporting children in hard places keeps them aware and sensitive, and is an act of faith, a “ministry of encouragement and personal involvement.”

“It is my belief that we as God’s people should not only depend on Cooperative Programs to directly financially support the various ministries of the denomination and local church body. We all should be directly involved as God leads us!”

The Nordbloms have supported TBCH financially and have supplied picnic items purchased online. They also write cards to the children for special occasions and have received responses back from them. “That was very meaningful,” he recalls, revealing that their faith and actions have an impact in both directions. “People can love and care for them from afar and pray for them...they are never spiritually alone.”

# Pray. Serve. Give.

TBCH, like most other homes, experiences the full range of emotions as the end of the calendar approaches. With a mix of joy and stress, the light at the end of the tunnel seems to alternate between breaking out into sunshine or dodging an oncoming train. If that is how our houseparents, foster parents and case managers feel, can you imagine what it's like for the kids in our care? We strive to provide them safety, peace, and joy—things important to every home—and when you pray, serve, and give you make that possible!

**PRAY** for our children and staff to have a safe, peaceful, and joyful holiday season.

**SERVE** by volunteering, tutoring, delivering a meal, helping in one of our offices, or leading a fundraiser at your church or business. Need ideas? Check out page 15!

**GIVE** faithfully and generously so we can continue welcoming children in hard places with the love of Christ. Whether you give one time or monthly, your donation today makes a difference. And if you've ever considered putting TBCH in your will or estate plan, your legacy gifts can make a difference in the future.

*Contact us for more info or volunteer opportunities, and donate today online at [tennesseechildren.org](https://tennesseechildren.org), by phone at 1-800-624-8591, or by mail to P.O. Box 2206, Brentwood, TN 37024.*





# British Cars on Campus Raise Money and Awareness

One crowd-pleaser of an event that comes around each autumn is the British Car Show hosted by the Nashville British Car Club. Each year the club covers our campus grounds in Brentwood with rare cars, enthusiastic motorists, and curious visitors to raise money and awareness for TBCH while enjoying the shiny, purring machinery from across The Big Pond.

As in past years, the 2021 event held in mid-October brought plenty of smiles, interest, and donations. On behalf of our staff and kids, we appreciate the folks from the Nashville British Car Club for bringing the community together in a unique and fun way to help support the kids who call TBCH home.



# “Office Homes” Shared with Foster Care Staff across the State

A top priority for TBCH is providing safe homes for kids, but sometimes we find ourselves in need of “office homes” for our own staff. With three campuses in the different regions of Tennessee, housing our Residential Care staff is relatively simple, but our Foster Care team members cover large territories further away from the campuses, making them impractical for their office locations. But the Lord provides, and we are incredibly grateful to the churches and other organizations across the state who have welcomed our staff into their “homes.”

## In West Tennessee...

Following a community foster recruitment event held in the spring of 2019, TBCH was offered the use of office space at Lakeview Church in Selmer, a home-base for Vice President of Foster Care, Alisha Worthey. “Pastor Clint Overton and Administration Assistant Julia Thomas have been supportive of our foster care ministry from the beginning.” From July 2019 to January 2021, a case manager used the space before Alisha.



*Lakeview BC in Selmer*

First Baptist Church in Collierville has also supported TBCH Foster Care throughout the past several years, and recently were quick to spring into action when they heard that we needed space for two case managers in the Memphis area, even supplying volunteers to assemble office furniture! TN-KEY classes for foster parents will be hosted there in the Spring, making the location even more of a blessing.



*Collierville FBC*

Churches haven't been the only organizations generous with their space. Our case managers are surrounded by fellow social workers at Union University's social work suite located at their Jackson campus, described as “a blessing and a great networking and resource opportunity,” according to Regional Supervisor Rachel McLean.

## In Middle Tennessee...

Square footage is not the only accommodation for which we are appreciative. "It has been great having my office space at Washington Avenue (Baptist Church in Cookeville)," says Case Manager Rachel Duty. "From the very beginning, Washington Avenue has shared a heart for loving on foster children and foster families. They have been more than accommodating. Not only have they provided my office space, but they have also allowed me to use other spaces in the church for meetings and TN-KEY classes." The church, always friendly and welcoming, has also invited her to speak at their services and set up a recruitment booth.



*Washington Ave BC in Cookeville*

## And in East Tennessee...

Case Manager Sydney Mintz couldn't be happier at Orebank Missionary Baptist Church in Kingsport, where a sense of belonging may be as tangible as the walls and roof. "The room is bright and brings me joy. The people who work here make it such an enjoyable place. They have treated me with such kindness and make me feel like one of them."



*Orebank MBC in Kingsport*

Our Foster Care team in Knoxville has been incredibly grateful to City View Baptist Church there for hosting them for the past few years. Expansion of the program and the size of the staff needed in the Knoxville area coincided with Wallace Memorial Baptist Church's offer for us to relocate to part of their property. Case Manager TJ Cloud describes their new home, "It's actually a house, three bedrooms and a bathroom, and extra storage. We have a functional kitchen and a living room that is set up with an extra desk set for other staff members to use when they visit the office." At five members, they are the largest off-campus group of TBCH employees, so this move required a lot of volunteer effort. "We truly appreciate everyone's hard work and effort in helping us create such a great office space."



*Our Knoxville Foster Care team on the porch of their new space at the Wallace Memorial BC property.*

**On behalf of the entire TBCH family, we thank these churches and Union University for extending hospitality, welcoming us as we welcome children across Tennessee.**



# Keep Saying "Yes!"

*Virginia and Frank Roberts put their "yes" on the foster care table, and then just kept adding seats around it. Here is Virginia's first-hand account of how God has grown their family and taught them to keep saying "Yes!"*

## **A little bit of background...**

We have been married 15 years and have seven kids. Frank started his own business in 2020 (Memphis Water Gardens), and I am an occupational therapist at Le Bonheur Children's Hospital. We go to Bellevue Baptist Church, and we live on a farm (Maranatha Farms) with cows, rabbits, chickens, turkeys, pigs, and a horse.

## **Getting started...**

We knew from day one that God was calling us to adopt. By the time we had three (biological) kids we realized financially that would not be possible and then we found out that you can adopt through foster care. After the first class, God broke our hearts for kids in need. We knew this is what God was leading our family to do even if it did not end in adoption. We had some difficulty during the process, and the same day someone mentioned TBCH. Once I spoke with Laurie (TBCH Case Manager at the time) I knew that would be the right path and God confirmed.

## **Expectations vs. reality...**

Our first placement was a brother and sister, eight and three, and our bio kids were four, two, and four months. We basically went from two to five kids in a short span! It was overwhelming at first; however, our life group and church helped meet our needs at every turn (meals, babysitting, house cleaning, gift cards...) It was a difficult but sweet placement. The boy was saved within the first month of being in our home and we were able to have a private baptism for him at Bellevue. After three months in our home they were removed, but we were able to stay in connection with their birth mom ...and she got saved too!!! God's hand was all over this. It's now been five years and I'm still in weekly contact with her.

Basically, it was harder than we expected but God's people showed up and held our arms up. God moved and we continued to say "yes." I believe trauma training (like Empowered to Connect) should be a priority for any family wanting to foster.

### ***Fostering to adopt...***

We ended up getting a call for a medically fragile baby boy in the Fall of 2018, and Josiah was adopted in November of 2020! We had five kids under 10 years old but felt the Lord strongly calling us to keep our home open for a teen girl. It didn't make much sense, but we obeyed. We said "yes" to five teen girl placements, and all fell through. God was preparing our hearts for the next call for TWO teen sisters. We said "yes" even though seven kids sounds scary! They came into our home in April of 2021 and within the first week they asked us to adopt them, and we knew they would be our daughters. Adopted in October—world's fastest adoption!

### ***Challenges and victories...***

We have never been parents of teens so that has been a learning curve. However, Mia got saved in July, Trinity recommitted her life to Christ, and Frank got to baptize her at camp. I don't know that you can get any better than that! In just six short months the girls have connected with our church, friends, and family. They have a host of people who love and support them. They have never known this kind of love before. They are a living example of Psalm 103 - God pulled them out of the pit, set their feet on a Rock, put a new song in their mouth and now people are seeing what God has done and are returning to Him! They have been able to reconnect with their birth mom and family. They both have drivers permits and jobs, Mia has her high school diploma and will be attending Southwest, and Trinity will graduate high school in the spring. Don't get me wrong...we have had a lot of hard things through this process, but it has been worth it! They are now a part of our forever family!

### ***A final word of encouragement...***

God has not called you to a system but to individuals and families! Put your "yes" on the table and allow God to write His story. The unknown can be scary; however, God promises to be with you and provide for your needs and the kids' needs every step of the way. Keep saying "yes!"



## **Thinking about getting involved in Foster Care?**

Visit us online at [www.tennesseechildren.org/foster-care](http://www.tennesseechildren.org/foster-care). There you can find FAQs, our Foster Parent Application, and info on training classes. You can also email us at [fostercare@tennesseechildren.org](mailto:fostercare@tennesseechildren.org) or call 1-800-624-8591.

# Welcome New & Transitioning Staff

LOTS OF GOOD CHANGES IN CHATTANOOGA!



## Matthew and Britney McKee

The newest houseparents serving at our Chattanooga campus come to us from Indiana. Matthew and Britney love children and have worked together in several different ministries. They are most looking forward to “truly being the hands and feet of Jesus... What better way to serve Christ than to love on these kids and create a loving, Christ-centered environment than TBCH?”



## Chris and Rhonda Dodson

The Chattanooga campus is blessed to have the Dodsons back after having served at a church in Middle Tennessee. They were previously houseparents in Chattanooga and are glad to return to serve God by serving and loving kids.



## Mark and Kim Robinson

Mark and Kim are both transitioning into new roles at the Chattanooga campus after having served there as houseparents. Kim is completing her master’s degree in clinical mental health, and looking forward to her new position as a Case Manager with The George Shinn Foster Care Program of TBCH. As is often the case in ministry, timing played a big part of their decision, and when the opportunity for Mark to fulfill a much-needed position in campus maintenance, they were excited to continue serving at TBCH together. “God’s timing is amazing!” says Kim. “We will get the best of both worlds. We are in the ministry that we love and support, and still see the boys most days.”

Looking for ways you can help? Here are some ideas, and you can share this page on a bulletin board at your church or office—And thank you for supporting the kids at TBCH!



## WHAT CAN I DO?

Whether you are an individual or representing a group, supporters and volunteers make it possible for TBCH to welcome children in hard places with the love of Christ all over TN. Hopefully this will help you decide what your next step will be.

### 1. CONSIDER THE NEED

One day a group of siblings was brought here by their mother. They were homeless and only had a few belongings stuffed in garbage bags—talk about starting from scratch! Providing for the physical, emotional, educational, and spiritual needs of children coming from situations like this is expensive, so every dollar matters. Safe homes with utilities, clothing, food, counseling sessions, transportation, sports/recreation equipment, and school supplies are just some of the many needs of the children in our care.

### 2. BE CREATIVE

One little girl ran a lemonade stand. One pastor celebrated his 50th birthday by biking across the state for donations. One VBS group provided sports equipment for all three of our residential campuses, and then through a God-sized series of events, managed to have a gymnasium floor completely repaired and refinished at our Middle TN activities building! Thinking outside the box has led to some amazing ways supporters have met the needs of our kids!

### 3. SET A GOAL (AND STRIVE FOR IT!)

\$5, \$500, \$5 million—every dollar really does matter to the kids. If you can imagine a goal of \$1,000, that's enough to...

- Feed a child in our care for almost an entire year. (The actual budgeted amount is around \$1,300.)
- Cover personal hygiene expenses for an entire home (up to 8 resident children) for a year.
- Cover almost all clothing expenses for a home for a year. (The kids mentioned earlier got to pick out new clothes when they arrived, as do many of our residents.)
- Pay for a lot of haircuts. (A trip to the barber or hairdresser, depending on location and gender, can cost anywhere from \$15 to \$150!)
- Pay for 10 trauma-informed counseling sessions. Most of the children coming into our care have experienced trauma and need the specialized help of trauma counselors.

## THIS IS WHAT YOU CAN DO!

Don't underestimate God or what He can do through you to accomplish great things! Take the next step: Contact us and make a difference in the life of a child.



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

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