

@TBCCH

Spring 2024



A PUBLICATION OF
TENNESSEE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES

A Note from our President:

As many of you reading this already know, TBCH is in the process of replacing our aging infrastructure. These new homes will be even better for the children we are called to care for in today's culture. The vision for this plan was born over five years ago. The planning for each of our residential campuses has been and continues to be a challenge as our conviction is that with God's help we have to get this right!



What we do over the next few years will impact the work of caring for children in hard places for the next fifty to seventy-five years. There has not been a time in our 133-year history when we have needed the support of our Tennessee Baptist churches more than we need it right now! Work has begun in Brentwood. Locations for the new homes at The Ranch at Millington have been identified. And we are getting very close to making a decision on what the future of the Chattanooga campus will look like.

I initially wanted to call this program of transition the "Safe Environment Project." After further contemplation and input from my team and others who care deeply about our ministry, we have decided to call this exciting time the "Firm Foundations Project: Building homes where kids flourish!" That's what we are going to do. We are going to build homes, but more importantly, we are going to build kids on the firm foundation of Jesus Christ!

Will you help us? Will your church promote the Mother's Day Offering for Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes? Will you pray for God's provision? Will you give sacrificially so that TBCH can continue its long history of caring for children in the love of Christ?

Your investment in our kids is greatly appreciated,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Greg".

Greg
TBCH President/Treasurer

The
MOTHER'S DAY OFFERING



Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes

THE CHILDREN AT TBCH NEED YOU TO SUPPORT
THE MOTHER'S DAY OFFERING
MAY 12



Residential Care

Providing safe, Christ-centered homes on campuses in Millington, Brentwood and Chattanooga for children aged 5-18, and Independent Living Services for residents transitioning to adulthood.



Foster Care

Providing safe homes across the state through free training and support of Christian foster parents, and placement services through a no-cost contract with the Department of Children's Services.

Welcoming children in hard places with the love of Christ

www.tennesseechildren.org

office@tennesseechildren.org • 1-800-624-8591 • PO Box 2206, Brentwood, TN 37024

@ RESIDENTIAL CARE

Springtime temps in Tennessee can bounce up and down from day to day. Some of our kids have felt the heat learning to weld, some enjoyed frozen fun in the snow, and some just looked cool riding on a horse! Hot or cold, there's always something happening with the kids on our campuses!



THEN AND NOW Thousands of children have lived in TBCH campus homes since 1891, and every so often we get a glimpse into the difference made in their lives. The following, which has been edited for confidentiality, was recently shared by someone who lived at TBCH decades past. Glimpses like this one remind us that what happens at TBCH today is the story our kids will share decades in the future.

"I graduated from high school on a Monday (as I recall) and was doing pushups (for Army training) on Wednesday morning. Everything that followed - Army, surviving a war, attending college, a wife and family, and a prosperous IT career, were all made possible by the foundation that TBCH provided for me. I tell anyone who asks that the Children's Homes saved my life. They provided shelter at a time when shelter and care were thin on the ground in my life. It was the first time (that I recall) getting 3 meals a day, every day. I was a malnourished 8-year-old abuse victim. You don't forget the people who saved your life."

CHATTANOOGA CAMPUS EVENT OFFERS INDEPENDENT LIVING RESIDENTS INSIGHT AND PERSPECTIVE

TBCH residents had the opportunity to participate in a career assessment aimed at gauging their interests post-high school. The Independent Living team in Chattanooga collected results from all three campuses and began to connect with local volunteers asking involvement to help foster early career exploration and guidance for those showing interest in specific fields.



On November 30th, at the Chattanooga campus, residents aged 14 and above were invited to engage with a panel of speakers representing diverse professions. The panel included a nurse, attorney, news anchor, and the Vice President of Engagement at the Ronald McDonald House, as well as an entrepreneur and college professor. Residents from Millington and Brentwood campuses actively participated via Zoom.

The interactive session provided insights into different career paths. Residents participated in a Q&A to gain a deeper understanding of various professions. Speakers were able to provide well-rounded perspective on career possibilities and insight to how these career paths impact their lives both personally and professionally. Speakers encouraged residents in goal setting and inspired them to pursue their full potential. The speakers not only shared their professional journeys and experiences but also offered life experience and their faith to inspire residents.

TBCH residents were blessed by these community volunteers and their willingness to pour into our Independent Living residents.

Interested in our Residential Care Program? Visit us online at www.tennesseechildren.org for information about our campuses, houseparenting, and getting involved in your part of the state.



(Scan to give here)

Pray • Serve • Give



THE MOTHER'S DAY OFFERING
SENDING TENNESSEE BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES
Name _____
State _____ Zip _____
Membership _____
Return church secretary. Please send this envelope with offering to Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes, P.O. Box 2206, Brentwood, TN 37024

ATTENTION CHURCHES & SUPPORTERS!

Materials for the Mother's Day Offering are now available. Visit tennesseechildren.org and click on the Mother's Day banner to order!



TBCH'S

NEIGHBORS

MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

THANK YOU TO OUR FAITHFUL AND GENEROUS NEW NEIGHBORS!

Throughout the month of February **SIX INDIVIDUALS AND ONE CHURCH** answered the call to commit to giving a recurring monthly gift. Recurring gifts help us budget for things like housing, food, clothing, school supplies, and all the expenses that come with providing safe homes for children in hard places.

Last year, recurring givers made an impact of nearly a half-million dollars in gifts! Becoming one of our Neighbors is simple, just click the "recurring gift" option when you make a gift today or give us a call.

Is your church or organization hosting an event to raise support for TBCH? We'd love to know about it! Email: office@tennesseechildren.org or visit www.tennesseechildren.org/resources

Adeline Irene Curtis, Alan Wilson, Allen Riggs, Anna Pate, Armando Foronda, Aubrey Ballard, Avis Miller, Barbara Dye, Barbara Fann Thompson, Barbara K. Stow, Barbara Ryan, Becky Bush, Bentley Olivia Buchanan, Bettye J. Knisley, Bill Lee, Billie Ragsdale, Billy Benz, Billy Castellaw, Bob Wheat, Bobby and Roxanne Wages, Bobby Ward, Bobbye Woodruff, Brian Oliver, Bruce and Bonnie Meriwether, Caden Burkett, Carolyn O. Dyer, Claire and Skylar Brown, Cooper Sandusky, Dalton Blakely, Daniel Baker, David Rawls, David Webb, Dixie Farthing Huff, Don Crull, Don Roberson and Elissa McComber, Dorothy Hamm, E. G. Mullinax, E.L. Passons, Ed and Cass Lowery, Ed Sims, Fernando Garcia, Floyd Groves, Fred Kendall, Gary Smithson, Gayle Oldham, George W. Carter, Gerald L. Stow, Geraldine Lawson, Gertie Sheffield, Glenda Cunningham, Grace Ballard, Greg L. McCoy, Greg Watkins, Heather M. Curtis, Henry & Kathleen Howell, Henry H. Smith, Homer and Melinda Smith, Hoyt Maberry, Ivan N. Raley, J. Edward North, James & Carol Williams, James C. Campbell, James Lafuze, James Matheny, James McCracken, James N. Prewitt, James Robertson, James White, Jan Dixon, Jarrett B. Millsaps, Jean Birchfield, Jeanie Brown,

Honor and Memorial Gifts

have been given in tribute to those named here.

We are deeply grateful for their love and support of the children at TBCH.

Jeffrey Pate, Jessie Lee Baird, Jim Johnson, Jo Vernon, Joan Glass, Joe Williamson, Joey Cooper, John P. Oldham, John Webb, Johnny Stroup, Jordan Riley, Joyce Faye Kirby, Kathy Smith, Katie Brann, Kenneth H. Russell, Kenneth L. Purser, Kerry Killebrew, Kyle Smith, Larry Watkins, Larry Williams,

Leann Drinnen, Levi Storey, Lily Champion, Linda Corbitt, Linda Hatcher, Loretta Turner, Louis F. Vossel, Marcia Jenkins, Mark Prince, Martha D. Burke, Martha Helen Kelly, Marvarene Vincent, Marvin Medlin, Mary Catherine Hutcherson, Mary Geren, Mary Jo Arendale, Mary Young, Matt and Steph Stachura, Megan Thomas, Melissa Jackson, Michael A. Roberts, Mike Maloan, Myrna Arnett, Myron G. Biggs, Nan Fleming, Nan Marion McKinney Munsey, Nancy McGuire, Nancy Short, Patricia L. Reed, Phyllis Thomas, Ralph Painter, Randy Morgan, Ray Griffith, Ray W. Hester, Raymond Burnett, Rebecca Manning, Reed Stacy, Richard Killebrew, Rick Cooper, Ricky Lowery, Ricky Stafford, Robert Daniel Hester, Roger R. Ellison, Ron and Mardi Lucas, Ron Bowman, Ruby Sloan, Sandy McPherson, Sarah Peay, Shane Wade, Sharon Johnson, Shaun and Jill Etheridge, Sherman N. Anderson, Sherryl Motte, Stanley Scott, Stephen Sloan, Steve Maloan, Susan Burrow Parr, Suzanne Smartt, Terry Kurre, Thomas Stow, Timothy W. Hayden, Tina C. Treadway, Todd and Emily DeVree, Tommy Williams, Toney L Davis, Tony Matheny, Travis Slater, Troy T. Styers, Wallace Burke, Wanda Brooks, Wanda G. Gardner, Warren Richard McCoy, William C. Hodge, Wilton Lewis, Zach Ward (*Gifts from Nov. 2023 through Feb. 2024*)

New Local Business Shares Faith and Support



A new friend to TBCH, **Top Rail Fence**, hosted a luncheon and ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce in January, and invited TBCH to attend. As part of the event, Owner Derrek Long presented a donation to our campus VP Patrick Addison. Derrek's philanthropy reflects his faith and the vision he has for his company to care for and improve the community. "My faith teaches me to participate with our Creator to restore all things in his name." TBCH is grateful for the generous support, and also excited to see God working in the lives of our supporters.

@ FOSTER CARE

In Foster Care, sometimes it is necessary to leave out identifying details for the sake of confidentiality, but the words are no less powerful—especially coming straight from a child in one of our foster homes:

“My foster parents have been very, very good of taking care of me and my sister. The fun things I like to do with them and my sister is to watch movies and play video games together...and talk. That’s my favorite thing.”

“Jesus defeated my sin because He’s the one and only Son of God. Without Jesus dying on the cross, there would not be such a thing as church. We get to join together, talk about Jesus, and that just makes us a family. It makes us a family, even though we’re not related by blood.”



Foster Care across Tennessee has been busy. At our March board meeting, it was reported that 80 children are currently being served in 64 approved TBCH foster homes, with two adoptions and five children in the adoption process so far this year.



The KAFCAM Conference (Knox Area Foster Care & Adoption Ministries) was held March 23 in Knoxville, and our foster care team in the East region was well-represented. FC Case Manager Lindsey Peak was on hand to meet potential foster parents and connect with other foster care professionals.

On the other end of the state, our foster care team has been blessed by Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, who has graciously provided three office spaces, allowing our case managers rooms to work, hold meetings, and host visitations for the kids and families we serve in that region.



Kingsport Home blessed by D-Now Weekend Volunteers

The use of our Kingsport Foster Home is currently shifting from one foster family to another, which has afforded the opportunity to do some much-needed spring cleaning inside and outside of the house, and Grace Point Fellowship in Kingsport stepped up to help at just the right time.

Youth Pastor Devin Beatty recently contacted us looking for a mission project for around 30 middle and high school youth attending their Disciple Now Weekend, and the Kingsport Home fit the bill. With a list of tasks outlined and a date set, Kelly Campbell, the TBCH Church Engagement Specialist met the Grace Point team at the property in Kingsport in late February. It was an overcast, cool, and windy day when the carpool from Grace Point began to pull up the long driveway to the house. Students filed out of vehicles and made their way into the great room to start the day.

First, they prayed. Dividing into groups, some walked the house, spending time in the empty bedrooms, praying for the children who would one day live in the home. Some prayed over the quarters soon to be occupied by new foster parents. Others gathered around the kitchen table and prayed for the physical needs of the children, and in the great room where children would do devotions and hear the Gospel. Then the team gathered to share how God used that prayer walk personally. One student remarked how blessed he felt to be in his own family, and an adult said how thankful he felt that TBCH had a ministry like this where children in hard places could come and live.

Next, they served. Window washing, organizing the shed, moving the swing set, and picking up trash and limbs across the property kept them busy. During the work day, rain turned to frozen rain, and each group wrapped up their tasks.

After some words of thanks, this faithful team of volunteers departed to enjoy the remainder of their weekend event. Their hard work and faithfulness has left behind the blessings of a spruced up campus and a home bathed in prayer.



Thinking about getting involved in Foster Care?
Find resources and contact info at tennesseechildren.org/foster-care
or call 1-800-624-8591.

Remembering those who made a difference



Aline Charlton Wesley, known for her energy and passion for helping children in hard places, passed away February 29 at the age of 92. Mrs. Wesley was a longtime champion supporter and friend of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes.

She was a long-time member of Epworth United Methodist Church in Franklin, where she served children, taught Sunday School, and filled various church leadership roles. She also taught Special Education for many years at Lipscomb Elementary in Brentwood.

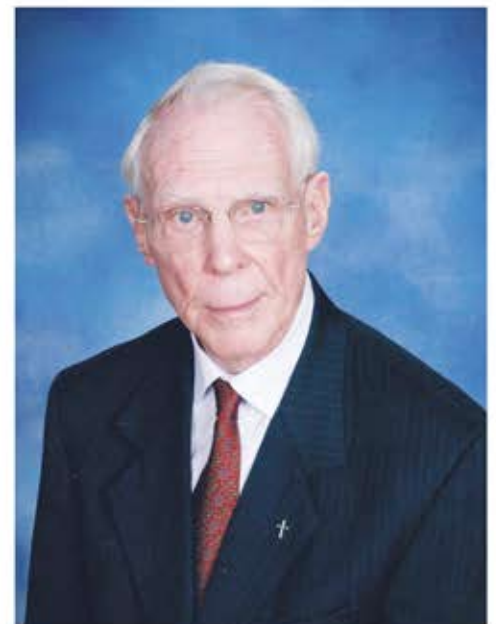
Her heart for children eventually overflowed into volunteering at the Brentwood campus of TBCH. For many years she tutored and participated in the visiting family program. For her volunteer work, TBCH honored Mrs. Wesley with a Lifetime Volunteer Award.

She and her late husband, Tom, were also advocates of adoption and foster care, opening their home to dozens of foster children across multiple decades, and adding to their own family through adoption. She is survived by a son, Dan Wesley of Nashville, three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Ernest Eugene "Gene" Gafford, who served as director of the former Bartlett campus of TBCH, passed away March 24. He was 92.

He was a member of Leawood East Baptist Church, a Marine Corps veteran of the Korean War, and worked as an electrician. He earned his doctorate at Southern Theological Seminary in Louisville, and pastored several churches before joining TBCH in the early 1980s. While leading the Bartlett campus, Dr. Gafford was instrumental in the founding of what is now known as The Ranch at Millington, our TBCH campus in West Tennessee.

He was the widower of Shirley Carrick Gafford, and is survived by a daughter, Lynn Gafford, and two sons, Rick Gafford and Tim Gafford, 10 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.



TBCH is grateful for Mrs. Wesley and Dr. Gafford, and the difference they made in the lives of children at TBCH.

FIRM FOUNDATIONS PROJECT: CAMPUS IMPROVEMENTS TO SERVE THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN OVER NEXT SEVERAL DECADES



In 1891 orphaned children were living on the streets of Nashville. Mrs. Georgia Eastman became their champion and began providing food, clothing, and shelter in a former hotel—the beginning of what is now Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes. In 1911 the first TBCH campus of children's dormitories opened. In the 1970s, those dormitories were replaced with homes that modeled safe family life on campuses in all three regions of Tennessee.

We understand these aging campus homes can't last forever, and indeed are now reaching the end of their effectiveness as tools for our ministry. For TBCH to keep welcoming children in hard places into safe homes, now is the time that they too must be replaced.

We are seeing more and more children coming from extremely traumatic experiences. A home designed to provide the safety of individual bedrooms and bathrooms is a simple and practical step toward helping them heal and bringing positive change into their lives. These new houses will be functional, comfortable, and efficient. Our goal is to provide the safest and healthiest environment we can as a firm foundation on which children can thrive.

We're calling this the ***Firm Foundations Project***, and the first of several phases is already in full swing in Brentwood, with land cleared, infrastructure being installed, and construction of new homes underway. Homes will also be built in Chattanooga and at The Ranch at Millington, estimated to serve more than 15,000 children over the next several decades. This is happening without any government funding. It is by God's grace that TBCH operates debt-free and does not charge any fees for our services.

Like Mrs. Eastman, will you be a champion for the children in our care now and for those we will serve in the future? Become a part of the ***Firm Foundations Project*** by contacting us or visiting tennesseechildren.org.



Joining our Staff

Emma Collins is from Knoxville and serves as our newest Foster Care Case Manager in the Kingsport area. She earned her bachelor's degree at ETSU, and her Master of Christian Education with Biblical Counseling from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. "When I saw the opportunity to work for TCBH I had to jump on it! God truly answered my prayers by bringing me back to like-minded people and to a company that I already love!"

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