Signs for Hope

The One who calls you is faithful, and He will do it!

I Thessalonians 5:24

As another year is ending and a new year is approaching the time for reflection, for each of us, is so important. It is an opportunity to look back over 2012 and realize just how much God has shown-up and shown-off, through the year. Specifically, here at Signs for Hope, this reminds us of His never-ending faithfulness through some faith-challenging times. Faith-building is God's business! 2012 had its share of experiences, which were cause for a deeper surrender of my own self and this ministry to His ultimate plan and a deeper sense of His walking with us and through us each step of the way. Often, His ways of building this ministry are certainly not the ways I thought He would build it, but His ways are by far the best. 2012, has been the defining year, for so many areas of our ministry and our personal lives. All year long, He has proven time and time again, this is not **my** ministry of "coordinating the adoption of deaf orphans around the world', but it is His and…He Will Do It! And for His glory!

I re-read my January 2012 SFH Prayer-letter and was surprised to see there had been nine families from seven states that had contacted Signs for Hope seeking information about the possibility of adopting deaf children, at that time. Seven of those nine, God led to us during the last 5 months of 2011. By May, this year, that number rose to 17 families. To think there are now 36 families (I do not know how many states, but these families are scattered all across the US) who have contacted SFH about their desire to adopt deaf children helps me better understand my sometimes feeling a bit overwhelmed. The bond that has developed between many of these families has been a blessing to watch unfold. The request was made early in the summer for opening a Yahoo Group specifically for sharing information between the SFH families adopting deaf children. That was not as user-friendly as hoped, so last month we started a private Facebook page for SFH Deaf Adopting Families (who are focused on ASL as their deaf child's first language) and that has been a tremendous blessing! I praise the Lord for the technology available today that allows Signs for Hope to do much of our ministry via the Internet, many things that could not be accomplished any other way. Thank our Lord for how He uses the Internet to share the love of Christ and encourage our brothers and sisters, wherever they live, to persevere!

In the year 2012, we have prayed consistently for six families deep in the adoption process. Five of which have brought their deaf children home from China (4), Ukraine (1), and the Philippines (1). Six More Deaf Children Have a Family to Call Their Own! Praise God! One Deaf family is still in the process of progressing through a VERY challenging Russian adoption for their deaf son. However, God is not finished writing their story, yet, and we covet your prayers for the Katics as they persevere to bring their deaf son home, very soon. Three additional SFH families are still deep in the process and will bring their deaf children home (4 deaf children total) soon after the new year begins, three from China and one from Bulgaria. It is possible I will be traveling with the Collicott family to Bulgaria in January as their ASL interpreter and with the Willard family to China in either March or April, as well. And at least another four SFH families will be welcoming their deaf children home later in 2013.

God Places the Lonely in Families. Psalm 68:6a

The other half of the Signs for Hope deaf adoption ministry is focused in Liberia, West Africa at the Oscar & Viola Stewart School for the Deaf (OVSSD)—on-going deaf orphan care—through Heart Adoption. God opened this part of the ministry even before He began to grow the traditional adoption part of the ministry. And God's working in Liberia is just as amazing as His working among families adopting deaf children. I made my third trip to Liberia, in June this year. Since June, I have watched, in awe, as God has opened the communication, via the Internet, with the Deaf Mission there in obvious answer to years of prayers. In addition to the greatly improved communications is the improved use of land for agriculture to help provide daily food needs for the deaf children and their caregivers. Funding is ongoing for the completion of the Vocational Trade School (VTS) and for the building of the concrete-block fence to protect the Deaf Mission. SFH will be leading a team, made up of hearing and Deaf members, back to Liberia in February 2013, the 12th – March 1st. In addition to loving on the precious deaf children we will take part in the dedication ceremony for the VTS scheduled for February 15th. The team will also participate in the weeklong annual conference for ACFI (African Christian's Fellowship International). Ed Kofi, founder and director of ACFI, has a great desire to expose Liberians to the SFH Deaf team members, as they teach and preach, in hopes of breaking some of the age-old thinking that deaf children are nothing more than a curse from God. Pray the ripple affect of these interactions, between hearing and Deaf, will quickly move to improve the lives of deaf orphans and children living across Liberia.

Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.
Psalm 82:3-4

At the end of 2011, I never could have imagined what 2012 would hold for Signs for Hope. I am thankful the Lord only reveals His plan on "a need to know" basis, which ultimately forces us to trust Him more. My ability to trust Him more is a direct by-product of your countless prayers for me and Signs for Hope. I am in AWE as I look back! And, as I look forward to 2013…I do not even want to venture a guess at what God has in store for Signs for Hope or for you. Whatever it is, HE WILL DO IT!

Signs for Hope 2012 – Give God the Glory!

- Your unbelievable prayer support!
- Charles' continued full-support of this ministry and me. This is, clearly, a God-thing!
- The opportunity to personally experience Deaf adoption, first hand. Becky traveled with the Barnes family, as their ASL interpreter, to bring Tie Barnes home, from China!
- 27-day Africa mission trip beginning in Rwanda and ending in Liberia! Oh, the things God revealed!
- God closing numerous doors, only to open others that are so much better! Greater glory for Him!
- His continued confirmations through the many God-connections and re-connections!
- Greatly improved communication with the deaf work in Liberia!
- A Taste of Africa – What a great day of fun! Donations $2,200 & Silent Auction $5,010
- Six deaf children have come home! Four more to come home in early 2013!
- Full-Support Raising Boot Camp in February. March - Signs for Hope becomes a full-blown full-support seeking non-profit ministry. April - The Signs for Hope Board of Directors is established!
- 19 ongoing Heart Adoptions at the Oscar & Viola Stewart School for the Deaf, Liberia.
- Total donations for 2012 (as of Dec 17th) - $27, 174.71. Over half of that donated in Sept. & Oct.
- 1023 paperwork, for 501c3 non-profit status, was filed in May. Still waiting on the IRS.
- 5 families/individuals start monthly support for Signs for Hope. Others giving, regularly, as the Lord leads/provides.
- 29 families in the deaf adoption process have contacted SFH seeking advice, information, encouragement, etc. (36 families overall)
- 10 new deaf children at the OVSSD in Liberia.
- $2,300 granted to 4 SFH families adopting deaf children to help defray the high cost of international adoption
- September - Sizable donation made by SFH partnering family for continued ministry work, with commitment to annual giving as God provides.
- SFH DeafAdopt Families Facebook page opens. Provides a safe place for SFH families adopting deaf children to connect, encourage each other, and share information and prayer requests.
- Kirby Woods Baptist Church, Memphis, TN – Global Impact Conference
- SFH T-shirt sales begin
- SFH Exhibition Table Display Created
- SFH paid the travel expenses for an ASL interpreter to travel with 2 Deaf families adopting from China and Russia (3 trips; Becky to China, once. Marie Wheeler to Russia, twice). Your giving made this possible!
- Empowered to Connect Conference – Nashville, TN. Two SFH families attend with 4 ASL interpreters providing access for the Deaf attendees. Show Hope pays all interpreter expenses.
- Golf-ball Drop Fundraiser (March) & Cornhole Tournament (June)– Funds raised for ACFI and to support the ongoing construction of the VTS in Liberia.
- Countless hours donated by volunteers for many events and activities!
- SFH's relationship with ABBA Fund continues to grow. ABBA Fund provides interest-free covenant loans for 3 SFH families. This is such a blessing, in so many ways!
- Those donating items for the Silent Auction at A Taste of Africa.
- Dale King – fundraiser extraordinaire
- 4 SFH ministry partners donating their proceeds (or a portion), to SFH, from their home party sales.
- Southern Baptist Convention of the Deaf

End of year giving & opportunities for giving HOPE in 2013!

If you are planning to donate funds and/or goods to Signs for Hope prior to the end of 2012, please remember we MUST receive, in hand, your donation no later than January 31, 2012. If you mail your donation the USPS postmark is accepted as the date received. Signs for Hope, PO Box 460, Fairview, NC 28730

One of the greatest ways you can give HOPE in 2013, is by heart adopting (monthly sponsoring) one of the deaf children in Liberia. $40 a month helps pay for ALL the children to have two meals a day, medical supplies, fuel for cooking, teacher stipends, etc. You will develop a bond with your heart adopted son/daughter by praying for them daily and sending small packets to them a couple of times a year. The packets are hand-carried, as the mail system to Liberia is still unreliable. The HOPE that your heart adopted child receives from having a monthly sponsor is life-changing! Please contact me at beckyblloyd@gmail.com for more information.

"You must serve faithfully and wholeheartedly in the fear of the Lord"
2 Chronicles 19:9

May your remembrance of the birth of the Christ-child, be great inspiration to begin the new year of 2013 strengthened and prepared to persevere, living wholeheartedly devoted to Him.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Becky & Charles