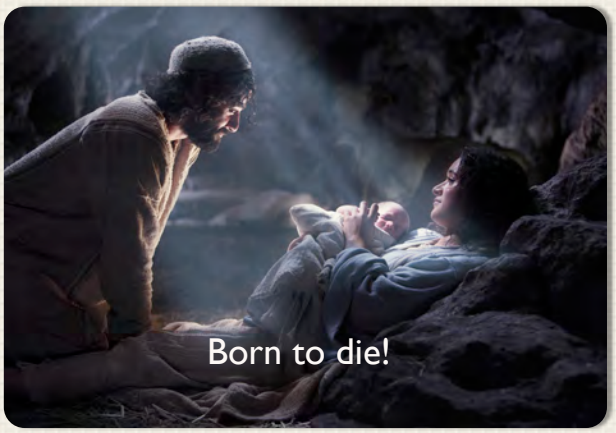
SIGNS FOR HOPE

The Gift That Keeps On Giving!



"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."
John 13:34-35

When you give your self, your time, your talents, your heartaches, your experiences, your failures…your life…your love…to someone else, the rewards are immeasurable (even if we never see them on this side of heaven) and the impact is never-ending. This is how you and I leave a legacy when we pass from this life to the next.

To, first, receive love and then to give love is the greatest gift any of us can experience. The kind of love I am referring to is agape love. The love 1st Corinthians 13 defines. This supernatural love—God-Love—is vastly different from this world's kind of love. It is the only kind of love that would cause the Son of God, Jesus, to be willing to leave His place in glory, to die a cruel death, enduring separation from His Father as the sinless, spotless One became sin for us. And He did this for those who were His enemies. Mind-boggling isn't it? It is certainly not a rational, logical act by any human thinking. The "cost" of this kind of love—in this world's eyes—is often too great to understand and to others even irresponsible. However for those of us who experience this kind of love, daily, deep within our souls, knows the cost *not to love* is far greater.

God's love has no end. It has no beginning. Because God, Himself is love, it is also eternal. It is perfect, without flaw or blemish. And, truthfully, words are not adequate to describe neither our God nor the love He has for us. And this is how we are to let the world know… everyone know…we are His disciples…love one another as He has loved us.

All too often we *Christians* show far less love for each other, even the earthly kind, than do others not claiming to be believers and followers of Christ. No wonder we have so little positive impact on those in our world. Suppose, just suppose, we loved our brothers and sisters as God loves us…I am having trouble even picturing *our world* in that way. Often, it is easier to love 'the lost" than it is to love our brothers and sisters. And yet, Jesus gives His disciples (that 's you and me) a new command -- not a request--at the Last Supper (John 13:34-35).

My prayer for me and for you, during this season of great expectation and as we begin a new year, is that the love of God will penetrate our hearts and permeate our minds, as it never has before. And in doing so His light will shine much more brightly through us, as we love each other so the world will know we are His disciples and they will want to become His disciples, too.

OPPORTUNITIES TO FULFILL JAMES 1:27

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

Hawaii Trip or $5,000 Cash Giveaway!

We have had many volunteers helping sell tickets for the Hawaii/ Cash Giveaway and others have shared it on Facebook. Thank you! You know who you are. Our goal was to sell 2,000 tickets ($20 each), in hopes of raising much needed funds, and thus far we have sold around 200 tickets. Looks like the odds of winning will be great! Please pray for the few short days this fundraiser has left. Deadline is December 23rd, at noon (EST). Drawing will be done randomly, on-line, at 6PM (EST). Winner will be notified within 24 hours of drawing.

"Matthew 25:40"
"Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

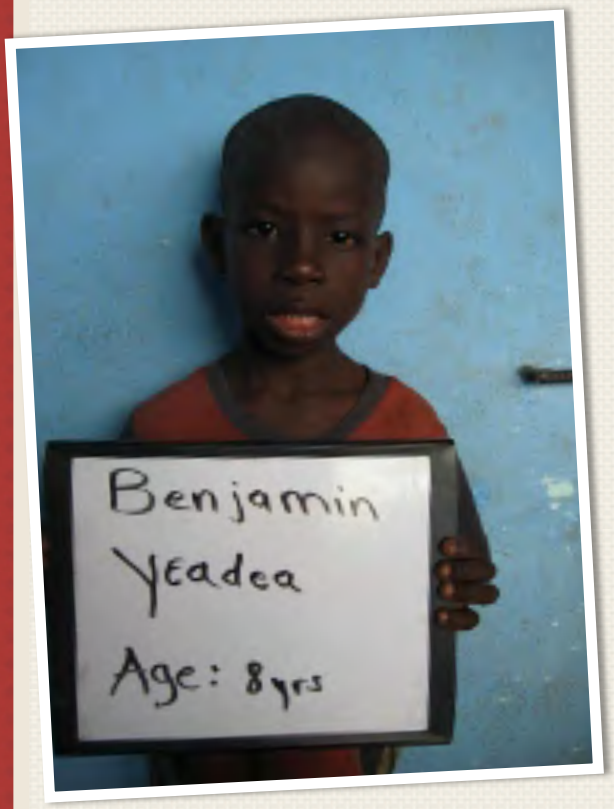
2013 Year-end Gifts to Signs for Hope

No gift is ever too small at Signs for Hope. Our only prayer is that you give out of the overflow of your hearts.

Donations can be made on the Signs for Hope website or via regular mail:
Signs for Hope, PO Box 460,
Fairview, NC 28730.

Your USPS postmark is the acceptable date for your mailed year-end gift.

SFH HEART ADOPTION



Monthly Sponsorship of a deaf child in Liberia

There are more than 60 deaf children/young adults (like Benjamin) at the Oscar & Viola Stewart School for the Deaf in Liberia, West Africa. Only 21 of them have monthly sponsors, so far. Will you ask God to show you if you are to Heart Adopt one of these precious ones? Your $40 per month will help provide two (2) meals daily, for all the children. It will also help to provide basic medical supplies, maintenance for the school and grounds, and possible stipends for the Deaf teachers. But your daily prayers and your small sponsorship packets you send twice yearly will change the life of Benjamin and others. I cannot tell you how important Heart Adoption is and what a life changing experience it is for these children and for you.

MISSION TRIP TO LIBERIA, WEST AFRICA 2014

February 28 – March 10

Last, but certainly not least, you can join Signs for Hope in Liberia to love on deaf orphans and children and those who care for them. The focus for this upcoming trip will be observing and evaluating the deaf student's classrooms. Obtaining feedback from their teachers will help us to discover how best we can partner with them to provide a better Christian education for their deaf students. Signs for Hope board member, Steve Farmer, will be leading this trip, along with me, and God is putting together the team He desires to see His work among the Deaf in Liberia grow. Time is getting close, so if you feel God nudging you, don't delay, contact me today!

Signs for Hope 2013 - Give God the Glory!

- As always, your prayer support throughout this year has been incredible! It remains vital to all we do!
- Charles continues to be a great support to this ministry and me. Your donations allowed him to join me at Summit 9 in Nashville in May, Liberia in August, and the Empowered to Connect conference in Houston in September.
- Orphan Voice (Tony Brewer) discovers 10 deaf children in Vietnam in need of family support, sign language training and education and connects with SFH. SFH discovers 7 deaf children, still living with their families, in River Cess County in Liberia (Feb).
- Signs for Hope and Show Hope provided ASL interpreters for Deaf attendees at the Empowered to Connect (ETC) conference in Houston! And we offered, our first ever Deaf Adoption Chats for families who have already adopted or will adopt deaf children! Thank you to Dr. Jon Bergeron and his wife, Shelly, who led these meetings in the evenings during ETC.
- The opportunity to travel to Bulgaria (Jan) and back to China (May) to eyewitness the adoption of two precious deaf children as I interpreted for these families. Lifeline shared half the travel expenses for the China trip.
- Dwain Gullion, President at ABBA Fund and NC State Director at Lifeline Children's Services' newly approved office. Dwain's continued support of us is immeasurable!
- Two trips to Liberia, to love on deaf orphans/children, one in Feb (17-days) with my Deaf pastor, his wife and 4 others and Aug (11-days) with Charles and Joseph by my side! INCREDIBLE!
- IRS APPROVAL…SFH is officially an IRS Charitable Non-Profit Organization! HIS PERFECT TIMING!
- Two new SFH board members, Steve Farmer and Blaire Murray! Two face-to-face quarterly SFH board meetings and two via tele/videophone meetings.
- Seven families continue their monthly/regular support of Signs for Hope! Others give as God leads!
- SFH was invited to exhibit at the Together for Adoption (T4A) conference in Louisville, KY in October. Event organizers waived the fee ($750).
- A sweet time of breaking bread together and praying for orphans in one of our supporters homes for Orphan Sunday (Nov).
- SFH supporters have donated $36,777.42, as of December 17, 2013. Last year, at the same time, donations totaled $27,174.71.
- The amazing God-connections continue! Dr. Becky Clark (China), Dr. Jon Bergeron (Summit 9), Tony Brewer at Orphan Voice (T4A), and JD King (Deaf Child Hope International) just to name a few.
- SFH was able to provide grants totaling $2,866 to 5 families adopting deaf children. One was a matching grant and brought in an additional $500.
- 11 SFH families have brought 12 deaf children home this year! Many of these families were connected to SFH after bringing their deaf children home.
- SFH was invited to share at the annual Baptist conferences in VA (June), GA (Sept), and NC (Nov).
- There are now over 85 families represented in the SFH DeafAdopt private Facebook group! This is a great place of support, encouragement, and resource sharing for pre- and post-adoption of deaf children.
- SFH received its first ever Love Offering ($500) from Fayetteville Deaf Church in NC. Larry Barnes, adoptive Deaf father, is the pastor.
- The opportunity to spend time in the homes of three SFH families who have adopted deaf children was such a blessing!
- The connections with Herbie Newell, Dave Wood and other staff at Lifeline Children's Services and their (un) adopted staff continues to unfold and to thrive.
- Liza Bush volunteered many hours to categorize all the links and resources shared in the SFH private FB group, providing over 15 pages of single-spaced resources for future access by family's adopting/raising deaf children.
- Ongoing collaborative work to develop "best practices" for the adoption of deaf children and for much needed support for adoptive families after they bring their children home.

And the list goes on! Be assured January's SFH PrayerLetter will share many opportunities for prayer, related to the above, as the new year unfolds. I can't wait to see all God has in store for Signs for Hope in 2014!

FROM MY HEART TO YOURS …

As 2013 comes to a close, reflection is inevitable. I am so thankful for each of your prayers, every one of them. Looking back His answers are numerous, but I have no way of knowing how many prayers have been answered. Only God! Be assured He knows every single one of them. I am so thankful for those of you who take time to read my lengthy SFH PrayerLetters and then pray as the Lord leads. I am so thankful God does not call us to do His work without the support of others. I am so thankful He places it in the hearts of those He wants to financially support this work, His work. I am so thankful when God calls us to do His work; He equips us to do it. I am so thankful He knows all things about our future. I am so thankful His timing is perfect, even when we cannot understand His timetable. I am so thankful He uses our weaknesses for His greatest glory. And I am so thankful for every obedience you and I have given Him this past year! But, most of all, I am thankful for our Lord Jesus Christ who has given us an example of true Christianity…servant hood!

"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. John 13:13-17

In the past few years, I have had the sweet blessing of having my feet washed once and then washing the faithful feet of several of our Liberian brothers and sisters in Christ. What a humbling and amazing experience that was! I would so desire to wash the feet of each one of you, but that is not physically possible. Therefore, I provide this picture to symbolize my heart's desire. And this is my prayer for you as we look forward to the new year 2014, together: "That your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God."

Love and gratitude to you all,
Becky

STAY CONNECTED WITH SIGNS FOR HOPE …

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In You, the fatherless find compassion. - Hosea 14:3