SIGNS FOR HOPE

The Graham Family

Greetings from South Carolina! We are the Graham Family - Simon, Kelli, Jackson (12), Haviland (10), Bennett (8), Victoria (7), and Whitaker (6).

We had the pleasure of adding to our family this summer as we traveled to Poland to adopt our 7-year-old deaf daughter, Victoria. In looking back at our adoption journey as well as looking ahead to our future, we would like to share the one thing that God has used consistently to support and equip us - Signs for Hope.

We could have never imagined in our wildest dreams that such a ministry existed. Whether it's been "deaf", "adoption", or "parenting" related, SFH and Becky have held our hands each step of the way.

These days we are enjoying time with our local Deaf community and in particular, being ministered to by a Deaf mentor which Signs for Hope helped coordinate for our family. We also eagerly anticipate Signs for Hope's first ASL-Immersion Family Retreat in June 2016 and hope to meet many of you there!

May the Lord's blessing be upon you all!

Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Galatians 6:9,10

2015 SFH Recap of SFH Events and Travel

Virginia Baptist Conference of the Deaf, Alexandria, VA– March

Empowered to Connect (ASL interpreters provided) – San Antonio, TX - April

SFH Deaf families, Austin, TX - April

Jean England Academy, Goliad, TX – April

Christian Alliance for Orphans – Nashville, TN - April/May

East Boulder Baptist Church – Denver, CO – May

New Beginnings School for the Deaf Adventure Trip– Vietnam – June

American Society of Deaf Children – Indiana School for the Deaf, Indianapolis – June

Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf – Lake Yale, FL - July

National Center for Biblical Parenting Seminar – Knoxville, TN - August

Bulgaria Adoption Trip – September

Graham Family, Warren Baptist Church, greater Augusta, GA – September

National Center for Biblical Parenting Presenter Training - Manassas, VA – October

Together for Adoption – Durham, NC – November

North Carolina Conference of the Deaf – Sofia, NC – November

Bulgaria Adoption Trip #2 (Becky) – December

Dominican Republic Adoption Trip (another SFH interpreter) – December

These are some of the places your prayers and gifts made it possible for others and me to "GO" in 2015! I thank God for His touching your hearts to provide in this way and I pray He alone will thank you, adequately, for your sacrifices of time and money.

EXCITING UPDATES AT SIGNS FOR HOPE

Great Opportunities to Pray & Give!

Signs for Hope
&
The National Center for Biblical Parenting Partnership

Jonathan Walterhouse has now created and uploaded the ASL translation for two of Dr. Scott Turansky's recent webinars on anger. Thank God for the new laptop and software we were able to purchase to make this possible. I do not know of any other parenting videos translated into ASL; these are the first!

If you know of any family struggling with raising their children to love Jesus by reaching their hearts, the National Center for Biblical Parenting has the practical tools and strategies needed. These biblical tools and strategies become second nature for you and your children as you reach their hearts for Him. I can highly recommend their books, DVD's, church partnership materials...EVERYTHING they publish and their trainings.

Check out (click each title) the two webinars on Anger below. Trust me, they will impact your life and your entire family, immediately.

- When Kids Get Angry
- I Can Help You As A Parent Deal With Your Anger

Lord willing, the training for a Deaf couple to become National Center for Biblical Parenting presenters will become a reality. Please join us in praying for God to open this door by guiding us to that couple and providing the funds to accomplish this.

SIGNS FOR HOPE

ASL-IMMERSION FAMILY RETREAT

June 2 -5, 2016

I am so excited to finally be able to announce our first ever Signs for Hope ASL-Immersion Family Retreat! We have been looking forward to this and praying for this for over 3 years. As always, God's timing is BEST & PERFECT!

God has led us to Bonclarken Conference Center in Flat Rock, NC. I cannot tell you how many places—dozens—I have researched over the past 3 years and ONLY GOD knew it would end up in my own backyard, the mountains of Western North Carolina. This makes so much sense to begin what I believe to be an event that will spread to multiple events across the US, regionally, wherever our SFH families live.

The staff at Bonclarken has already shown us how much they want to serve our families by giving us a greatly reduced required deposit to hold the accommodations, meeting rooms and meals for just $200. Typically they require a 50% deposit. ONLY GOD! This has granted us the opportunity to share with you the need for funds to help make this family retreat affordable even for those who are raising many children.

Family registrations will begin January 2016. Signs for Hope will also be seeking Deaf and ASL-fluent families and individuals as staff members and ASL-Buddies for our family retreat. If you are interested, please email me today. beckyblloyd@gmail.com

I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains,
from whence cometh my help.
Psalm 121:1

COLLICOTT DEAF ADOPTION SFH MATCHING GRANT

I am so thankful to share with you Signs for Hope is able to support Doug and Lynda Collicott with a $750 matching grant to help bring home their third deaf adopted son, Christopher, from Bulgaria. Christopher has many special needs, but God has gifted his dad and mom in miraculous ways to care for him and placed them strategically geographically, as well. He will be 6 years old in February and he weighs a mere 11 pounds. Lynda and I had the distinct privilege of spending a portion of 5 days with Christopher in September. This, by far, has been the most challenging experience for me, thus far. Lynda and I were very pleased to learn many positives about Christopher while we were with him, however. If God touches your heart to help bring Christopher home, feel free to click here to give via our secure Signs for Hope website or mail a check to Signs for Hope, PO Box 460, Fairview, NC 28730. Every dollar will be matched up to $750. This is just a portion of the amount they still need to raise to admit him to the hospital in Bulgaria to stabilize him first, for a few days, and then bring Christopher home.

We are asking God to make it possible for us to go back to Bulgaria and bring Christopher home in early December, instead of January. Please join us in praying for all the Bulgarian paperwork to be completed in a timely manner.

Also, we are still seeking a medical person to travel with us for this trip and we are helping raise the funds for that person's travel expenses. Others who have adopted children like Christopher have recommended this to Doug and Lynda. Please pray with us and share these needs with others.

Let us not become weary in doing good,
for at the proper time we will reap a harvest
if we do not give up.
Galatians 6:9

FROM MY HEART TO YOURS ...

I am writing this to you while Charles and I are on vacation in the Cayman Islands. By God's grace we were gifted air miles to allow us to visit, once again, our most favorite place. It has been 4 years since our last visit here. God's bountiful, colorful HD (high-definition) creation here—above the water and below—is some of the most striking I have ever been allowed to see with my own eyes and experience fully. We started coming here on a regular basis in 1989 and became certified scuba divers in 1991. I am so in awe of our God and His mighty and stunning handiwork!

In September 2004, hurricane Ivan hit Grand Cayman hard, as a category 5 hurricane. We had been here with Rachel and Joseph just two months prior. For a time, the entire island of Grand Cayman disappeared from radar, as it was completely engulfed by storm surge. As Charles and I watched the weather reports and prayed for the folks here in Cayman we found it odd that none of the news agencies were reporting anything about the horrific damage here and really never did. We searched the Internet for information and finally found a website of a photographer who had flown across the island, by helicopter, two days after Ivan departed capturing the devastation. His pictures astounded us! We found other websites where families were reconnecting with loved ones and read stories full of the supernatural protection of their God. Miraculously, only two people died during the horrific event—one man had a heart attack and another was lost at sea in a small boat. When the runway was repaired at Owen Robert's airport the vast majority of Caymanians—women and children--were evacuated to live with family in the states or somewhere else while the massive cleanup began. Generators had to be flown and shipped in to help restore power to the island, even before cleanup could commence. Where we stay, East End, the power was out for weeks before new power poles could be replaced, but only after some of the roads were reconstructed.

I am reminded, on this trip to paradise, that beauty often emerges more beautiful after a time of refining. Beauty from ashes! This is not just true for our environment, but in our lives, as well. I wonder if that was what our world was like after the flood? As our LORD allowed the clouds to dissipate and the sun to shine again. As new growth began to spring forth from the dead, the broken and the withered, was it more beautiful than Noah and his family had remembered?

I wonder, too, about that first rainbow. How close was it? Was it ON them? Was it a double rainbow, as we often see if we look close enough, long enough? No doubt they could see both ends as they were on the highest point, if both ends were visible.

On Tuesday, I mentioned to Charles that I could not remember seeing a rainbow here in Cayman. It was a rainy day here, all day, which is not the norm. If you know me well, you know I get a bit excited every time it rains and the sun begins to shine. I run outside to see if God will bless us with a glimpse of that amazing promise He made, so long ago. Yesterday afternoon, as we were about to get ready to go to dinner, I glanced out our sliding glass doors facing the Caribbean here at our condo and to my great surprise and delight I saw the most beautiful rainbow I have ever seen! Maybe I am partial, so I will let you be the judge.

I do love you, but He loves you more,
Becky

PS. I have started a new blog series you might want to check out: "What My Eyes Have Seen"